

AGENDA

TITLE:

Working Together to support Regional VET Centres (RVETCs) in North Macedonia

SUBJECT:

National workshop 26-27 March 2026, Skopje (North-Macedonia).

Venue: Hotel Marriot Plostad Makedonija 7, Skopje 1000, North Macedonia.

BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND AGENDA

North Macedonia is currently implementing a VET policy reform. Such reform started with the establishment of the Regional VET Centres (RVETC) foreseen in the Education Strategy 2018-2025. The role and tasks of the RVETCs are regulated in the Law on Vocational Education and Training and the “Concept for Establishing Regional VET Centres” which were adopted in 2022 ⁽¹⁾.

The RVETCs are seen as drivers for increasing the efficiency of the VET reforms by centralisation of investments and concentration of results, followed by the promotion and dissemination of VET innovations based on good international practices (MoES North Macedonia, 2022). All RVETCs are established as state legal entities, following the State Model tasked to providing formal vocational education and training, Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning (VNFIL) and adult education. Seven Regional centres have been established in seven different regions out of eight in the country. Nowadays, RVETCs network is composed by following institutions:

- (A) RVET Centre "Kiro Burnaz" in Kumanovo - Northeastern region.
- (B) RVET Centre "Vancho Pitoshevski" in Ohrid - Southwest region.
- (C) RVET Centre "Mosha Piade" in Tetovo - Pologi region.
- (D) RVET Centre "Nikola Karev" in Strumica - Southeast region.
- (E) RVET Centre "Kole Nedelkovski" in Veles - Vardar region.
- (F) RVET Center "Kole Nehteni" in Shtip – Eastern region.
- (G) RVET Center "Gjorgji Naumov" in Bitola – Pelagonija.

The ETF is working with Minister of Education and Science (MoES) in North Macedonia to support mandates, roles and functions and capacities of RVETCs. In concrete, the ETF has conducted an analysis to identify capacity development and policy learning needs of RVETCs, based on participatory methodology by engaging relevant stakeholders and practitioners. The analysis

⁽¹⁾ The current RVETCs concept refers, to a wider or lesser extent, to the ETF approaches in Vocational excellence and CoVEs. The concept is available at:
https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgqe326/files/migration/mk/Razvoen-Koncept_en.pdf

outcomes open floor for proposing a capacity building program which focus on the RVETCs working areas of Governance and Funding, Cooperation and Partnerships, and including specifically the core function of adult learning services.

There are many challenges which are shaping on-going operational work of each RVETC to move forward in becoming inclusive Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs). The ETF Network of Excellence (ENE) concepts, methodologies and international practices and outcomes on different vocational excellence dimensions are the inspiration for the proposed analytical framework to conduct such capacity learning analysis to support further development of RVETCs operations for better performing connected with other players in regional skills ecosystems (e.g CoVEs approaches to digitalization and greening; governance, funding, autonomy and public-private partnerships; work-based learning -WBL-, entrepreneurship, lifelong learning, internationalization, self-assessment tools-ISATCOVE-, etc) ⁽²⁾.

The results and findings of this analysis address a good number of both challenges and opportunities for RVETCs cooperating with MoES, regional and local public powers and private actors and companies to further shaping regional skills ecosystems which should be aligned to the needs of citizens (young and adults) and contribute to socioeconomic and inclusive development of North Macedonia. Overall, the findings address capacity needs of different stakeholders in the VET system.

The **objectives of national RVETCs network workshop (26-27 March 2026)** are:

- Sharing ETF VET Excellence concepts, approaches and methodological tools used to implement capacity learning analysis working together with RVETCs, and in close cooperation with MoEs of North Macedonia.
- Present and discuss results and findings of capacity learning analysis addressing challenges and opportunities, including sharing and learning best international practices.
- Validate results in cooperation with key stakeholders on capacity learning prospects which might be useful for RVETCs network and other stakeholders in the country.

