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## The Evaluation of Training Programs in Qualifications for the Automobile Industry in Romania

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### Abstract

School is the place where destinies are built. It depends on teachers whether these destinies will be built on the aspirations of the educated ones. One can hear more and more important actors of Romanian public life, but also ordinary citizens expressing their dissatisfaction with the results of the Romanian school. The goal is to have competent graduates, able to respond successfully to the requirements of the profession for which they have been prepared who are able to quickly integrate in the labour market. Before accomplishing these objectives, we must understand that any improvement in the quality of training involves an amount of changes in technical education. From this perspective, this paper presents a study on some training programs for pre-university education in Romania, for the qualifications required by employers in the automobile industry. Based on the research results, the authors propose a number of amendments for vocational training standards and curriculum documents, supposed to meet the expectations of the business environment, to facilitate a better mobility of graduates and to ensure a minimum level of knowledge required for further studies in higher education.

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## 1. Introduction

By acting on the only inexhaustible resource - the human factor, training is becoming increasingly important to society. In the last decade, the demands of the labour market have multiplied and diversified at a quick pace and the technical education will have to respond to these changes, at any level, through a series of transformations and adaptations regarding short-term, medium and long-term future.

The national report on the implementation of "The strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ET 2020" conducted by the Institute of Education Sciences emphasized that educational institutions:

- are not sufficiently oriented towards knowledge and understanding of labour market signals;
- do not encourage enough activities of information, awareness, career guidance;
- do not provide enough partnerships with local authorities and companies in order to facilitate the transition from school to work [1].

The impact of education and training quality on the society can be followed both through the degree to which it meets the needs of local communities and population, at national, European or world level, but also through ways of interacting with the interested factors in order to improve the correspondence between demand and offer.

For this reason, we intend to carry out a research to identify needs and solutions to adapt training programs as a response to employers' needs and technological developments in the automobile industry. We considered that the human resource in this sector has a significant share among the employed population and the quality of initial, continuous training is strongly affected by the ability of programs suppliers to follow technical progress in the automobile industry.

Furthermore, the effects of globalization in this sector are considerable, including the occupational and geographical mobility of labour force. In this context, the employees of automobile industry and related industrial activities have to integrate and adapt rapidly to their new jobs.

## 2. Research objectives:

The research described in this article followed a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the current vocational training standards and curriculum documents for two training programs in Level 3 and 4 qualifications (as classified by CNAC) or "auto mechanic" and "auto electrician-electronics technician". We aimed this research to lead us to proposals for reviewing and correlating, horizontally and vertically, with other training programs.

The objectives were:

- to identify those human resource training needs in the automobile industry that are inadequately covered by the curriculum content of the programs offered by vocational and technical education in Romania;
- to identify curricular aspects of training programs, similar in Romania and in other countries, which require harmonization and correlation;
- to propose reviewing the speciality curriculum of the two qualifications, which made the object of our research.

Through these objectives, the research aligns to the following directions recommended by the European Commission and transmitted through the Communication from November 2012, entitled "Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes" [2]:

- developing vocational and technical education worldwide in order to increase the quality of services;
- promoting partnerships between public and private institutions (to ensure that appropriate educational programs and competences are being offered).

The partnerships between training institutions and private companies can be promoted by creating and updating a specialized information data base, usable in pre-university and university education.

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