

STUDY ON THE ADVANTAGES OF DUAL EDUCATION FOR ROMANIA

PLEȘCA CLEOPATRA^{1*}, VASS HUNOR¹, NAN ANCA¹, ORBOI DORA¹,
MATEOC- SÎRB NICOLETA¹

¹*Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania" from Timisoara, Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism*

*Corresponding author's e-mail: jita.cleopatra@yahoo.it

Abstract: Professional experience has become increasingly sought after by employers, which has led to the implementation of a vocational education system that meets the requirements of entering the labor market of graduates. The paper's primary purpose is to highlight the advantages of the dual education system both for students and partner economic organizations. The reforms carried out by the Ministry of Education for dual education and the proposed ones actively participate in supporting and developing an accessible and attractive education system for Romania.

Key words: dual education, advantages, Romania

INTRODUCTION

Professional experience is increasingly sought after and appreciated by employers, so its lack is imperative for those looking for a job. Many of them face the problem of employment due to a lack of professional experience.

Initial and continuing vocational education and training have in common the dual objective of contributing to employment and economic growth and addressing broader societal challenges, particularly the promotion of social cohesion. [1]

According to UNESCO, education and training are "tools both for the full development of a person and for the participation of that person in social life." Therefore, they are decisive factors in achieving employment results, especially among young people, providing appropriate skills and attitudes in employee training. Apprenticeship programs have been shown to have a significant impact on the employment rate. Youth employment is one of the main reasons for the low levels of youth unemployment in some European countries.[2]

According to UNESCO, "the dual education system is called 'dual' because it combines apprenticeship in a company and vocational education in a vocational school in a single course" [3]

According to Cedefop, dual education refers to "periods when learning or training in an educational institution or training center combined with learning or training in the workplace" [4]

In Cedefop's opinion, "dual education" can be synonymous with "on-the-job learning," "work-study training," "apprenticeship programs."

The expansion of vocational education in a dual system can solve the problem of lack of specialized staff and at the same time lead to a decrease in the unemployment rate among young graduates.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In 2012, vocational education was reintroduced. Considering the educational models from Germany, Austria, Belgium, and the participation of several German companies, in 2016 by GEO no. 81/2016 with the amendments brought by law no. 82 / 30.03.2018 approving GEO no. 81 / 2016, the dual model is implemented in vocational schools in Romania.

The current scientific paper highlights the advantages of implementing the dual education system in Romania, using it as a reference period 2016-2020. In the research conducted, the authors used various sources of information and the following research methods: data collection, data analysis, interpretation of data.

RESEARCH RESULTS

According to the National Qualification Criteria (NQC), dual education as a form of organization of vocational education is organized for level three professional qualifications [5]

Despite the intense interest shown by enterprises, dual education can be considered rather unattractive for students. Moreover, student retention in partner companies is complex, and their financial investments are high.[10]

In this regard, according to the "National Recovery and Resilience Plan," or established investments and in the social infrastructure (dormitories, canteens, learning spaces) to serve dual vocational education as well as the creation of support schemes provided to partners between economic agents, academic units and institutions, territorial administrative units, and chamber of commerce or others social partners to facilitate the purchase of equipment and staff training in order to organize educational activities in a dual regime [12, 16]. Support measures are also being considered to facilitate the access of disadvantaged young people to vocational training programs, including in dual-mode [6, 8]

The dual education system involves the collaboration of several actors. The term "dual" suggests the involvement of two training places, the theoretical part being carried out within the school and the practical part being carried out within the company. Therefore, three major actors participate in dual education: students, school, and company. In this approach, they are joined by the local authority in the administration of which the school is, being responsible for the theoretical training of the students. [7]

The dual education system has multiple advantages for both students and companies. (Table 1.)

Table 1.

