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As an Urban Public Policy Analysis: The Relation Between Vocational Education and Training (VET), and Municipalities

Bir Kentsel Kamu Politikası Analizi Olarak: Mesleki Eğitim ve Öğretim
(MEÖ) ile Belediyeler Arasındaki İlişki

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ÖZET

Bireylerin çağın gereklerine uygun bilgi, beceri ve yeterliliklere sahip olması sürdürülebilir sosyal ve ekonomik kalkınma için günümüzün en temel gerekliliklerinden biridir. Mesleki eğitim ve öğretim (MEÖ), kentsel büyümenin yanı sıra ülkelerin sosyal ve ekonomik gelişmişlik düzeylerini belirleyen önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Genel olarak mesleki eğitim, ulusal hükümetin işi olarak kabul edilmektedir, ancak doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak kentsel kamu politikasıyla da bağlantılıdır. Kentsel kamu politikası, yalnızca kent alanlarını, ekonomik yapıyı yönetmeyi değil, aynı zamanda kentsel gelişmeyi, kentsel büyümeyi ve sakinlerin refahını artırmayı da amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışmanın odak noktası mesleki eğitim ve öğretim (MEÖ) ile yerel yönetimler arasındaki ilişkiyi kentsel kamu politikası ve uygulama araçları açısından araştırmaktır. Çalışma, kentsel meslek politikasının, işletmelerin insan kaynakları kapasitelerini artırma açısından kentsel ekonominin yapısına da katkıda bulunduğunu iddia etmektedir. Dolayısıyla mesleki eğitim, bireylerin, işletmelerin gelişimini ve kentsel büyüme potansiyelini doğrudan etkiler. Bunu açıklığa kavuşturmak için planlar, raporlar, kent meclisi kararları vb. ikincil veri kaynaklarından yararlanılmıştır. İkincisi,

mesleki eğitim kırılgan grupların istihdama katılımını sağlamak, becerilerini geliştirmek için kullanılır ve şehir ekonomisinde faaliyet gösteren iş dünyasının ihtiyaç duyduğu nitelikli eleman ihtiyacının karşılanmasına katkıda bulunmaktadır. Üçüncüsü, belediyeler ulusal ve uluslararası projelerin desteğiyle mesleki eğitim programları yürütmektedir. Ayrıca, belediyelerin eğitim merkezlerinin fiziksel kapasitesini artıran ve faaliyetlerin maliyetlerini karşılayan proje finansmanından da belediyeler yararlanılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kentsel kamu politikası, yerel yönetimler, mesleki ve teknik eğitim, kentsel büyüme

ABSTRACT

It is one of the most basic requirements of today for sustainable social and economic development that individuals have the knowledge, skills and competencies appropriate to the requirements of the age. Vocational education and training (VET) is an important role that determine social and economic development levels of countries as well as urban growth. In general, vocational education is considered a work of the national government, but it is directly or indirectly linked with urban public policy too. Urban public policy aims not only to manage cities spaces, economics structure but also it purposes to enhance urban development, urban growth and resident welfare. The central focus of this study is to investigate the relationship between vocational education and training (VET) and local governments in terms of urban public policy and implementation tools. The study claims that urban vocational policy also contributes to the structure of urban economics in terms of boosting enterprises' human resource capacities. Therefore, vocational education directly affects the development of individuals, businesses, and urban growth potential. In order to clarify that, I benefit from secondary data resources, including plans, reports, urban parliament decisions, etc. The study reached three conclusions, as follows: Firstly, vocational education is an urban policy implementation tool that is considered based on the social municipality's approach. Secondly, it is used to improve vulnerable groups' skills to ensure employment participation, and It contributes to fulfilling the needs of qualified personnel required by the business world operating in urban economics. Thirdly, municipalities have conducted vocational education and training programs with the support of national and international projects. Moreover, the municipalities have benefited from the project funding, which increases the physical capacity of the municipalities' education centres and covers the costs of the activities..

