

FLASH REPORT

Event name

Skills for economic development in Montenegro: Dual education - where we are now? How to boost skills for priority economic areas?, *Podgorica, Montenegro, 22 October 2019*

Main objective/s

The objectives of the event was to share the preliminary findings from two analyses launched and supported by the ETF, one focused on dual education and the other on skills implications of economic prioritisation as a key resource for innovation, growth and competitiveness in Montenegro.

Background

The European Training Foundation (ETF) and the ILO Budapest have jointly supported an evaluation of the first two years of Dual Vocational Education in Montenegro. The analysis looked at the current capacities and abilities of all stakeholders involved in 3-year dual education in the country to design, govern and implement 3-year dual education. It also investigated in some scenarios of how the quality and quantity of 3-year dual education provided by VET schools and companies may be further developed.

On the other hand, the ETF, in close cooperation with national stakeholders, launched in the beginning of 2019 an in-depth analysis on skills implications of economic development and innovation strategies, using the Montenegro smart specialisation strategy as a proxy. The analysis focused on two priority areas identified in the Montenegro smart specialisation strategy, namely renewable energy and health tourism. Building on the findings of the smart specialisation approach, the current human capital situation and challenges were analysed through a combination of quantitative and qualitative research instruments. The findings point to the main education and training, skills and human resources issues that need to be addressed for the policy goals on innovation, growth and competitiveness to be met in Montenegro.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT

The participants in the event, around 30, were representatives of the Ministry of Education in Montenegro, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of Health, VET Centre, Chamber of Commerce, Employers Federations, EU Delegation in Montenegro, private companies from renewable energy and health tourism sub-sectors, VET providers from Podgorica, Bar and Nikšić, other relevant government bodies and international organisations in Montenegro (UNOPS, EPRD), national and international consultants, ILO and ETF staff.

In the opening, the Ministry of Education representative referred to the dual education in Montenegro as a priority to smooth school to work transition, stressing also that lessons from the implementation and assessment should be taken into account for developing a revised legislation on dual education. Success of dual education depends on the involvement of all partners, coming both from education and economic sectors. Training of trainers remains a priority for the system also the involvement of the

private sector; skills relevant for the local development and the changing needs pose challenges to VET planning and delivery.

ETF teams presented the preliminary results/findings from the two analyses on dual education and skills implications of economic prioritisation.

As regards dual education, participants agreed that there was a great interest both from students and employers for such programmes, and further improvement of the systems should be continued, with mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation to be put in place, and improvement of the training of in-company trainers. According to the analysis, the percentage of students employed after completing dual VET education cycle was 55-60%, considered as a positive result.

Stakeholders feedback to the analysis on skills relevance for economic development revealed that both initial and adult education programmes need to include modern technology aspects, new modules are needed on energy efficiency, renewable energy potential. In addition, STEM, digital and foreign language (English) competences are needed for the development the two sub-sectors. Some occupations will require higher levels of specialisation (7-8) while others remain in the remit of VET (4-5).

KEY OUTCOMES/CONCLUSIONS

Further actions in developing the dual VET system must involve all stakeholders, greater involvement of Chamber of Commerce and Employers' Federation in the selection of employers, closer cooperation with in-company trainers, improved communication between employers and schools providing VET education. The conclusions of the analysis of skills development on the context of smart specialisation can further help the initial and continuous training systems to adapt to newer skills requirements and support economic competitiveness. Both analyses will feed the Ministry of Education and stakeholders in the process of elaboration of the new VET strategy and action plan post-2020.

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