

INFORMATIVE NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRE FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION



VET Centre's Newsletter

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Year I

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Chief Editor's word

We are pleased to present the first edition of the Informative Newsletter of the Centre for Vocational Education (VET Centre). The idea for publishing the Newsletter has been derived from the need to present the many activities of the VET centre in a high-quality, efficient and comprehensive manner.



Embracing the concept of the „knowledge society“, as well as creating preconditions for equal access to education for all Montenegrin citizens, are the main challenges of vocational and adult education. The main area of the VET Centre's work is the development and strengthening of the vocational and adult education system, emphasizing the adjustment of these educational systems to social changes, the market economy, technological progress and information technologies. The VET Centre is one of the key implementers of vocational education reform in Montenegro, as well as the institution which created the adult education system, raising it to a significant level of social recognition.

From the time it was established, the VET Centre has been investing in its employees in order to ensure high professionalism of the staff, openness to changes and innovations, as well as readiness for continuous professional improvement. So far, it has brought good results, contributing to the development of this institution and to recognition of its significance in the country, region and beyond.

This Newsletter is intended to increase the transparency of activities undertaken by the VET Centre in the field of vocational and adult education, and to ensure faster flow and comprehensiveness of information.

Duško Rajković,
Director of the VET Centre



The Centre for Vocational Education is a developmental, advisory and research institution founded in 2003 by social partners (Government of Montenegro, represented by the Ministry of Education and Science, Employment Agency of Montenegro, Chamber of Economy of Montenegro and Association of Trade Unions of Montenegro) within the process of education system decentralization, and development of vocational and adult education. Representatives of the founders, as well as the VET Centre representative, comprise the Steering Committee of the institution.

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COOPERATION

In this edition, we are presenting a brief retrospective of the VET Centre's activities.

The Department for Occupational Standards and Curricula

The Department for Occupational Standards and Curricula intensively reforms curricula in accordance with new methodological documents, to harmonize with labour market needs, on the basis of occupational standards. In this respect, there are 99 curricula developed for 15 sectors: two for two-year, 31 for three-year, 65 for four-year and two for post-secondary vocational education. There are 210 occupational standards developed. Along with curricula development, activities are conducted on the creation of material-technical, spatial and human resource conditions for curricula implementation. There are a lot of equipped cabinets from different sectors and there were numerous trainings organized for over 1200 teachers in order to apply modern methods in teaching, as well as a number of study visits for teachers of theoretical and practical subjects. Among all, there were six national competitions for students from catering schools and three in the field of automotive mechatronics. A National Fair of Training Firms was organized as well as a conference for teachers from the field of electronics to increase the quality of educational activity at schools, create a positive atmosphere which encourages the work of both students and teachers, as well as the promotion of occupations and vocational education in Montenegro. Our students participated in significant international competitions and exhibitions where they achieved excellent results and won a large number of awards and certificates. Besides the organization of professional improvement of teachers and school directors, one of the permanent activities is the professional improvement of the employees in the Department.

The Department of Adult Education

The Department of Adult Education is the only professional service in Montenegro dealing with developmental, advisory and research affairs in the field of adult education. Since the VET Centre's foundation, the Department has been actively developing training programmes for occupations, changing qualification, developing additional qualifications, engaging in professional improvement and development of key competences. Up to now, there are 80 training programmes, out of which the Council for Adult Education adopted 65 and accredited 30 programmes for special skills. The Adult Education Department had a significant role in the preparation of documents and materials considered during the sessions of the first and second mandate of the Council for Adult Education. Employees in this Department were members of working groups for writing laws and other important documents in this field. Along with the development of programmes, the Department actively works on the promotion of the life-long learning concept (adult education festivals and other). The Department was a partner in the implementation of two projects intended for adult literacy and professional training of adults. Seminars for andragogical training of adult education teachers were initiated for the needs of work improvement in the field of adult education. Representatives of this Department coordinated the network of licensed adult education organizers up to the foundation of their Association (at the end of 2007), initiated by themselves. There is an active cooperation with national and international institutions and organizations in order to strengthen the adult education system in Montenegro and develop the life-long learning concept. The employees of this Department participated in many conferences and seminars and they constantly improve themselves professionally in order to make their activities in conformity with European trends.

Department for General, Legal and Accounting Affairs

Department for General, Legal and Accounting Affairs performs legal and administrative, financial and accounting affairs, maintains the information system and provides professional and technical support to the work of the Council for Vocational Education and the Council for Adult Education. The Council for Vocational Education, since its foundation (2003), held 96 sessions in the first mandate and 20 in the second, while the Council for Adult Education (founded in 2003) held 63 sessions in its first and nine in the second mandate.