Keywords: Urban public policy, local government, vocational education and training, urban growth

1. Introduction

Education is an apparatus which contributes to change social structure. The role of education in social change is discussed from different perspective in the literature. On the one hand, it is considered a component of economic, social, and technological developments, and it is evaluated as creating a new social order in terms of a reconstructionist approach. Education, on the other hand, is directly related to preserving the continuity of the existing order as a

component of the existing social, economic, and political order within contradictory ways (Eskicumalı, 2002: 109 - 125).

Within public policy aspect, education raises people's incomes by improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities. It also helps the economy grow and is the most important factor in maintaining peace and order in society. From this point on, policymakers are planning and formulating education policy throughout the country. For instance, during the establishing modern Türkiye, the education was primarily taken into consideration to create a new society. To do that, Türkiye has succeeded in changing the educational institution's structure, which derives from the Ottoman Empire, and formulating a new educational law (Alkan, 2009; Eskicumalı, 2002; Gül, 2015; Karpat, 2006; Sidney, 2007; Yıldız & Sobacı, 2013).

This study's aim is not to assess the education as a way of historical and theoretical. But instead, this research main goal is to investigate the relationship relation between vocational education and training, and municipalities. In order to explain this relationship, this study asks the following questions:

What is the role of municipalities in vocational education and training?

What laws and regulations facilitate to do vocational education and training?

Which organizational structure is involved in these educational activities?

What kind of collaborations can municipalities develop?

What kind of policy tools can municipalities use to realize to vocational education and training?

In this study, I take a glance at the vocational education and training (VET) systems in Türkiye to try to answer these questions. First of all, Türkiye's educational system consists of three components: informal learning, formal education, and non-formal learning. Additionally, education system in Türkiye, it basically consists of five stages as preschool, primary education (primary and secondary school), secondary education and higher education (T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2019: 16).

Historically, vocational education and training were conducted in Türkiye through traditional methods by craftsmen and tradesmen from the 12th century to the end of the 18th century. Since the Ottoman Empire, vocational education had been passed down from generation to generation within the Ahi Systems. As of the 1860s, vocational and art schools, which were considered as formal education institutions, were put into practice. With the

establishment of the Republic, vocational and technical education was adopted as a state policy. The Ministry of National Education was established in 1927 and its vocational education directorate was established in 1933. During the second decade, vocational schools were ruled by the national government, and the state tried to educate the labour force by supporting vocational courses. From the 1960s, it is observed that practical art schools were opened to labour forces, which had completed primary education, as well as vocational education. By the way, vocational high school, which are attended after 5 years of primary school and whose education period is 5 years, were opened. In the 1970s, technical high school with a 4-year education period were included in the education system. Additionally, with the Law No. 2089 enacted in 1977, apprenticeship training was included in the vocational education system. By the Law no. 3038 enacted in 1986, apprenticeship training systems had arranged in a system integrity (Akpınar, 2004; Ezer, 2020: 145; Karakok, 2011: 90-97; Çırak, Kalfa ve Ustalık Kanunu, 1977; T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2019: 17).

Vocational education and training is the process of learning a vocation via the acquisition of the required information and skills. This procedure dates back to the earliest stages of human history. In the broadest sense, vocational education is defined as a balanced development process with sensory, mental, and socioeconomic components that include gaining the requisite knowledge, abilities, behaviours, and habits for the performance of a life-sustaining career (Uçar & Özerbaş, 2013: 242; Uysal et al., 2002: 300). Vocational and technical education aims to train an innovative, entrepreneurial, productive, and competent workforce that adds value to the economy, with national and international professional competence, professional ethics, and professional values in cooperation with the social and economic sectors. In other way, (T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2018: 15). Vocational education and training (VET) can be a key part of getting young people ready for work, improving the skills of adults, and meeting the needs of the economy in the workforce (OECD, 2010).

In particular, the research is structured as a case study, which is an approach to research that concentrates on gaining an understanding of a certain social issue through the perspective of an instrumental case study (Creswell, 2015; Glesne, 2016; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). In this sense, secondary data resources such as reports, literature, development, and strategy plans were used during the study. A paradigm for selective coding that was created by Strauss was used to do the coding of the data. Following the event, MAXQDA

2022 Pro was utilized to carry out the data analysis (Kuckartz, 2015; Strauss, 2003, s.32).

The framework of this research was comprised of three chapters, which are as follows: In the first part of this chapter, I analysed the relationship between municipalities and vocational education and training. In the second part of the study, municipalities have conducted vocational education activities with the support of national and international projects. At the end of the study, municipalities' vocational education and training programs were evaluated in terms of institutional capacity and activities, financial funding, and target group. In order to answer the questions, which are mentioned above, the research was adopted as a multiple and instrumental case study pattern and was constructed using a qualitative research methodological approach.

