Dual higher education piloting in the Republic of Moldova: challenges and perspectives

Presented by:
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COOPERERA “Integrating Dual Higher Education in Moldova and Ukraine”

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COOPERERA is following the overarching aim to integrate DHE in the Partner countries in general, and to improve individual employability and development, increase suitability and continuity between the demands of the professional world and the initial training of university students, and achieve of greater economic efficiency and social integration, in particular.
COOPERA PROJECT SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

To identify needs and specific requirements of companies in different industrial sectors and businesses for DHE and to find companies willing to participate in pilot implementations of DHE during the project.

To develop a flexible and generic DHEM to support different needs and interests of employers, HEIs and students in different industrial and business sectors and to provide recommendations to HEIs for implementation of DHE.

To test the specific DHE models generated from the developed generic DHEM, by realizing their pilot implementations during the project and to analyse achieved results.

To propose changes to legislation/regulations to adapt DHE in the Partner countries.
COOPERERA PROJECT PARTNERS:

**MOLDOVA**
- Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Technical University of Moldova, Free International University of Moldova
- Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova

**UKRAINE**
- State University ‘Uzhhorod National University’, KROK University, V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Odessa National Economic University
- Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine

**EU**
- Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University (Stuttgart/GERMANY), University of Lleida (Lleida/SPAIN), Varna University of Management (Varna/ BULGARIA), Akademia WSB (Dabrowa Gornicza/ POLAND), European Policy Development and Research Institute (Maribor, SLOVENIA)
The empirical research was conducted through a questionnaire sent to respondents from both countries. The survey was conducted online between August and September 2021. The research was attended by top management representatives from 27 organizations in the Republic of Moldova and 32 companies in Ukraine. The selection of the organizations was made by the higher education institutions participating in the COOPERERA project.
SOURCES USED TO RECRUIT SPECIALISTS WITH HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE ANALYSED COMPANY

![Bar chart showing sources of recruitment for specialists with higher education in the analysed company in the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.](image)
OCCUPATIONS, WHICH WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO BE PREPARED THROUGH DUAL EDUCATION, REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AND UKRAINE
ASEM has chosen to redesign and pilot as Dual the existing bachelor study programs:

**Business and Administration (BA) and Applied Informatics (AI).**

This decision is based on several considerations:

- First of all, students studying in these specialties can do in-company training in companies in any field and of any size;
- Another important moment is the fact that there is a high demand for these specialties, with a significant number of students enrolled annually;
- International statistics show that in the countries where DHE is implemented, the most requested study programs offered in a dual way are in the field of BA and IT;
- The study on companies needs for DHE, carried out within the COOPERA project, showed clearly that organizations from the Republic of Moldova are ready to work with higher education institutions to train IT specialists - 64%, engineers - 36%, managers - 32%, accountants - 31.82%, etc.
Form of training within the enterprise of future specialists

In international practice, there are several forms of training:

- **Daily** (the study period at the university alternates during the day with the activity within the company or students work in companies in the evening or at the weekend);

- **Weekly** (rotation between the study period (e.g. 3 days per week) and the activity within the enterprise (e.g. 2 days per week);

- **Monthly** (succeeding university studies during several weeks or a month with the same period spent in the economic agent);

- **Modular** (the duration of the studies is divided into modules: studies in the university and at the economic agent, which follow each other (e.g. 2 months at the institution then 2 months at the company).

The distribution of training hours (theoretical and practical) in the ASEM and at the economic agent will be organized according to a **modular form of training**. This means that each semester will be divided into two parts. The first part will include the theoretical training of students, which will take place within ASEM and will last about 2 months (depending on the semester and year of study).
Following consultations with company representatives, it was decided to choose the following training model: **60% of the total number of study hours will be spent at the institution, 40% at the company.**

### Distribution of training hours in the university and at the dual partner economic agent, from the total number of study hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Semester I</th>
<th>Semester II</th>
<th>Semester III</th>
<th>Semester IV</th>
<th>Semester V</th>
<th>Semester VI</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hours</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>hours</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>hours</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study in the university</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>456</td>
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<td></td>
<td>564</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>3107</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-company training study</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>444</td>
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<td></td>
<td>336</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>2353</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>900</td>
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<td>900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Integration of the study program into the structure of the higher education institution

The integration of the study program into the structure of the higher education institution can be achieved according to two types:

- integrated into existing programs;
- independent program.

An integrated model in the existing program was chosen for ASEM. This implies that for students who study dually, there are no separate subdivisions in the organizational structure of ASEM.

For example, at ASEM at the specialty Business and Administration will be separate groups, which will study both dual and non-dual way.
Now, we have a group of **17 students in Business and Administration**, who are in professional training within **5 companies** and a group in **Applied Informatics**, consisting of **17 students**, also assigned to **5 companies**.
Conclusions:

➢ there is an increased interest in dual education from both employers and students;
➢ students in dual groups show a higher level of discipline, responsibility and diligence, achieving better results in their studies;
➢ however, there is a confusion of the notion of dual education with production practice, which causes wrong perceptions about the role of companies in DHE;
➢ legislative regulations are needed for dual education in higher education institutions; certain fiscal facilities must be provided for partner companies in DHE;
➢ in higher education institutions there must be persons responsible for DHE and cooperation with companies;
➢ considerable efforts are needed to prepare teachers for teaching in dual format;
➢ it is necessary to create a closer cooperation between university mentors and companies.

This form of preparation is not a simple one and requires significant efforts on the part of all actors involved: the educational institution, the economic agents and the student. But we strongly believe that these efforts will later materialize into more benefits for all stakeholders.
Thank you for your attention!