



## English at the Workplace

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**Abstract:** Albania is made up of approximately 40.0 % of English speakers referring to the Institute of Statistics INSTAT May 2018. Referring to the same source it is considered the most spoken language followed by Italian language with 27, 8 % and Greek language with 22, 9 %. English language is turned into a necessity with the demands of the private companies and public administration in Albania. As such English is considered as the international business language. This study plans to identify the English language needs among Albanian adults working in government or government-related institutions or private companies. The study is based on the database of respondents from Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tirana. The aim is to analyze the current situation and the needs of the employees in order to help employers pay more attention to language trainings for their employees. The study is based in 4 main pillars such as: Demography, Self-assessment of English Language, English Skills within the Public Administration/ Private Companies and the Need for Improvement.

**Keywords:** English, Business Language, English Skills, Public Sector, Private Sector

### INTRODUCTION

In Albania English has become the language of professional communication. Not only as a means of communication, but also as a vehicle for pursuing a wide range of careers. The ability to communicate in English is a huge asset to many companies and organizations. Companies who conduct business internationally are likely to be engaging with people who speak English as a second language on a regular basis making the ability to use English in the workplace a very valuable skill. English is used daily despite not being the Albanians' native language. In Albania, although English is a foreign language, it is widely used among the private and government organizations. While in Albania there is a growing trend of employers in offering different trainings to the employees so to improve their professional skills, on the other hand there is an absence in understanding the needs of employees' English skills. To employees are not offered language skills training as in other training topics. Therefore this study aims to identify mainly the English language skills within the private and government organizations and the need for improvement.

### Research Objectives

This study aims to identify and answer the main following research questions:

#### Demography

- Gender of respondents
- Age of respondents
- Education of respondents
- Years of working experience

- Type of company/ organization
- Size of the company
- Nature of profession

### Self-assessment of English Language

- Experience in using English
- How important are English language skills in your organization?
- Your English language skills rating

### English Skills within the Public Administration/ Private Companies

- You generally use English
- How necessary are reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in your company/ organization?
- Does your company offer you language training?
- What benefits does your company/ organization offer to employees with good English?

### Need for Improvement

- What do you need to improve in your English language skills?
- In which area do you need to improve you English terminology?

### Research Design

In this study is used the quantitative method. Structured survey questionnaires is used to collect information from employees of public administration and different private companies based on the database of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tirana through Google survey form. The questionnaire is designed to mainly obtain information based on four main pillars: *Demography*, *Self-assessment of English Language*, *English Skills within the Public Administration/ Private Companies* and *the Need for Improvement*. All the questions aim to give a clearer overview of English language current situation; to emphasize the importance of English in today's globalized world and the benefits it offers.

### Population and Sample Results

The population consists of 60 professional respondents from public administration and private companies.