2. The Relationship Between Municipalities and Vocational Education and Training: As an urban policy implementation

In general, local governments are primarily responsible for social and economic development. Local governments play a crucial role in addressing local concerns and providing urban services to inhabitants. As mentioned that municipalities are admitted the closest administrative units to the public. In Türkiye, local governments are regulated by legal and administrative decisions such as the Constitution, laws, etc. Whole activities and responsibilities of the municipalities are determined by national parliament and local parliaments regulations. The subject of urban development is comprised of policies and practices that aim to improve the social and economic well-being of a city's residents, in addition to the city's physical development. Urban development's process is defined by urban's spatial planning and urban policy implementations (Eraydın, 2006: 38; Keleş, 2016: 147; Yaman, 2021).

With the urbanization process, cities have various and serious problems, which affect the residents' social welfare. The activities of local governments are diversifying and expanding into many urban realms. In addition to traditional municipal services such as infrastructure, they provide such, cultural, and educational activities (Girard, 2018; Toprak & Şataf, 2017). Municipalities are set up to meet the needs of the people who live in a city, as decided by the voters in that city, and have their own administrative and financial power. In the Municipality Law No. 5393, Everyone is a citizen of the town in which he resides. Townsmen should be able to take part in municipal services and decision-making, get information about what the

government is doing, and get help from the government According to Law No. 5393, urban infrastructure (construction, water and sewage, transportation, etc.), geographical and urban information systems, environmental management, waste management, police, fire departments, emergency assistance, rescue, and ambulance services, city traffic, burial and cemeteries, trees, parking, and green areas, housing, culture and art, tourism and promotion, youth and sports, social services and assistance, marriage, occupation and employment, and development of the economy and trade are among the duties and responsibilities of municipalities (Bayraktar, 2019; Büyükşehir Belediye Kanunu, 2004; Belediye Kanunu, 2005; T.C. Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2014: 14).

According to Law No. 5393, municipalities will be able to do the following: take part in all kinds of activities and projects to meet the common needs of the town's residents. Municipalities has many implementation tools in related to education. The law permits to put educational activities on as follows:

Municipalities can open pre-school educational institutions,

It contributes to build state schools at all levels and carry out the maintenance of and repairs. Additionally, municipalities provide schools with all the equipment and supplied what they need, etc.

Municipalities either do infrastructure work for the provision of utilities like water, sewage, and electricity for free or with interest-free loans that can be paid back in up to ten years.

In order to increase municipalities capacity, it employs personnel and experts in the fields of training and consultancy.

Municipalities provide vocational and skills training (Büyükşehir Belediye Kanunu, 2004; Belediye Kanunu, 2005).

Municipalities are also able to collaborate with local, national, and international organizations in order to carry out activities connected to the training described above. According to Vocational and Technical Training Strategy Document and Action Plan 2014- 2018, national government plans to develop collaboration with local government and support vocational education and training by the local governments (Belediye Kanunu, 2005; T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2019).

Municipalities have carried out joint projects in cooperation “Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR), Development Agency, Social Support Program (SODES)”. For instance, Ankara Metropolitan Municipality signed a protocol with Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) to support cooking, clothing and trikotaj trainees (Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2015). Konya Metropolitan Municipality has performed vocational education and training (VET), personal development courses based on long life learning programme since 2004 (T.C. Konya Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2023). According to Girard, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Art and Vocational Training Courses (Istanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi sanat ve meslek eğitimi kursları, ISMEK) is a significant implementation tool in related to vocational education. ISMEK was established in 1996 and it was described as the “largest public university in Türkiye “. Furthermore, ISMEK provides training in accordance with Law No. 5216, which establishes metropolitan municipalities' responsibilities for social and cultural services for adults, women, youth, the elderly, and the disabled, in collaboration with universities, faculties, public foundations, and non-governmental organizations (Girard, 2018: 131). The Union of Municipalities of Türkiye conducted a technical assistance project, called ISKEPROJECT, that was supported by the European Union, and implemented in 12 municipalities that were selected for the service model developed for the social integration of disadvantaged people. The purpose of the operation is to contribute to the sustainable integration of the disadvantaged into the labour market by establishing a model for the coordination and implementation of employment and social support services (Baş, 2016).

