



## PRESS RELEASE

**An innovative international cooperation pathway for vocational training in the agrifood sector. The new Albanian Professional Training Framework Curriculum in Agrifood starts, thanks to the cooperation work between the Emilia-Romagna Region, the consortium of training organisations "Pema" (Ifoa, Aeca and Serinar), Arter, the Italian Cooperation, the Italian Embassy in Tirana, the Agency for Professional Training NAVETQ and the Albanian Ministry of Economy and Finance**

**Bologna, 28 July 2022**

The validation meeting of the **new Albanian agricultural vocational training framework curriculum** (level 2 of the National Qualification Framework corresponding to the European EQF2 level) took place on 28 July in Bologna at Arter.

The meeting represented the final moment of validation by a commission of teachers and experts from the agricultural institutes of the Emilia-Romagna Region of the process of revising the occupational and qualification standards, as well as the framework curriculum for the training and profession of agricultural technician in the Albanian vocational training system.

The Commission of experts was composed of: Prof. Massimiliano Urbinati and Prof. Stefano Giatti (Vergani Navarra School of Ferrara), Prof. Luciana Cino, Prof. Valentina Sallustio and Prof. Federico Corbara (Garibaldi-D Vinci School of Cesena), D.ssa Silvia Bagnari (Aeca).

Also present at the meeting were: Alqi Mustafai (Deputy Director Navetq); Lorenzo Ciapetti (project leader 'pema'); Anna Lucia Corfiati (Arter); Arsonela Sorra (Ifoa).

This result represents an important step in the collaboration process between the Italian cooperation in Albania and the Albanian vocational training system and takes place in the context of the "Vet through innovation" project, which, within an intergovernmental agreement between Italy and Albania, envisages technical assistance by a consortium of vocational training institutions, Arter, the Vergani-Navarra school of Ferrara and the Garibaldi-Da Vinci school of Cesena, under the coordination of the Emilia-Romagna Region.

"The project, among its various technical assistance activities," as project leader Lorenzo Ciapetti recalls, "has been charged with accompanying the National Agency for Vocational Training and Qualifications NAVETQ in a series of steps to update the standards and curricula of vocational training in agriculture. In this sense, we are projecting the entire system of agrarian skills from Emilia-Romagna into the heart of the reform of professional skills in Albania and in perspective in the entire area of the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-region, in a crucial phase for the future of skills in the agrarian and agri-food sector, especially for countries in negotiation for EU membership such as Albania".

These activities to revise national qualifications will allow the achievement of the project's main objective of developing a multifunctional agricultural training centre at the Rakip Kryeziu School in Fier, 100 kilometres from Tirana, located in the agricultural 'heart' of Albania.



The revision process supported by the Emilia-Romagna Region through the 'Vet through innovation' project, promoted by the Italian Cooperation, was carried out through a three-level work that involved a commission of Albanian experts from the main agricultural vocational training schools and the University of Agriculture in Tirana. The work led to the revision of the standards of the agricultural profession; revision of the professional qualifications for agricultural training; revision of the second-level framework curriculum (two-year initial vocational training course in agriculture).

The launch of the new vocational training curriculum in agricultural education in Albania comes after the official alignment in November 2021 between the European Qualifications System (EQF) and the Albanian one, paving the way for vocational skills development actions that ensure mutual recognition.

The consortium of training organisations that sees Ifoa alongside Aeca and Serinar in technical assistance activities recognises that the new curriculum represents a further step in aligning the Albanian qualification system with that of the European Union and paves the way for various forms of collaboration for vocational training in the agrifood sector.

In fact, the technical assistance action guaranteed by the Emilia-Romagna secondary and vocational training system takes place within the framework of a consolidated and profitable system of trade relations in the agro-industrial sphere between Italy and Albania and with further prospects of investment in Albanian agriculture, which represents 17% of the national GDP and almost 40% of the employed workforce.

The importance of close ties with Italy in the field of agricultural vocational training is also recognised in a recent communication signed by the Director General of the Emilia-Romagna Region, Francesco Frieri, addressed to the Albanian Ministry of Economy and Finance, which is responsible for training reform, in which it is acknowledged that 'having updated the agricultural curriculum with elements of innovation in both subjects and methodologies, we believe that there is now an opportunity, in the wake of the *Illyria Memorandum* signed by the Italian Embassy in Tirana and the Albanian Government, to allow future students of Albanian technical-professional agrarian education to include a language choice, such as Italian as first foreign language, in the general culture part of the curriculum, allowing them to take advantage of the strength of the exchange of knowledge and trade relations between the Emilia-Romagna Region and Albania".

The work of the 'vet through innovation' project will continue in the coming months until the end of 2023 with the aim of strengthening the framework of agricultural skills in Albania also at the post-secondary level, working on synergies between the Albanian agricultural system and the skills of the Emilia-Romagna agrifood ecosystem.