International cooperation and public relations are a crucial aspect of activities within which the VET Centre cooperates with various international organizations and institutions and participates in numerous projects, which will be explained in detail in future editions.

The Department of Evaluation

The Department of Evaluation conducts quality assessment, at least once every four years, in institutions in which vocational education programmes are implemented. It is in charge of planning and training in the field of preparation and implementation of internal evaluation in vocational education institutions.

The process of external quality assessment of educational activity was initiated in 2006. The first round of the process of external quality assessment was completed in June 2009 with visits to 39 institutions. The second round of quality assessment of the work of institutions by the VET Centre has been initiated in the 2009/10 academic year.

In order to prepare external quality assessment of the work of institutions, the Evaluation Department conducts a pre-inspection process. During the pre-inspection process, relevant documents for quality assessment are collected; the survey is conducted for parents, students, directors, teachers of vocational and practical subjects for key areas subject to quality assessment, social partners and representatives of the local community.

In October 2009 there was external quality assessment in two adult education institutions. During examination periods in an institution, the Department implements activities on quality assessment of the organization and implementation of vocational and final exams for new curricula, as well as for persons who do not have the status of regular student. After that, results achieved are statistically processed.

In cooperation with the British Council, during 2009, there were two seminars organized "Self-evaluation of the quality of teaching in vocational schools" for representatives of groups for quality of all vocational and mixed schools from Montenegro.

The Department of Textbooks

The Department of Textbooks works within the scope of the VET Centre's publishing activity. An innovative approach in publishing procedures was defined by adopting the "Methodology for preparation of textbooks in vocational education", which was a significant support to the implementation of the new concept of vocational education in Montenegro. In the period from 2004 to 2008, together with the Textbook Department and author teams, the VET Centre published 25 textbooks within the Project "Publishing Textbooks in Secondary Vocational Education in Montenegro", supported by the Government of the Kingdom of Norway.

During the same period another two textbooks were published: "Rudiments on Andragogy" for adult education and "Transport Security" for the Transport Sector.

New textbooks provide students with understanding of the aims as defined in new curricula catalogues of knowledge. During the preparation and development of textbooks, in addition to other things, it was taken into account that contents and illustrations be adapted to modern pedagogical standards and new information technologies.



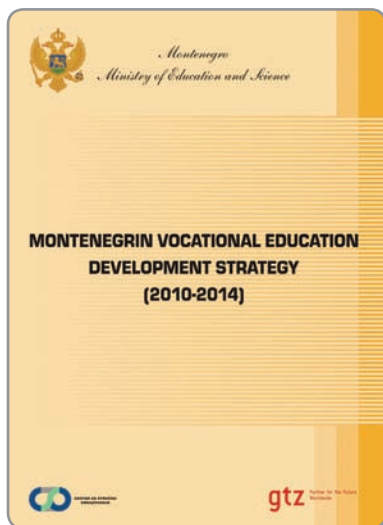
The Montenegrin Service Centre of Training Firms

The Montenegrin Service Centre (www.serviscentarpzv.me) was established in June 2005, with its headquarters at the VET Centre. The basic function of the Service Centre is providing a real business environment for the training firms, taking the role of institutions with which actual companies cooperate (Bank, Commercial Court, Tax Administration, Statistics etc.). So far, a total of 34 companies have been established in eight secondary schools, whose work has been coordinated and monitored

by the Service Centre. The Service Centre, in collaboration with KulturKontakt, prepared and organized a number of seminars for training of teachers who teach the Training Firms subject. Up to now, 40 teachers underwent the training, while 10 teachers were trained to become multipliers. In cooperation with KulturKontakt, the Handbook - Economics and Entrepreneurship - was made for teachers. In close cooperation with KulturKontakt, the Service Centre organized the participation of Training Firms in several international fairs (Austria, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina) as well as the first National Fair of Training Firms in April 2010. The Service Centre is in charge of activities for the inclusion of Montenegrin Training Firms in EUROPEN (European Union Association of Training Firms) and represents the link between domestic and international companies. The work of the Service Centre is coordinated by S.Brkanović and S.Obradović, advisers in the VET Centre.