As briefly mentioned above, local government has a crucial role to ensure urban development via vocational education activities. In particular, local governments have some implementation tools to realize vocational educational activity in their area; for example, they establish a vocational education centre. They can carry out vocational activities in cooperation with national or international organizations. All activities of municipalities provide vocational education and training in accordance with laws No. 5216 and 5393, which highlight the responsibilities of metropolitan municipalities for social and cultural services for adults, women, young people, the elderly, and the disabled, in cooperation with universities, faculties, public foundations, and non-governmental organizations (Girard, 2018; T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2019).

3. Municipalities Implementation Tools in Related to Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Vocational education and training equips the urban economics labour force with knowledge, skills, and competence that are related to the changing labour market. We know that cities are a main factor in supporting local and regional development, so cities play a key role in urban growth. In order to achieve sustainable urban growth, the urban area's human resources should have a qualified workforce (The European Commission, 2020: 3-10).

In terms of urban growth approach and urban public policy, the subject of the relationship between urban growth and vocational and training is also evaluated. Urban public policy investigates: who manages the city? Who's setting the city's agenda? These questions have various aspects, which are determined by the urban policy process. The urban policy process also expresses the social and economic development of a city's dwellers, including where they live, how they can reach urban services, and how they can compensate for the city's negative externalities such as poverty, crime, violence, etc. (Capello & Nijkamp, 2004; Lubell et al., 2009; Savaşkan & Çam, 2019: 145-150).

As discussed in literature, urban policy not only focuses on spatial issues or local political elections but also it consists of the discussion among social, economic and politic decision. In this sense, it has an impact on the wellbeing of the urban inhabitants (John, 2017: 44; Keleş, 2016). The wellbeing of urban residents is affected by the structure and performance of local government and the politics of decision-making and interest groups. The labour market, entrepreneurship, and qualified workforce are shaped by the structure and actors of local politics and economics (Storper et al., 2015: 24).

In developing countries, regional and urban development is seen as the broad process of industrialization, the spatial dynamics of population, and the features of economic activities. The common part of the two actors is about vocational education and training. According to Storper, urban development shapes the decisions of the forces, which are called firms and people. These two actors have different objectives: people follow jobs, and firms focus on profit maximization too (Storper, 2011: 338-339). The two parties share a common interest in vocational education and training. In addition, the function and scope of VET as an attractive and high-quality route to employment and life (The European Commission, 2020: 6)

4. Findings and Evaluation

Within the scope of the research, the secondary data was analysed via the MAXQDA program in terms of codes and categories. In order to investigate the data, the selective coding approach was used by selecting specific words such as "education,", "course,", and "vocational education" (Saldana, 2016; Strauss, 2003) Thereby, the selective coding that was created by Strauss was used to do the coding of the data in this study as follows:

Implementation tools: capacity building, personal development, and vocational education

Target group: employers, employees, producer, older, women, young, family, vulnerable groups (handicapped and immigrant)

Political approach: social, economic, and education

Cooperation: local, national, and international

Capacity: human resources, technical capacity, and physical recovery

Institutional: vocational centres, head of department, and branch office,

Legal: municipalities law, metropolitan municipality law, and 3308 (The Apprenticeship and Occupational Training Law)

Implementation ways: online or face to face.