Advantages of dual vocational education

Benefits for students	Benefits for the company
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - job at graduation offered by economic agents; -acquiring early experience concerning a potential job; -professional scholarships offered by the state; - scholarship offered by the economic agent; -increasing the quality of vocational training through students' access to technological resources; -increasing interest in learning and motivation for work; -place safety after graduation; -free meals and accommodation in fireplaces and boarding schools; - reimbursement of transportation expenses for students studying in another locality than their home; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -direct possibility of involvement in training young people for employment; -fiscal facilities offered to companies, respectively of the expenses made by the economic agents for the organization of the dual vocational education; -possibility of participation of economic operators in the decision-making process, by the presence in the board of directors (CA) of their representatives; -increased involvement of companies in the selection process of students; -possibility of forming classes with a smaller number of students (classes with a minimum of 20 students and a maximum of 30 students; the possibility of participating in a class of three distinct groups of qualifications); -inclusion in the schooling plan of the requests of the economic agents for the dual vocational education;

Source: National Center for the Development of Vocational and Technical Education [1]

The introduction of dual education in Romania was not exactly easy because the first schools with whom it was discussed just wanted a contract signed for practice, no more.[11] The pioneering dual education in Romania was placed in Timișoara, the Technical High School "King Ferdinand I" being the first to understand the concept and formed a class of 17 students for this type of education, having as a partner the Continental company. [9, 15]

In the school year 2017-2018 were included on the Romanian territory, dual education in 64 schools in 103 classes at the beginning of the cycle (ninth grade), 2568 students, and 227 economic operators. (Figure 1.) [10]

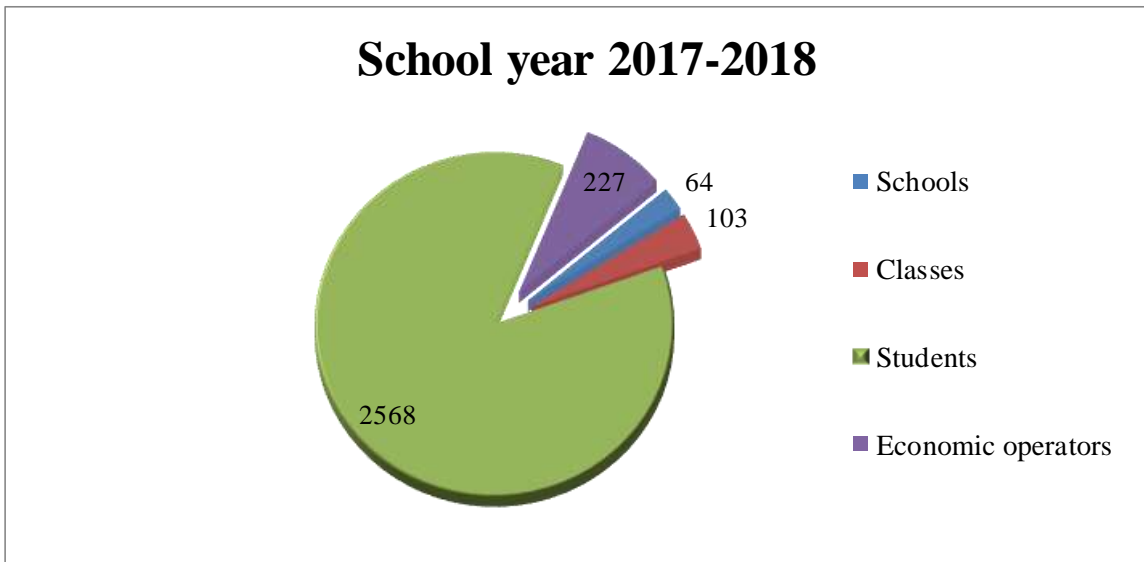


Figure 1. School year 2017-2018

Source: National Center for the Development of Vocational and Technical Education [1]

In the 2018-2019 school year, according to the schooling plan, 121 schools were closed, 203 starting classes (9th grade), 4110 students, and 452 economic operators. (Figure 2.) [10]