### Results

#### Demography

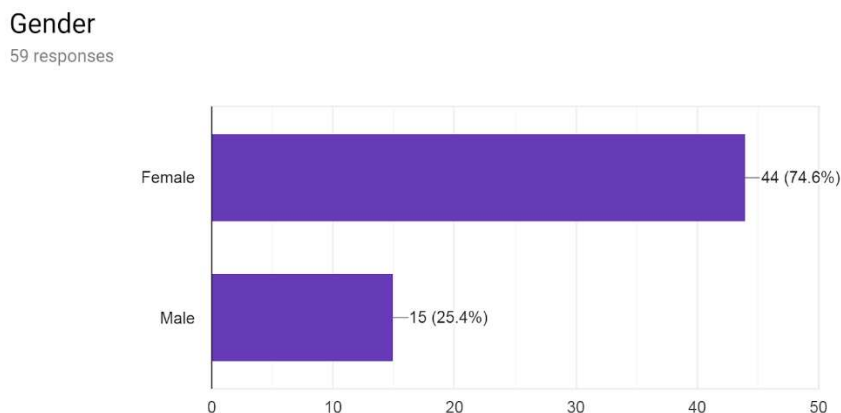


Chart 1

### Age

59 responses

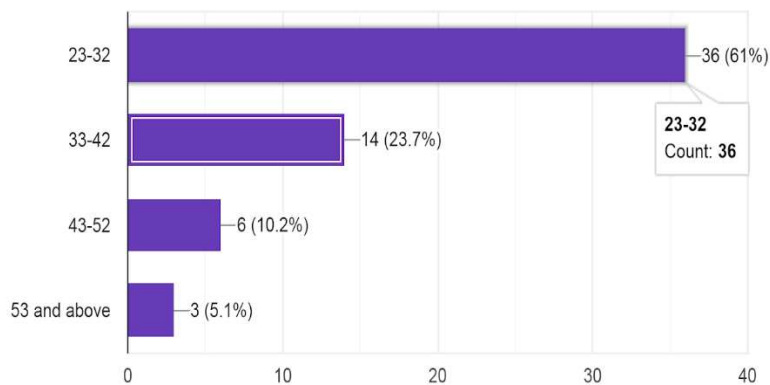


Chart 2

### Education

59 responses

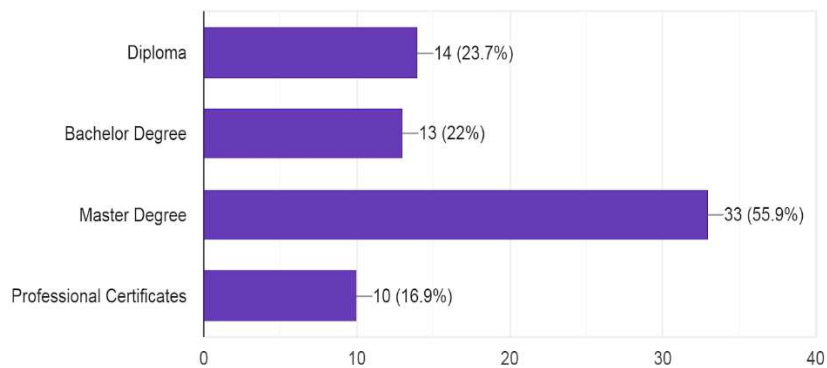


Chart 3

### Years of working experience

58 responses

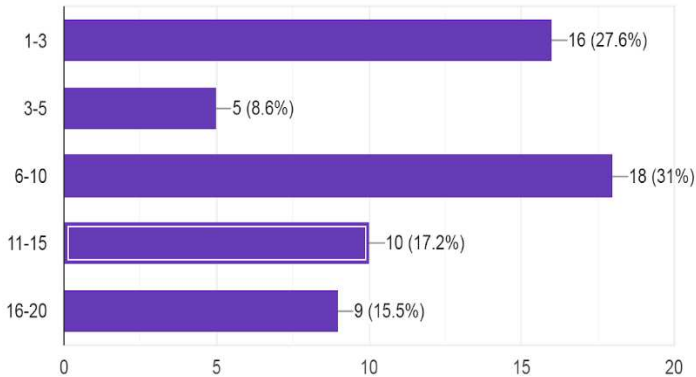


Chart 4

### Type of company / organisation

58 responses

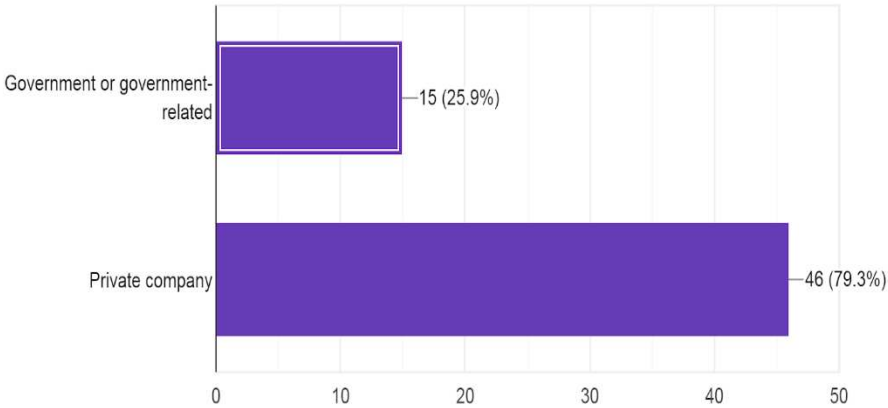


Chart 5

### Size of your company

58 responses

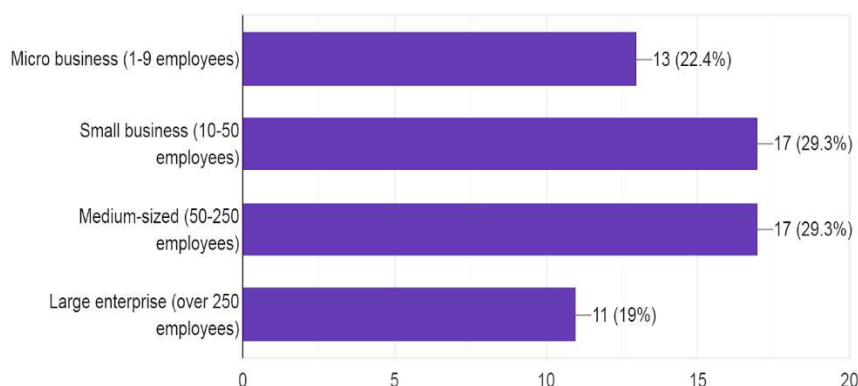


Chart 6

### Nature of profession

60 responses

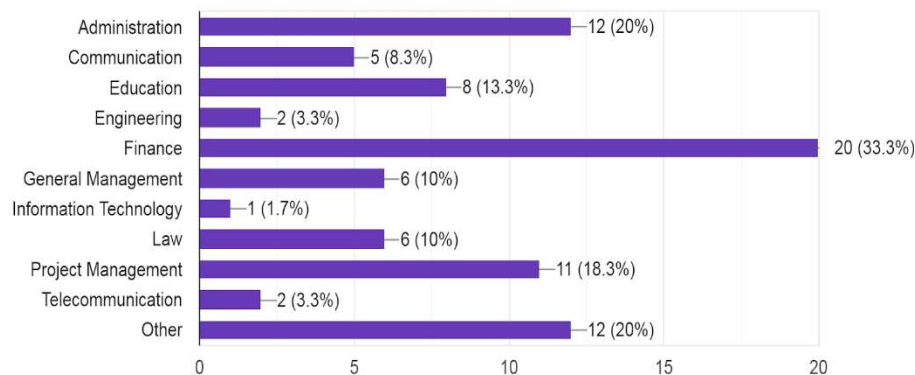


Chart 7

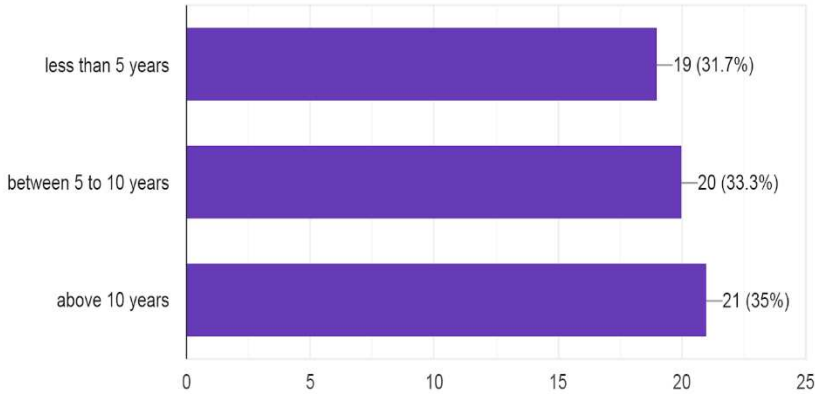
Chart 1 shows that the majority of the respondents are female (74.6 %) and (25.4%) are male. Chart 2 indicates that the majority (61%) of the respondents are between 23 and 32. The other 23.7 % belong to the age group of 33 and 42. 10.2 % of them are between 43 and 52. Only 5.1 % are between 53 and above. It is observed in Chart 3 that 23.7 % of them hold a diploma, 22% bachelor degree, 55.9% master degree and 16.9 % professional certificates. Referring to the years of working experience in Chart 4 the highest percentage is between 6 and 10 years is 31%. It is followed by 27.6% with 1 and 3 years, 11 and 15 years is 17.2 %, 16 and 20 years is 15.5% and between 3 and 4 is 8.6 %. Regarding the type of organization or company the respondents work in Chart 5 it is observed that 25.9 % work in government of government-related institutions and 79.3% in private companies. Considering the size of the company in Chart 6, 29.3 % of the respondents work in small businesses and as well the same percentage is in medium businesses 29.3 %. Other with 22.4% work for micro businesses and 19% in large enterprises. It can be seen that the respondents are from various

line of work. As reflected in Chart 7 the majority are engaged in finance with 33.3%, followed by administration 20%, project management 18.3%, education 13.3%, general management and law with 10% each, communication with 8.3 %, engineering and telecommunication with 3.3% each and information technology with 1.7%.

