

An Assessment of the Labor Market in the North of Albania – Policy Implications

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Abstract

This paper provides a comprehensive understanding of the employment situation in the Northern Albania, including an assessment of the growth potential of the regional labor market with specific emphasis on women, and the assessment of the skills required by employers, skill shortages, trainings and facilities needed in order to increase employment and professional skills, etc. Three regions were selected for the study as representatives: Shkodra, Kukes, and Dibra. The assessment methodology was based in questionnaires, focus groups and high-level interviews conducted with selected business in each representative region.

Specifically, the study provides first, an overview of the socio-economic conditions in Albania with specific attention to the Labour Market of the Northern target regions; primary research with Northern employers in order to profile the current labour market situation, assessment of the labor market demand, skills/professions sought by employers, what employee recruitment and retention issues are facing employers; Review of existing mechanisms and operating structures that bring together local and central governmental structures and business community representatives to address the socio-economic and labor needs of the regions; an assessment of the growth market potential of the regions, including what potential businesses could be created to meet the current and future needs of existing employers, businesses and investors.

Recommendations on how the existing structures that support vocational training, entrepreneurship and small business development in the region could be strengthened to be (more) effective in enhancing entrepreneurial initiatives and addressing local labor market needs.

There were identified what new and alternative resources are needed to improve local socio-economic conditions and better address labor market demand, including what concrete actions would needed to initiate such developments.

Forth recommendations are given on issues that address coordination among policies/programs, access to employment information, improving the public private partnership at the local/regional context to enhance income generation opportunities in the target regions as well as how to create new opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship development among the vulnerable groups, including women, outlining concise and fundamental next steps to be undertaken by public and private stakeholders in order to achieve this aim.