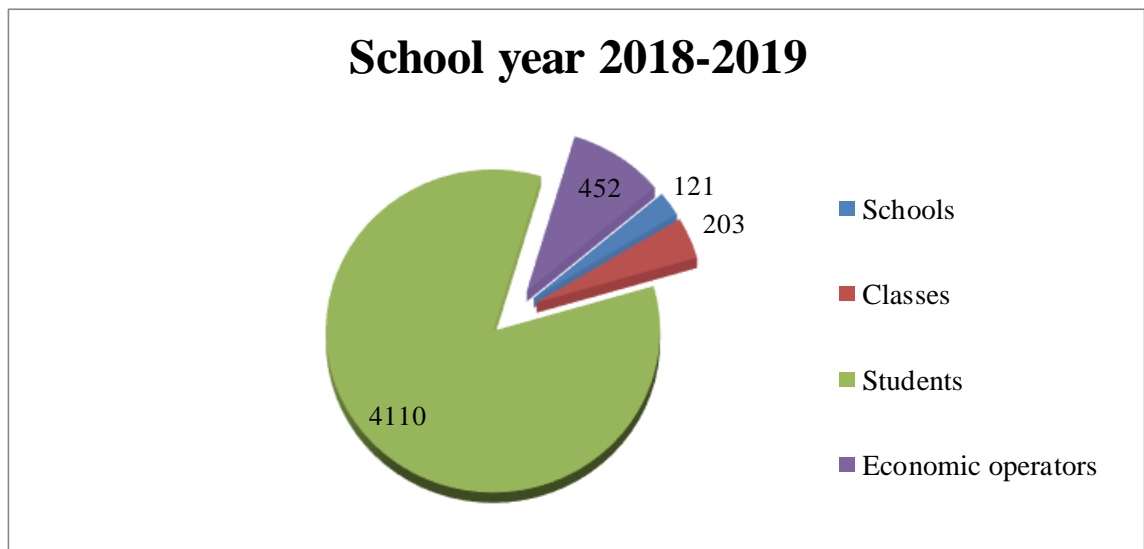


Figure 2. School year 2018-2019

Source: National Center for the Development of Vocational and Technical Education [1]

According to the information provided at the "EduPro Summit # 1- Future Educator" Conference, for the 2020-2021 school year, dual education in Romania has the following composition: 128 schools, 164 beginning classes (ninth grade), 4200 students, and 300 economic operators. (Figure 3.)

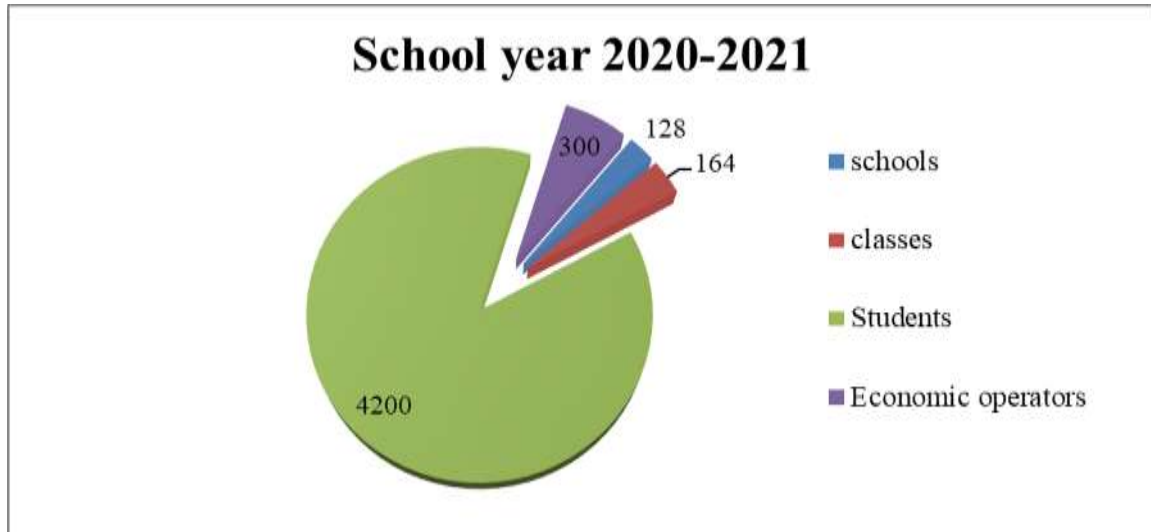


Figure 3. School year 2020-2021

Source: EduPro Summit # 1- Future educator [14]