**Self-assessment of English language**

**Experience in using English**

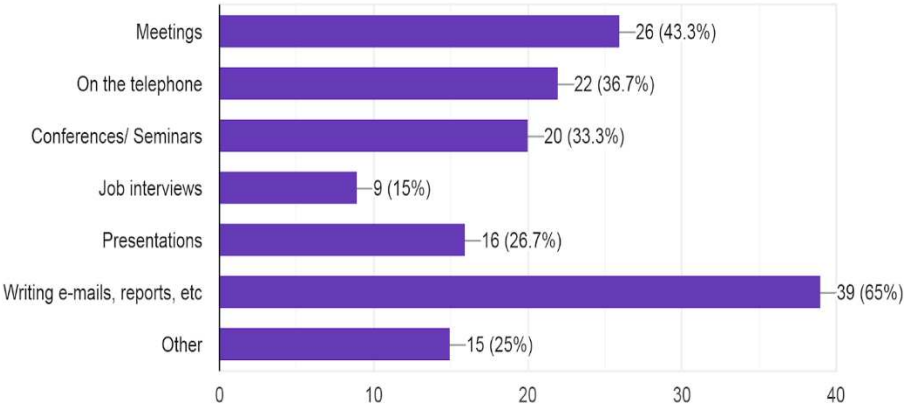
60 responses



**Chart 8**

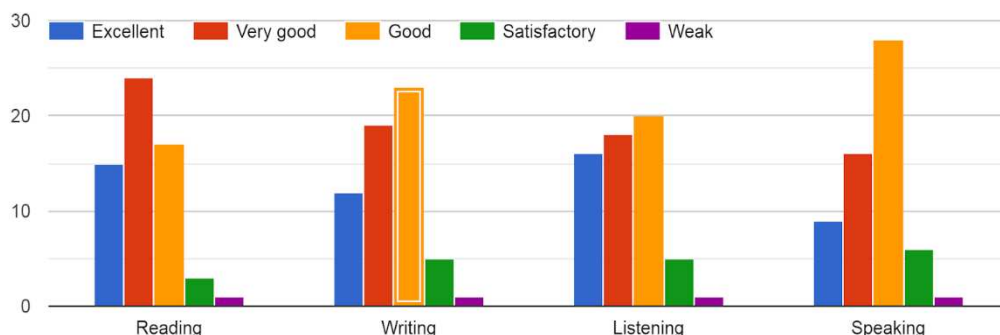
**You generally use English**

60 responses



**Chart 9**

### Your English language skills rating



**Chart 10**

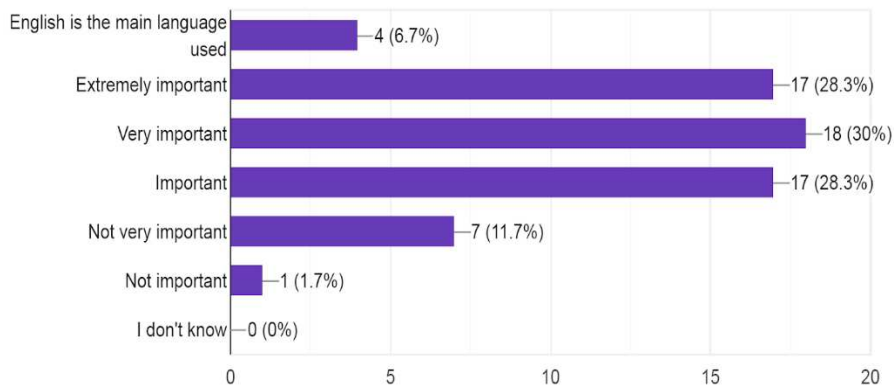
Chart 8, 9 and 10 show the experience in using English, general use of English and English language skills rating. In Chart 8, 21 of the respondents have above 10 years’ experience in using English. 20 of them between 5 to 10 years and 19 less than 5 years. So based on this figures it is observed that English language is necessary. In Chart 9 most of the respondents use English in writing e-mails, reports, etc 65%, 43.3% in meetings, 36.7% on the telephone, 33.3% in conferences/ seminars, 26.7 in presentations and 15% in job interviews. 25% use it for other purposes not mentioned in the chart.