Time	Agenda (DAY 1) 26 March 2026
12:00 – 12:30	Registration of participants
12:30 – 13:30	Buffet lunch (offered by ETF)
Session 1 13:30: 14:15	<p>The ETF and Minister of Education and Science (MoES) in North Macedonia are working together to support mandates, roles, functions and capacities of Regional VET Centres (RVETCs). The MoEs is leading an ambitious policy reform process to support VET status and empowering roles of RVETCs in the country. The ETF is an international reference on VET Excellence and Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) and deploys a leading advisory role in close cooperation with European Commission (EC- DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion) in such policy areas.</p> <p>The ETF has conducted an analysis to identify capacity development opportunities by engaging relevant stakeholders and practitioners in the</p>

⁽²⁾ Please see ENESAT https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-07/ENESAT%202022_EN.pdf and ISATCOVE: <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/what-we-do/internationalising-vocational-excellence>

Time	Agenda (DAY 1) 26 March 2026
	<p>country, for supporting RVETCs network development aligned to CoVEs concept and models embedded into skills ecosystems notion.</p> <p>Welcome and introduction to the agenda Setting the scene: MoES expectations and actions in the current VET reform process and Regional VET Centres (RVETCs) role. The ETF working in VET Excellence & CoVEs to support shaping skills ecosystems in North Macedonia.</p> <p>Ms. Ivana Popovska- MoEs North Macedonia Ms. Olga Borodankova - EU Delegation North Macedonia Mr. J. Manuel Galvin Arribas - ETF</p> <p>(Q.& A)</p>
<p>Session 2</p> <p>14:15 – 15:10</p>	<p>The ETF participatory methodology has promoted a constructive dialogue by bringing a good number of representative stakeholders, players and other experts throughout the implementation process. The analysis focussed on the RVETCs working areas of Governance and Funding, Cooperation and Partnerships, and including specifically the core function of adult learning services. The outcomes inform a capacity building draft program which might help on shaping further strategic steps to work together with RVETCs in cooperation with national, European and international stakeholders and other players.</p> <p>Presentation of key methodological ingredients and main findings on capacity learning gaps to support RVETCs.</p> <p>ETF National Experts- Mr. Antonie Onosimoski & Ms. Vesna Janevski-</p> <p>(Q&A, reflections, discussion).</p> <p>Key short note: Methodological support to implementing the daily RVETCs' operations. Mr. Ludmil Kovachev-Senior Expert EU VET, policies & Adult Education-</p>
<p>15:10 -15:30</p>	<p>Coffee break</p>
<p>Session 3</p> <p>15:30 - 16:30</p>	<p>Regional Vocational Education and Training Centres (RVETCs) in North Macedonia have been established as a central pillar of ongoing VET reforms, with the ambition to evolve into regional hubs for skills development, lifelong learning, and socio-economic transformation, whilst being anchored in the national development concept and aligned with European policy frameworks.</p> <p>Overall, RVETCs are expected to play a dual role: to ensure high-quality initial VET for young people and to expand provision for adult education, reskilling, and upskilling in response to dynamic labour market needs, and economic and industrial transformations. Leadership, coordination and networking are key ingredients for unleashing RVETCs performance.</p>

Time	Agenda (DAY 1) 26 March 2026
	<p>Panel discussion: RVETCs network as hubs for VET reforms in North Macedonia and supporting regional socioeconomic development</p> <p>Panel composed by RVETCs Directors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mr. Aleksandar Koteski, Director of RVETC Mosha Pijade. ▪ Mr. Toni Andreski, Director of RVETC Vancho Pitosheski. ▪ Mr. Goran Jovanovikj, Director of RVETC Kiro Burnaz. ▪ Ms. Jovanka Saleva, Director of RVETC Kole Nehtenin. ▪ Ms. Zaneta Servini, Director of RVETC Gjorgji Naumov. ▪ Mr. Arhelos Turanov, Director of RVETC Nikola Karev. ▪ Mr. Goran Bogoevski, Director of RVETC Kole Nedelkovski.
<p>Session 4</p> <p>16:30 – 17:15</p>	<p>The Slovenian vocational education and training (VET) system is built on an effective governance and partnership framework that combines strong national steering role, with smart degree of institutional and regional autonomy.</p> <p>Inter-Company Training centres in Slovenia have become key practice to inspire and inform Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) concept worldwide, by playing a strategic role in linking initial VET, continuing VET, adult learning, and innovation and applied research (etc.). This model is acting as a hub in the country for informing on quality assurance (Q.A), curriculum innovation, successful cooperation with employers, internationalization and dissemination of good practices across the VET system (etc.). Overall, VET practices in Slovenia via this type of institutions are strongly inspiring current VET policy development, including local and international partnerships.</p> <p>Vocational Excellence & CoVEs: the case of Slovenia. Ms. Adrijana Hodak Head of Šolski Centre -Nova Gorica - UNESCO-UNEVOC Focal Point for Slovenia.</p> <p>(Q&A, reflections, discussion).</p>
17:15 – 17:30	Final discussion & Wrapping- up day 1
19:00 - 21:00	Dinner (offered by ETF)

