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REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Assis. Prof. Katerina Mitevska Petrusheva

Faculty of education, International Balkan University – Skopje

Phone: +38975499537

E-mail: mitevska_kate@yahoo.com

Assoc. Prof. Biljana Popeska, PhD

Faculty of educational sciences, Goce Delcev University – Stip, Macedonia

Phone: +38975499380

E-mail: biljana.popeska@ugd.edu.mk

Full professor Snezana Jovanova – Mitkovska, PhD

Faculty of educational sciences, Goce Delcev University – Stip, Macedonia

Tel.: +38970228070

E-mail: snezana.jovanova@ugd.edu.mk

***Abstract:** One of the goals of education today is to prepare young people with knowledge, skills and competences that will be required tomorrow and will enable them to be concurrent at the labor market. In recent years, special emphasis is placed on vocational education and training. One of the keys for successful vocational education and training is highly qualified teachers. However, when it comes to vocational education, this issue has its own specifics, because teachers beside basic pedagogical competences should also fulfill and other conditions aligned with the specific area of work. There are different practices between countries regarding the requirements that teachers in vocational educations should fulfill. In most of the countries, main condition is a degree in specific area and pedagogical training, while in some countries relevant experience in the field is required. In this regard, this paper analyses the issue related with requirements that teacher should fulfill, in a meaning of initial education and other conditions in order to work as teachers in vocational education and training. The emphasis is given on analyses of specific requirement related with the type and level of pedagogical training and education needed for specific area; working experience in specific area of work, as well as specific requirements needed to become a teacher in Vocational education. A comparative analysis has been made at a sample of universities in the Balkan region and other European countries. Analysis shows that there are different approaches in the system of vocational education, as well as criteria for being vocational education teacher.*

***Keywords:** Initial teacher education, pedagogical competences, vocational education and training.*

INTRODUCTION

In last few years in Macedonia, there is a tendency of directing students to select vocational education as secondary education. The reason for this is evident lack of working force in certain segments in industries and recognition and affirmation of professions that are needed at the labor market. Providing quality vocational education is becoming more and more important issue considering the direct impact that this issue has on the quality of labor market.

Good teachers are essential for quality education. The quality of teaching is crucial if young people are to be inspired in the classroom and reach their full potential. Quality education prepares them for adult life as active and productive members of society. In the report of EACEA “Education and training in Europe 2020” it is emphasized that: “Teaching today involves lifelong career development, adapting to new challenges, collaborating with peers, using new technologies and being innovative. Areas that can be acted in order to improve the working conditions and efficacy of teachers refer to: selection and recruitment of new teachers should take into account a broader set of attitudes and attitudes in addition to academic merits, a bridges access to the profession should be provided for those from other professions (EC EACEA, 2013a, pp:18). In this regard, a significant

shortage of teachers in some specific subjects such as STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) is notable (EC EACEA, 2013b, pp: 29).

Different requirements for teachers are noted regarding their possibility to enroll as teachers in vocational education. The requirements differ from having only a university diploma in particular area to different competences, working experience, evaluation tests and exams such as “state“ or “national“ examination, hour of practical work etc. Regarding the education of teachers for teaching in vocational education, different models are noted among countries. There are two main organizational models: **concurrent model and consecutive model** (EU EACEA, 2013b). The concurrent model gains a teacher qualification through short professional-oriented programs (for example in Germany, Belgium, Slovakia, Turkey, Iceland, Macedonia). These programs are usually provided by traditional teacher education institutions and include pedagogical and psychological disciplines, methodology, didactics and practical training. The consecutive model means that basic and professional component is taught and learned at the beginning of the study process and after that it is followed by pedagogical qualification (for example: Estonia, France, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Luxemburg, Hungary and Portugal). In England, different alternative models of teacher education exist (Eurydice, Key Data on Teachers, 2013).

Considering the importance of this issue, the subject of interest of our paper is teacher's education for vocational education in Macedonia, compared with several surrounding Balkan countries with well established system of vocational education and comparison with the system of countries with long tradition in their education system. In this regard, we selected Slovenia and Croatia as representatives of Balkan countries and France as a representative of European older systems of education.

METHOD OF WORK

The purpose of this paper is to identify the requirements that teachers should fulfill in order to work as teachers in vocational education and training as well as to compare different models of vocational education of teachers in some of the Balkan and European countries. The analyses were focused on specific requirements related to: structure of system of vocational education, initial education of teachers that teach in vocational education, their pedagogical competences, training and education in specific area and working experience in specific area of work. Study sample refers to following countries: Macedonia, Slovenia, Croatia and France.