According to English language skills rating in Chart 10, a low percentage of the respondents have weak reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Most of the respondents have good skills, followed by very good and excellent skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

### English skills within the Public Administration and Private Companies

#### How important are English language skills in your organisation?

60 responses



**Chart 11**

How necessary are the above language skills in your company/ organisation?

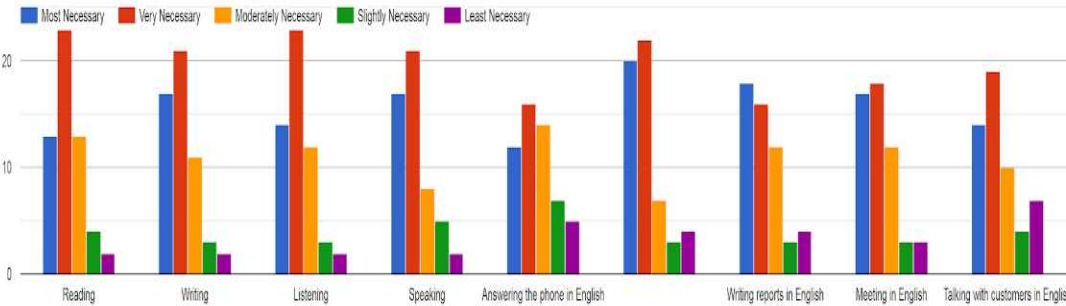


Chart 12

Does your company offer you language training?

59 responses

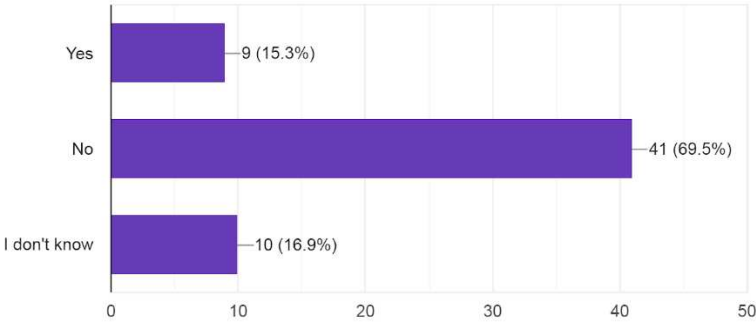


Chart 13

What benefits does your company/ organisation offer to employees with good English?

56 responses

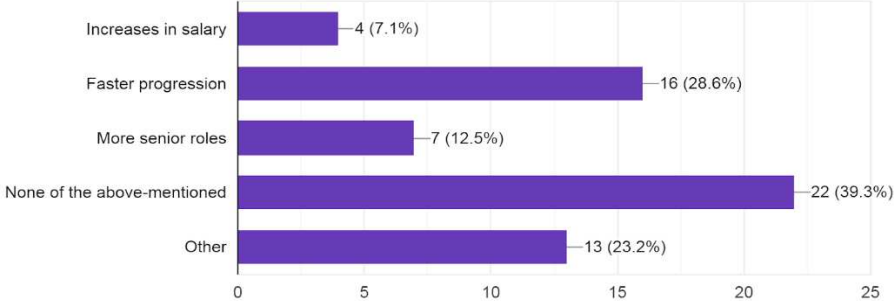


Chart 14



The percentage of the Chart 11 on the importance of English language skills is quite interesting. It emphasizes the importance of using English. More concretely 18 respondents (30%) consider English skills as very important in their organization. And 17 respondents (28.3%) consider these skills as extremely important. The same percentage 28.3% answered that English skills are important. We notice a low percentage of respondents consider English language skills as not very important 11.7%, 1.7% as not important. The ones that answered that English is the main language used constitute 6.7%.

In Chart 12 that shows the necessity of using such skills as Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, Answering the phone in English, Sending e-mails in English, Writing reports in English, Meeting in English, Talking with costumers in English the overall trend is that all this skills are equally very important. In the case of writing reports in English the highest percentage of the respondents consider it as very necessary in their organization. The lowest percentage of the respondents answered that these skills are slightly necessary or least necessary for their organizations.