With the participation of the Ministry of National Education regarding the reforms in education and training, in recent years, there has been an increase in interest in participating in dual vocational education.[11] The objective of the reforms in education and training is to ensure an education adapted to the requirements of the labor market and focused on personal and social development.[14]

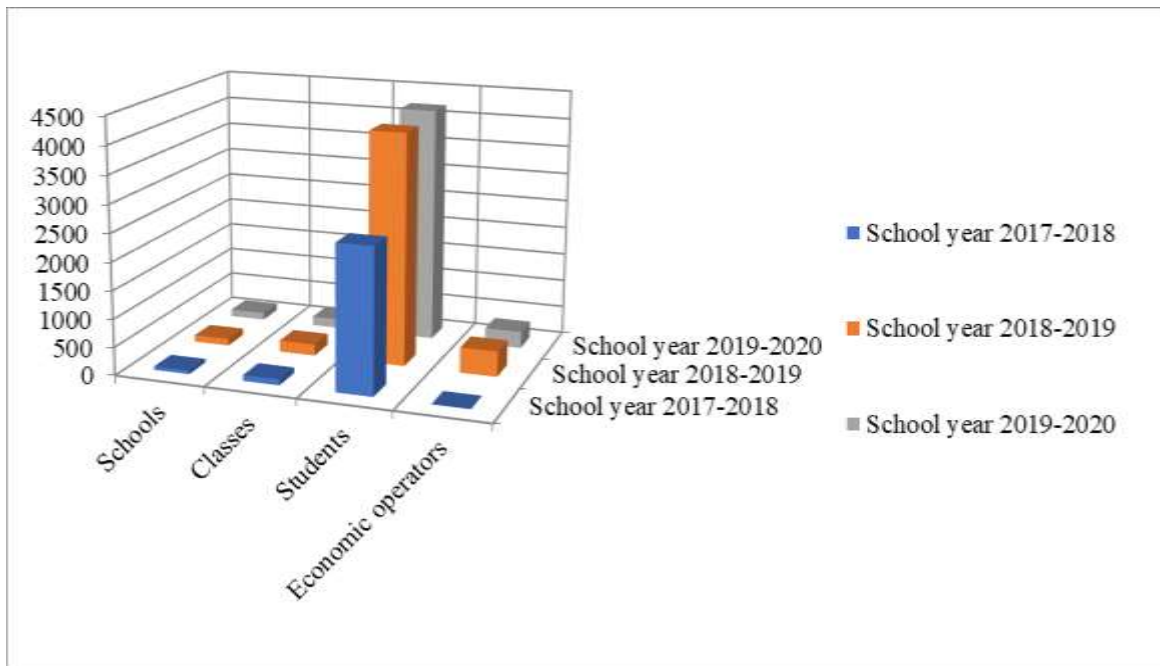


Figure 4. School years 2017-2020

Source: Own processing

CONCLUSIONS

Education and training have a fundamental role to play in creating and developing a skills-based society. Dual education offers students enrolled in a state vocational school the opportunity to train their practical knowledge in a real work environment provided by partner companies, to become familiar with the work environment directly in the company that needs the student's skills, which is an essential asset at the beginning of professional life. This type of education is a viable alternative to classical education.[12]

The advantages of vocational education in a dual system, compared to those of classical education, are of particular interest to participants and companies.

Due to this fact, in recent years, there has been an increase in the number of students enrolled in the vocational training program and also a significant increase in the number of schools and financial companies participating in the vocational training process of students in dual education.[13]

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