Vocational Education Strategy

- The Government of Montenegro, at its session held on 28 December 2009, adopted the Vocational Education Development Strategy in Montenegro (2010-2014). The working group comprised of representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, VET Centre, Examinations Centre, vocational schools and social partners, drafted the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Vocational Education Development Strategy in Montenegro (2010-2011). Development of the Action plan was assisted by GTZ Project in Montenegro, engaging the experts from BiBB, Germany, and Project MNE/011. In June 2010, the VET Centre, with the support of Project MNE/011, organized a ceremony for the promotion of vocational education called "Stručno je ključno" ("Vocational is the key"), with the aim to promote the newly adopted strategic documents.



Amendments to the laws on education

- Amendments to the legal regulations in the field of education have been made so far. The Parliament of Montenegro adopted the Law on Amendments to the General Law on Education and the Law on Amendments to the Law on Vocational Education. Drafting the Law on Amendments to the Law on Adult Education has been planned for the last quarter of 2010.

Vocational exam for 2010/11

- Representatives of the VET Centre in collaboration with the Examination Centre, participated in the development of new Test catalogues for reformed curricula, according to which, students who complete their four-year secondary education, in the 2010/11 academic year, will undergo the vocational exam. General test catalogues, as well as test catalogues of professional theoretical and professional work were done in order to inform students, parents and teachers on the content and manner of conducting the vocational exam. In addition to the representatives of the VET Centre and Examination Centre, teachers from vocational schools also participated in the preparation of the catalogues.

Textbooks

- Taking into account the significance of textbooks in the modern teaching process, the Textbook Department aims its activities towards the preparation of textbooks used for curricula chosen by the largest number of students. In this respect, current activities have been aimed at three sectors: Economics, law and administration, Electronics and Trade, tourism and catering. The VET Centre published three new textbooks in 2010, and another 10 new ones, for the sectors mentioned, have been in the preparation process. In the forthcoming period of activities, it is necessary to focus on writing textbooks for other



sectors attended by smaller number of students, which form the majority in vocational education in Montenegro.

Adjusting primary school programmes to adult learners

- In accordance with the request of the Ministry of Education and Science, the Adult Education Department and representatives of the Bureau for Educational Services have been adjusting primary school programmes to adult learners. At the end of all activities on adjusting the programmes and procedures of their adoption at the competent Council, for the first time in Montenegro, adult learners will have the opportunity to acquire elementary education according to the programme adjusted for adults.

Handbooks for practical teaching in the field of electrical engineering

- A "Handbook for Practical Teaching and Laboratory Exercises - Electronics" and a "Handbook for Practical Teaching - High Power", have been written within the project "Reform of Vocational Education in the Direction of Promoting Employment" implemented by Ministry of Education and Science of Montenegro, VET Centre and GTZ. Authors of these handbooks are D.Đubljević and M.Drašković, teachers in vocational school from Nikšić. The handbooks contain a large number of worksheets and examples, representing a significant support to teachers in implementation of demanding goals in the practical teaching process.



Conference on Intellectual Property

- At the beginning of September, a Regional conference on intellectual property rights in the field of higher and vocational education was held in Belgrade. Participants of the conference were representatives of countries involved in the IPA project, who presented the current state of study of these topics in their own countries. Professors of Universities from Western European countries reported their experience and recommended an introduction of a special subject called "Intellectual property rights" in high and vocational schools. They pointed out the importance of this subject especially for students of legal, technical and other faculties. Montenegrin participants at the conference were representatives of the University "Mediterran", the Intellectual Property Office, Ministry of Economy and the VET Centre.

Workshop within the Project "Labour Market Reform and Development of Labour Force"

- The Working group for the promotion of local partnership for employment and human resource development, as a part of the Project "Labour Market Reform and Development of Labour Force", attended a workshop organized by the project team on 3 September in Podgorica. Training on the application of methodology for drafting local employment strategies was organized during the workshop. The project has been implemented with the aim to build capacities of local partner groups in four pilot municipalities in the north (Bijelo Polje, Mojkovac, Berane and Pljevlja) in order to draft local employment strategies. The VET Centre appointed G.Bošković to be a member of this working group.

Regional vocational education strategy

- A Technical working group started its activities on 3 September in order to draft a Regional vocational education strategy for the North of Montenegro and to align it with the existing tourism and agriculture strategies. In addition to the VET Centre and Ministry of Education and Science representatives, the working group comprises representatives of relevant ministries, local communities and schools, and the whole activity has been supported by Project MNE/011.

Conference in Slovenia

- The Final conference of the Project "Co-financing of Key Joint Tasks to Support the Implementation of New Education and Training Programmes in Vocational and Technical Secondary Education in the Period 2008 to 2010" was held in Kranj, Slovenia, at the beginning of September. The Director of the VET Centre and adviser for international cooperation and public relation attended this conference.

EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) standard in four pilot schools

- The final seminar, led by foreign experts M. Klauke and W. Hartman, within the project GTZ-VET related to the implementation of the component - improving management quality in four vocational schools, was held from 7 to 9 September 2010. After two-year training, from September 2008 to September 2010, management and teachers of the schools (Vocational school from Nikšić, Secondary mixed school "Mladost" from Tivat, Vocational school from Pljevlja and Mechanical engineering school "Ivan Uskoko" from Podgorica), received certificates by J. Rottluff, certified evaluator for the EFQM. These certificates prove that these schools established a successful school management system based on elements of this model. The first seminar of the second phase of this project, which included the remaining three vocational schools (Secondary mixed school "Danilo Kiš" - Budva, Construction - Geodesy Secondary school "ing. Marko Radević" from Podgorica and Vocational school "Sergije Stanić" from Podgorica) was held on 8-10 September. S. Brkanović attended the seminar, as a coordinator for the EFQM on behalf of the VET Centre.



Seminar for training teachers in areas of economics, law and administration files

- The first seminar for teachers that will, for the first time, teach the subject Training Firms in this academic year, was held in the beginning of September in Podgorica, organized by KulturKontakt. Training Firm is a simulated company that operates in a competitive environment with the aim to enable students to acquire knowledge and entrepreneurial skills, develop positive attitudes towards school work and connect with local communities by working with local businesses. This subject has been implemented as required since academic 2009/10. The speakers were the coaches for the teacher training, professors J.Đikanović and V.Veličković, and the seminar was attended by Service Centre coordinators.



Development of basic elements of the Career Orientation Strategy in Montenegro

- ♦ The third meeting of the Working group, within the third component of the IPA project „Reform of Market and Labour Force Development“ with emphasis on the development of the National Strategy of Professional Orientation and Information, was held in Budva on the 9 and 10 September 2010. The working group is composed of representatives of Ministry of Education and Science, Employment Agency, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Federation of Employers, University of Montenegro and VET Centre, who have been drafting the basic elements of future professional orientation strategies in Montenegro. The VET Centre representative for this component of the project is J. Knežević.

Internal evaluation in vocational schools

- ♦ One part of the Project “Quality Assurance Process in Vocational Education in Montenegro“ is concerned with the development of a new internal evaluation concept, which will be methodologically processed in a modern handbook for internal evaluation. A Working group consisting of two school representatives is appointed for drafting the handbook, and their work has been coordinated by Ž.Raičević, adviser in the Evaluation Department. Six schools from different regions are selected for piloting the concept.

External quality assessment

- ♦ Within the process of external quality assessment of education activity in institutions which implement vocational education curricula, in the period September/October 2010/11, there will be external quality assessment in the following schools: Secondary vocational school -Bijelo Polje, Secondary agriculture school - Bar, Mixed secondary school “Danilo Kiš” - Budva, Secondary economic – catering school - Nikšić and Construction – Geodesy Secondary school “ing. Marko Radević” - Podgorica.

Sectoral commissions

- ♦ In mid-September, sectoral commissions for three areas of work were established in order to jointly contribute to the development of the Montenegrin Qualifications Framework. The members of the commissions are representatives of the University of Montenegro, relevant ministries, the Chamber of Economy and the VET Centre. Representatives of the VET Centre are: D. Pejović - for the area of Agriculture, food processing and animal health, D. Bošković - for Trade, tourism and hospitality, and M.Sredanović for Architecture, construction and geodesy.

VET Centre Capacity Development

- ♦ Based on a training needs analysis, conducted by German expert E.Gutmann, the “Capacity Development Plan of the VET Centre Employees” is drafted. Within this activity, in mid-September, the first part of a seminar on NQF was implemented, with the second part planned for October. Trainings of the VET Centre employees have been the part of Project MNE/011. An expert from Scotland, T.Kelly, was chosen to conduct the seminar, and he is also a member of the team of experts in the Project IPA 2008 “National Qualifications Framework and Quality Assurance in Education“.
- ♦ At the beginning of September, within the same activity, the adviser for international cooperation and public relations, participated at a two-day workshop in Maastricht called: “Formal Writing in English for Public Officials“, organized by EIPA (European Institute of Public Administration).



Energy efficiency in construction

- ♦ The third seminar on „Energy Efficiency in Construction“ within the GTZ-VET project, was held in Construction – Geodesy Secondary school “ing. Marko Radević”, September, 20-24. The lecturers were eminent experts from Germany, and the seminar was attended by teachers of those schools as well as by the representative of the VET Centre, V. Koprivica. In future, teachers will apply acquired competences in teaching energy efficiency subjects.