Method of theoretical analyses and comparative analyses were applied. Several different types of documents from included countries were analyzed and compared. The analyses were focused on analyses of study programs from several universities from all included countries, legislative documents such as laws, different acts for vocational training etc.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Vocational education and teacher education in Macedonia. Vocational education in Macedonia could be three or four years education. At the end of three years studies, students have final exam that enables them to enter at the labour market but not at the universities and are not able to attend higher education. At the end of four years studies, the students could choose whether to have final exam or state exam. In this case, only state exam gives them possibility to apply for university education.

Teachers that teach different subjects in vocational education should complete the initial university education at some of the faculties closely related with the profile of teaching at vocational schools and should also have specific pedagogical and didactical knowledge that as addition to initial university education. These pedagogical competences are obtained after several courses with different subjects and exams related with pedagogic work, methodics and didactics of teaching etc. In addition to theoretical competences, teachers also have determined a minimum of 45 days of pedagogic and practical work in schools and are directly, fully and independently involved in the teaching process. After this formal education, teachers access to schools and after successfully completed induction period they have to pass a professional examination. Related to preparation of teachers for vocational

education, the Strategy for education 2018 – 2025 underlines a serious barriers and lack of knowledge in teachers' knowledge of modern technologies and their relations with teaching subjects. Several factors including lower level of motivation of the teachers and not well-developed system for professional development and career development additionally complicates this issue. These reasons are recognized as the main reasons for traditional approach in realization of teaching process. These underlined issues are also the key points for changes in the segment of teachers' education.

Vocational education and teacher education in Slovenia. Upper secondary education in Slovenia includes vocational, technical and general (gimnazija) programmes. It covers students aged from 15-19 years and usually takes 2-5 years of duration. Vocational and technical education prepares students to enter the labor market.

Teachers of professional subject in vocational education must meet some criteria in order to teach in secondary vocational education. They must hold second cycle degree diploma, to have relevant pedagogical - andragogical educational qualification as well as to fulfil the requirement for practical experience, skills and specific knowledge in the subject they teach. Other criteria for all profiles of teachers, including vocational education teachers is successfully passed professional exam. Teachers must hold ISCED 7 qualification level, while for some teachers of practical subjects in VET prerequisite is ISCED 6 qualification level.

A teacher of general subjects shall have educational qualification of a second cycle study programme, while a teacher of practical subject educational qualification at least first cycle study programme. Other criteria is pedagogical-andragogical educational qualification. Teachers also have to fulfil the requirement for practical experience, skills and specific knowledge in the subject they teach. A teacher of practical lessons and skills in vocational education must have at least an upper secondary technical educational qualification in the relevant field, at least three years of relevant work experience. All profiles of teachers, including vocational education teachers have to have successfully passed professional exam. Before getting to state professional examination, applicants must have at least 840 hours (approximately 10 months) of teaching practice and must have completed at least five assessed teaching presentations as a part of induction or independently

Vocational education and teacher education in Croatia. In Croatia upper secondary education is not compulsory and lasts between 3 and 5 years. It includes generalist programmes, 4-5 year vocational programmes and 3 year vocational programmes. Completion of 3 year vocational programmes leads students to labour market, while 4 year vocational programmes enables them to either enter the labor market or to continue in higher education.

There are different profiles of teachers working in vocational school. Teachers who are teaching professional subjects must hold a degree in the area they teach of at least 180 ECTS, as well as to have obtained pedagogical-andragogical educational qualification (60 ECTS).

Teacher who teaches practical subjects must have completed upper vocational education in the area, to have pedagogical-andragogical educational qualification and at least five years working experience in the area. They also have licensing examination that can be taken after the teacher has completed the induction programme. The result of a traineeship are part of the documentation submitted in with the application. The candidate is examined through a combination of written and oral tests, and the observatory by the committee of a lesson taught by the candidate.

Vocational education and teacher education in France. In France, there are three educational paths at upper secondary school:

- The general path which prepares pupils for higher education;
- The technological path which mainly prepares pupils for higher technological studies and
- The professional path that leads mainly to labor market and active working life, but also enables students to continue their studies up to higher levels of qualification.

Before explaining the teacher's education, we must underline that the educational system in France is highly affected by the impact of the state. This in general is manifested in the segments of

financing, organization, defining curricula, monitoring and quality assessment of educational process etc. The state is responsible for recruiting new teachers and the state defines then employment criteria. In France, teachers have status as state administration.

