

# HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE TIMBER INDUSTRY, AN IMPORTANT FACTOR FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF KOSOVO

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## Abstract

Kosovo is relatively small place with 10870 km<sup>2</sup> where 42% of its territory is covered with trees. To date, Kosovo has passed through three important phases of economic development; the first phase was the emergency one after war, the second phase was privatization of social enterprises and the third phase was sustainable development. The after war period was very important for this sector because it has passed through a reconstruction process, privatization and development and become part of the internal and foreign markets.

Positive developments in the field of wood industry led to the number of work places offered in this field are increasing, also requirements for specialized workforce and qualification workers are increasing. This is the reason why today's study programs of wood industry are addressing these issues. One of the study programs that is applied in many European Universities and beyond in the wood program at Applied Technical Sciences Faculty in University of Prishtina. The Faculty of Applied Technical Sciences in Ferizaj is the only high institution in Republic of Kosovo, that for 35 years offers Kosovo's students, and widely, opportunity to study in wood industry.

Based on high expertise of this institution and the achieved results, together with experts of this industry, along with relevant Kosovo institution and private enterprises as well as in cooperation with western universities, the faculty presented a new study offer. This offer meets the highest contemporary needs and is compiled together with wood processing enterprises in Kosovo, and with Kosovo Wood Processing Association. Also this study project is fully equivalent with European Universities and is comparable to University of Applied Sciences Salzburg, Austria and University of Applied Sciences Rosenheim, Germany.

This curriculum offers students to built new competences, combining scientific and technological knowledge for industrial management, communication knowledge and creative work. Furthermore, during studies a special time will also devoted to building management competences as: project management, team work, etc. However, the scientific work and research methods, working with projects from the start of study, means that students not only that will study but they will also gain the ability for practical projects, and this fact makes these practical projects to be very complexes and more interdisciplinary in high study semesters.

Orientation of this curriculum in projects is focused in a way that the study process should be more closely with industrial practices and scientific analyses of all practical parts in economical context. The fact that Kosovo approximately has 42% of all area that are covered with trees represents a relatively good potential for development of this sector domestic market, and on the other side potential for exports of wood products. This sector can be very attractive for foreign investments and can generated new jobs.

Keywords: Wood industry, development, curriculum, forest.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Located in the heart of the Balkans, Kosovo represents a bridge between the several countries of South Eastern Europe. Through its unique geographical position and its liberal trade regime, Kosovo