Time	Agenda DAY 2 (27 March 2026)
08:40 – 09:00	Arrival of participants and signature of the attendance list
Session 5	<p>The RVETCs' are called to address high-level performance. In this respect, RVETCs should jointly co-creating and coordinating regional skills ecosystems embedded into institutional strategies, governance arrangements, and/or operational partnership practices working with both local stakeholders and companies, employers (including SMEs). Improving regional coordination, networking and leadership capacities of RVETCs should help, for example, on collecting relevant labour market</p>

Time	Agenda DAY 2 (27 March 2026)
<p>9:00 – 10.00</p>	<p>intelligence, adult education provision, forging longstanding multilevel partnerships arrangements, embrace career guidance services and piloting funding diversification (etc.).</p> <p>Overall, RVETCs are invited to become catalysts for innovation, entrepreneurship, research and smart specialisation, and contributing on inclusive regional growth. Thus, strengthening cooperation at the regional level might bring good benefits for RVETCs to co-creating and implementing effectively regional and national VET policies and strategies.</p> <p>Introduction to the day: Panel discussion with central, regional/local stakeholders, experts and employers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ms. Frosina Nikolovska, Municipality of Kumanovo ▪ Ms. Natasha Janevska, Chamber of Commerce of North Macedonia ▪ Ms. Bojana Politova, Centre for the Development of Vocational Education, North Macedonia. ▪ Mr. Ludmil Kovachev-Senior Expert EU VET, policies & Adult Education ▪ Employers' Representatives: M. Emilija Damjanovski, employer representative at Kronberg Schubert & Filip Mishovski, employer representative at Metropol Ohrid ▪ Ms. Andrijana Stojanovska, State advisor at Ministry of Local Self Government <p>(Q&A, reflections, discussion).</p>
<p>Session 6</p> <p>10.00 – 10:45</p>	<p>The Basque Country (Spain) is a European and international high-level performer reference model, which deploys the ability to integrate VET system closely aligned with regional and local innovation, matching skills with employers' needs/demands, as well as contributing on socioeconomic regional and development strategies. The Basque VET Plan (2022-2025) and recent VET strategy (2030) position vocational education as a core driver for competitiveness, technological advancement, and lifelong learning (LLL) aimed at helping the well-being and inclusion of learners and citizens in society.</p> <p>The Basque VET centres function as an advanced public community-model CoVEs, combining training delivery with applied research, innovation and international projects, and other enterprise services (etc.). In this context, TKNIKA - Centre for Applied Research and Innovation in VET- plays a central coordinating and leadership role, by connecting schools, enterprises, and research institutions to co-create and infuse innovation projects to the VET system. This is closely aligned to the active key role and recognized status of teachers and trainers' community in the region.</p> <p>Vocational Excellence & CoVEs: the case of Country Basque (Spain). Ms. Inge Gorostiaga Luzarraga, Director of Digital Transformation and Advanced Learning, Directorate General for Vocational Education and Training, Regional Ministry of Education, (Basque Government -Spain-)</p> <p>(Q.&A, reflections, discussion).</p>

Time	Agenda DAY 2 (27 March 2026)
10:45 – 11.15	Coffee break
Session 7 11:15 – 12:15	<p>To wrap up two days' workshop discussions and knowledge sharing, the ETF will facilitate 3 Working Groups focusing on core investigated dimensions (Governance & Funding; Cooperation & Partnerships; & Adult Learning) to addressing capacity learning opportunities of RVETCs community.</p> <p>In a nutshell, the participants in working groups will be asked to use a short selection of findings to be discussed and validated, supported by some guiding questions, and provide a final deliberation/advice for next steps and action on capacity needs in cooperation with MoES and ETF.</p>
12:15 – 12:45	Presentations of working group results
12:45 – 13:00	Final Remars & Wrap up: MoES-RVETCs- International Partners & ETF. Closure of the event
13:00 -14:00	Lunch (offered by ETF)