Development of networks and clusters

- ♦ Training on “Development of Networks and Clusters – Framework for development of local economy in Montenegro” was held on 22-24 September, in the Directorate for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, within the UN Project, focused on mitigation of crisis in Montenegro by producing so-called green jobs in the least developed north region. The training was conducted by international experts of the Foundation of MSME clusters, and two representatives of the VET Centre attended this training.

Conference on adult education

- ♦ Regional conference “Adult Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina and South-Eastern Europe” – a contribution to peace and development, was held in Sarajevo on 24 September, 2010. The event was attended by two representatives of the Adult Education Department, and the purpose of the conference was the contribution to strengthening regional cooperation in the field of life-long learning.

Seminar on key competences in education

- ♦ With the aim to introduce innovations in teaching, by developing the key competence “learning to learn”, ETF, VET Centre and Bureau for Educational Services organized a seminar in the period between 27 and 30 September 2010, for 20 teachers from nine secondary vocational and mixed schools from Montenegro. This seminar is the part of the project “Key Competences in Teacher Education in Montenegro”.

Project for internally displaced Roma population

- ♦ The Project “Intersectoral initiative on the prevention of diseases and special education for internally displaced Roma living in Konik” has been intended for internally displaced Roma population from Kosovo, living in a Roma camp in Konik, Podgorica. Danish and Montenegrin Red Cross are in charge of implementing this project. Elementary functional literacy of internally displaced Roma population and acquiring first qualification via programmes for simple occupations, represent a part of the project, whose partner will be the VET Centre, through the Adult Education Department (at the end of 2010 and in the first half of 2011). The Project is of paramount importance, as for the first time, internally displaced Roma from Kosovo enter the programme of elementary functional literacy. Trainees who complete this programme will have the opportunity to attend other training programmes for simple occupations and thus acquire a qualification which will provide them with entrance into the world of work.

Preparation of IX Adult Education Festival



- ♦ The VET Centre has been organizing an Adult Education Festival for years. Local self-governments, adult education institutions and organizations are participants of this exhibition.
- ♦ The IX Adult Education Festival, coordinated by Lj.Garić, is planned to take place in the period from 25 October to 1 December 2010. The basic goal of this Festival is initiating a stronger role of local self-governments in strengthening cognitive capacities of employees in the local community, spreading the educational offer, as well as increasing the level of knowledge on possibilities and significance of adult learning.
- ♦ The Adult Education Department, in cooperation with local self-governments, plans to organize round tables in each municipality of Montenegro. The municipalities have the opportunity to propose the round table topic, whose content is of interest and significance for their citizens or to choose one of the topics significant for a specific local community.
- ♦ Organization of the Fair of adult education licensed organizers is also planned within the Festival, whose aim is to promote educational offers and activities provided by adult education licensed organizers in Montenegro. The Association of Licensed Adult Education Organizers and the VET Centre are the organizers of the Fair.
- ♦ An Entrepreneurship and management seminar for heads of adult education institutions/organizations is envisaged to take place during the Festival. The basic goal of the seminar is improvement of entrepreneurial and management knowledge and skills of trainees.

Activities for October

- ♦ Seminar “Implementation of professional practice at employers”;
- ♦ Presentation „Model of internal quality assurance in vocational schools in Montenegro“;
- ♦ Regional Meeting of Western Balkans and Turkey on Social Inclusion;
- ♦ Drafting handbooks for career guidance;
- ♦ Workshop for teachers of practical classes for occupations: Waiter and Cook;
- ♦ Teacher training from the sector of Electronics - II phase;
- ♦ Harmonizing curricula with new legal and methodological solutions;
- ♦ Development of new occupational standards;
- ♦ Development of new training programmes for occupations, change of qualifications, additional qualifications or professional improvement;
- ♦ Implementation of activities of IX Adult Education Festival;
- ♦ Andragogical didactic-methodological training of teachers working in the field of adult education;
- ♦ Study visit to Finland within the Project IPA 2008 “Labour Market Reform and Development of Labour Force II“;
- ♦ Teachers from construction school from Libek visiting the Construction – Geodesy Secondary school from Podgorica.

International cooperation

Various international organizations have been investing their material and expert resources in the development of vocational and adult education. International organizations with which the VET Centre cooperates, as well as joint projects, will be presented in future editions of the Informative Newsletter.



ETF
(European Training Foundation)



GTZ



KulturKontakt



DVV International



European Union Delegation



LuxDevelopment



British Council

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