Related with teacher's education, a consecutive model is present. This model means that first three years of education, teachers are learning specific subjects from the specific profession and the next two years are preparation for teaching work (pedagogical and methodical preparation). Since 1989, Teachers in France are educated at Institutes for preparation of teachers "Instituts Universitaires de formation des Maîtres (IUFM)". Changes in teacher's education were also made in 2010/2011 when obligatory master degree was introduced as condition for employment as teacher as well as passed exam for teachers. Another specific in educational system of teachers education in France is the existence of unique center for initial education and professional development of teachers named as Faculties for education of teaching staff (Écoles supérieures du professorat et de l'éducation - ESPE) aimed to prepare teachers for all levels of education and at all educational institutions. It is created in 2013 and exists in frames of the universities with aim to strength the vocational preparation of the teachers.

In 2013 a reform of initial teacher training has been implemented. According this reform, teachers must go through a competitive examination in the end of the first year of master at master *Métiers de l'Enseignement, de l'Éducation et de la Formation* (MEEF – Teaching, Education and Training Professions). These MEEF studies are realized in frames of ESPE and their goal is to qualify teachers for involvement in their profession by linking theory with practice. Students which will pass this test successfully become "teacher trainee" and during the second year they spend 50% of the time in initial teacher training and other 50% in practice. After the second year of MEEF studies, the candidate earns the status teacher (professeur titulaire) and continues to work full time (EU EACEA, 2013).

All teachers must pass different competitive examination, which differs depending on the level and type of educational institution where they will teach. Several competitions provide access to the teaching profession in the secondary education. They are the following:

- The Aptitude Certificate for Professorship in the Second Degree of general education (CAPES);
- The Aptitude Certificate for Professorship for Technical Education (CAPET);
- The Aptitude Certificate for Professorship of Secondary Vocational Education (CAPLP);
- The Aptitude Certificate for Professorship of Sport and Physical Education (CAPEPS);
- Agrégation – teachers with finished master degree (Eurydice).

The structure of MEEF studies for teaching, education and training (Métiers de l'enseignement, de l'éducation et de la formation)

Precondition for having Master 1 MEEF is diploma from particular area of interest. Condition for enrollment in the second year is completed Master 1 MEEF and successfully finished exam for teachers. These studies are organized as cooperation of ESPE and faculties from 4 different universities. In this frames, the faculties are responsible for subjects from particular area of interest, while ESPE is responsible for pedagogic preparation. The MEEF studies – 2 degree are pointed creation of possibilities for future teachers to learn how to transmit the acquired knowledges to students. Following elements are the principal one in the program: acquisition of theoretic knowledges from particular area of interest, knowledges for didactical aspect of work and abilities for research work, competences related to realization of teacher's profession and practical work. These studies are realized as 2 years studies.

CONCLUSION

Based on document analyses and comparative analyses, it could be concluded that differences occur in different countries related to analyzed criteria. Considering the years of vocational education, the general conclusion is that they last for three years with possibility to entrance on labour market and four year education with possibility to continue with university education. Related to teachers education for teaching in vocational educational, differences between analyzed countries

are noted. Namely, all teachers are required minimum university level of studies and in some countries such as Slovenia and France, master degree is obligatory for teachers. One of the tendencies related to teachers at vocational education is to have a master studies degree.

Other similarities are related with required pedagogic competences for teachers. These competences are required in all analyzed countries, but then differences could be noted in manners of their realization and period of their realization. In this regard, France has a well developed system, where teachers attend courses for pedagogic competition in period of two years.

Another important issue, underlined in each of analyzed countries is period of practical teaching during teachers education and this period also have varieties among countries. Each country adapts this segment according the organization of their educational system, system of teachers education and relations that they have with labour market and companies.

The last issue emphasised in comparison is working experience before enrolling as teachers in vocational schools.

Master studies for teachers is one of the requirement for teachers on initial level of education is even lower. For example, in Croatia five years working experience is required in specific field, while for Slovenia this period is three years. There is no such requirement in Macedonia, but there is a suggestion given by the National Center for Secondary Vocational Education teachers to attend courses in companies in order to get familiar with their work and opportunities and also to be able to make close and rational relations between theory and practice.

All conclusions leads to the acknowledgment that education of teachers for vocational education is and should be consider very serious, it should be increased to level of master degree, combined with obligatory pedagogic competences, practical work and working experience in specific field as well as well established and developed relations with companies. Only education with such components could be considered to give all required knowledges and practical experience of student and could answer on requirements of the labour market.

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