In Chart 13 of the third pillar of the study we see that the public institutions and private companies do not offer in a high percentage language skills training. We have 41 respondents (69.5%) that are not trained on English language skills and only 15.3 % are trained for such skills. About 16.9% of them do not have the information if such training are offered from their employers.

Chart 14 shows that employees with a good command of English can benefit from their employers' increases in salary 7.1%, faster progression 28.6% and more senior roles 12.5%. About 39.3% answered that they do not benefit none of the above-mentioned and about 23.2% answered that they have other benefits.

### Need for improvement

What do you need to improve in your English language skills?

57 responses

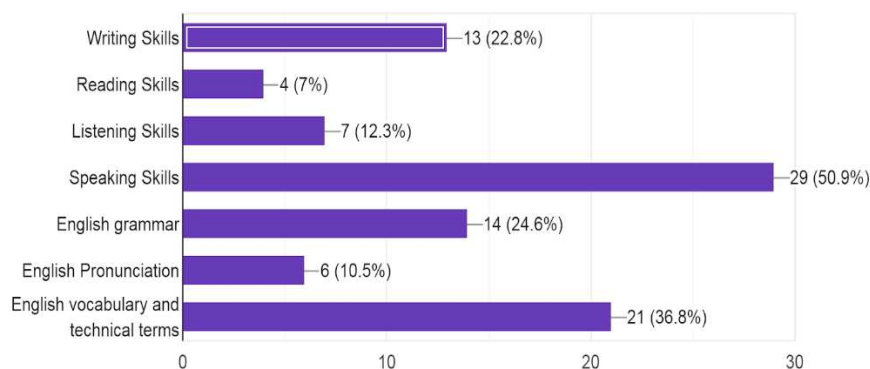
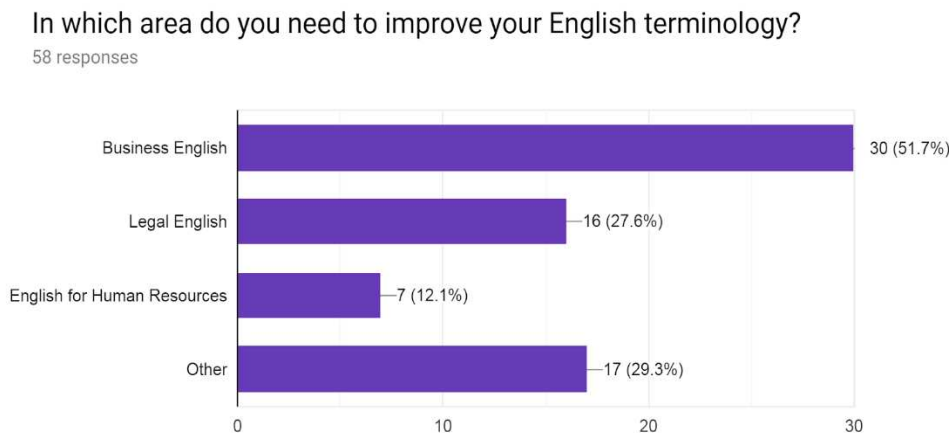


Chart 15



**Chart 16**

In Chart 15 it is observed that a high percentage of respondents 50.9 % need to improve their speaking skills. Also there is a high need to improve English vocabulary and technical terms 36.8%, English grammar 24.6% and writing skills 22.8%. They are followed by listening skills 12.3%, English pronunciation 10.5 % and reading skills 7%. So Speaking skills are most needed for improvement compared to other skills. Reading skills are the least needed skill for improvement.

The areas that need to be improved as reflected in Chart 16 are Business English with 51.7%, Legal English with 27.6 % and English for Human Resources with 12.1 %. 29.3 % indicates that the respondents need to improve their English terminology in other areas.

### **Recommendations and Conclusion**

It is important for employers in public and private sector to identify employee's needs for English skills training prior to conduct an English skills training. This assessment is necessary to consider various elements such as: demography factors; experience in using English and the areas of English they want to improve.

In Albania English is crucial and the most important language of communication to establish and maintain work relations at international level. Considering the fact that only a low percentage of people use it in a proficient and professional way, there is a need:

- 1) To design specific training curricula based on relevant needs (English for Specific Purposes)
- 2) Aware public and private sector to participate in such English language trainings
- 3) Assess post training results

so English language skills can be improved at the workplace because such skills are very important for the present and the future of private companies and public sector.

### **References**

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