The coding structure consists of 8 categories and 28 codes which was explored by using MAXQDA 2022 Pro. The aim of this study was to clarify several aspects of the relation between municipalities and vocational education and training in line with codes and categories. According to Creswell (2017), the purposeful sampling is facilitated to revealing similarities and differences of the phenomenon studied. I used purposeful sampling techniques, which is widely preferred in qualitative research. Figure 1 shows that I selected eleven municipalities (Adana, Izmir, Istanbul, Bursa, Ankara, Samsun, Mersin, Gaziantep, Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Mardin) for this study based on purposeful sampling. The metropolitan municipalities, located in each region of Türkiye, were included in the sampling group according to economic, political, social, and population features. Data were collected by analysing the strategic and activity plans of the municipalities using codes and categories. Additionally, the other secondary data was analysed such as development plans, national and international special reports, etc. to reveal the relation among municipalities and VET.

and social well-being. Izmir Metropolitan Municipality’s vocational education policy is based on a long-life learning programme. Samsun Metropolitan Municipality aims to contribute to women’s personal and vocational development by providing vocational education and training (Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2020; İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2020a; İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2020; Samsun Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2020)

The Relation Between VET and Municipalities

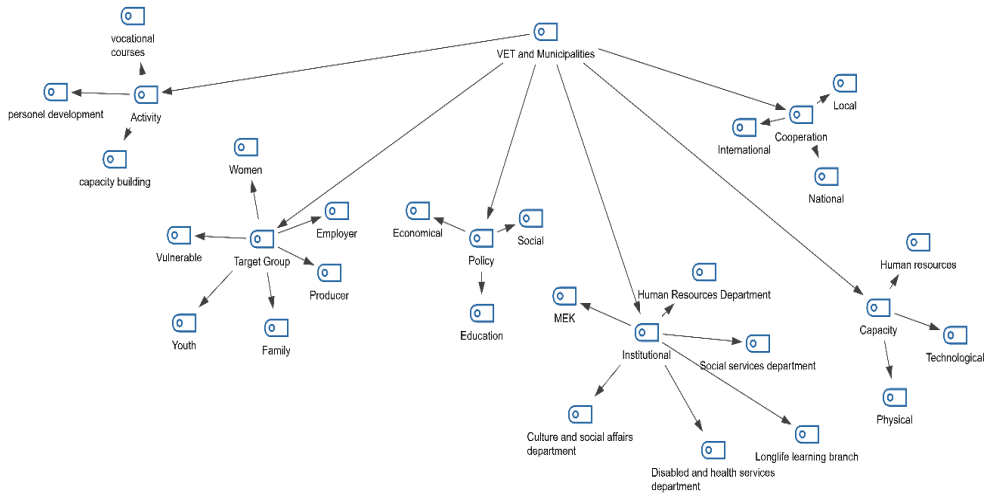


Figure 2: The relation Between Vocational Education and Training, and Municipalities

This research had provided additional evidence with respect to the municipalities’ target group. As seen in Figure 2, the municipalities studied generally have six target groups. Some group members were vulnerable people, such as immigrants and the disabled, while others are women, young people, and employees. For instance, the İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality agrees to prepare an online education program for the purpose of the professional development of disabled people. Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality’s goal is that a vocational education and training policy will be carried out to ensure that social aid beneficiaries can live without assistance. People gain the ability to survive independently in this manner (Gaziantep Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2020; İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2020a).

According to Law No. 5393, municipalities are responsible for meeting the common needs of their residents. To do that, each municipality has established different institutional organizations to carry out VET. In other

words, the municipalities organized their management structure into departments or branches for vocational education services. For instance, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality manages vocational education services depending on its human resources department. Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality conducts vocational education and training activities under the social services department as a vocational education branch. The Bursa Metropolitan Municipality has been organized as a long-life learning branch (Bursa Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2020; Diyarbakır Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2021; İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2020b).

An important finding to discovered in this study is that the municipalities have taken action vocational education projects with support from local, national, and international organization funding or cooperation. A well-known example of international cooperation is the Mersin Metropolitan Municipality's 13 joint projects with international organizations such as the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) which they supported with 406.117 euros and 895.000 dollars. In this regard, Mersin Metropolitan Municipality established a social cohesion center in cooperation with IOM UN Migration in order to give social assistance to Syrians Temporarily Under Protection (STUP). Additionally, Mersin Metropolitan Municipality established a vocational education and training center (MERCEK) with the support of the IOM (Mersin Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2021: 50-51) .

As part of a national-level collaboration, the municipalities perform joint projects with the support of the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR), development agency, and the Directorate General of Lifelong Learning, Ministry of National Education (Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2021; Gaziantep Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2021: 55; İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2021: 120) . The study illustrates that the municipalities benefited from the joint projects, which were supported by national and international organizations, in terms of the development of human resources and technological and physical capacity

5. In lieu of Conclusion

Throughout world history, we have witnessed the urbanization process that occurs via industrialization. Although the development of urbanization doesn't spread equally in all areas of the world, academia and policymakers admit that urbanization causes social and economic growth and prosperity. There is a key a variable called industrialization that it is fundamental to a deeper, more sophisticated process known as "modernization." Cities has composed by the interaction of industrialization and modernization process, and this process creates a prosperity. In other words, urbanization and growth go hand in hand.

In this regard, urbanization is an irreversible phenomenon because 75 percent of the world's population lives in cities. The concentration of the population in the city brings us two critical consequences, which is changing depend on time, place, and social relations. While the rapid urbanization process is considered a growth that ensures human development and reduces poverty, it is also expressed as causing inter-regional and inter-urban inequalities and an unfair distribution of investments. The effects of urbanization on social, economic, and political life are generally discussed in urban studies. In other ways, urban studies not only focuses on the effects of urbanization but also deeply investigates urban governments' management capabilities. So, the primary goal of municipalities is to mitigate the negative effects of urbanization while disseminating its positive outcomes.

In general, it seems that industry, services, and population are known as a driver of the city. As a consequence of this reality, the future of the drivers is affected by education. This paper argued that education is not only an apparatus to contribute to social structure changes but also, education is critical component of the urban growth as well as. This paper admit that education raises people's incomes by improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities. It also helps the economic growth and is the most important factor in maintaining peace and order in society. Specifically, the vocational education contributes to well-being of industry, services, and population who lives in cities. This paper argued that local governments are primarily responsible for social and economic development on behalf of their residents. Local governments play a crucial role in addressing local concerns and providing urban services to inhabitants. With the urbanization process, cities have various and serious problems, which affect the residents' social welfare. The activities of local governments are diversifying and expanding into many urban realms. In addition to traditional municipal services such as infrastructure, transportation. They also provide like cultural, and educational activities.

The municipalities' vocational education and training policy provided in accordance with Law No. 5216 and 5393. municipalities will be able to do the following: take part in all kinds of activities and projects to meet the needs of the town's residents. Municipalities have numerous educational implementation instruments. Municipalities can also work with local, national, and international organizations to carry out activities related to the vocational education and training (VET) mentioned above. Within the scope of the research, municipalities used the VET as an essential instrument to meet the needs of urban economics actors such as labour force, businesses, etc. They are using vocational training, personal development courses, and capacity building education as implementation tools. To carry out these activities, municipalities use face-to-face or online education techniques in order to increase access to VET. The study found that municipalities both contribute to urban growth and improve the well-being and welfare of their

citizens. To do that, the municipalities organized their management structure into departments or branches for vocational education services

An important finding to discovered in this study is that the municipalities have taken action vocational education projects with support from local, national, and international organization funding or cooperation. As part of a national-level collaboration, the municipalities perform joint projects with the support of the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR), The Union of Municipalities of Türkiye (TBB), development agencies, and the Directorate General of Lifelong Learning, Ministry of National Education. By the way, municipalities applied to international funds to improve their vocational education centers, create extra financial capacity, and develop a culture of doing business together. An another conclusion to revealed in this research is that the municipalities have taken action vocational education projects with support from international organizations such as the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

According to the initial research questions, it is now able to say that the study reached three conclusions, as follows: Firstly, vocational education is an urban policy implementation tool that is considered based on the social municipality's approach. Secondly, it is used to improve vulnerable groups' skills to ensure employment participation, and It contributes to fulfilling the needs of qualified personnel required by the business world operating in urban economics. Thirdly, municipalities have conducted vocational education and training programs with the support of national and international projects. Moreover, the municipalities have benefited from the project funding, which increases the physical capacity of the municipalities' education centres and covers the costs of the activities.

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