

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR VOCATIONAL TEACHERS



FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

There is high awareness of the issue of continuing professional development (CPD) for vocational teachers in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and it is reflected in different strategic and policy documents.

This research confirms that CPD of vocational teachers is in need of reform. It is often theoretical, not preceded by assessment of teacher needs and it is, usually, a formal (often obligatory) requirement.

Some 63% of the vocational teachers stated that no relevant professional development is offered to them.

According to the law, CPD of vocational teachers rest with the Bureau for the Development of Education (BDE) and the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Centre.

The BDE has the competence to accredit programmes for CPD

of vocational teachers and CPD provision. Overall participation in CPD is relatively high for the region, only 27% of vocational teachers did not participate in CPD during the 12 months that preceded the survey (OECD average is 10%). However, these arrangements do not generate CPD tailored to the needs of vocational teachers.

Some 66% of vocational teachers stated that they received no CPD that addressed the vocational specialism they teach and only 24% of vocational teachers attended training organised in a business environment.

There is no effective system for accrediting permanent providers of CPD for vocational teachers and there is no catalogue of CPD programmes that schools and teachers can draw upon to meet their needs. It is necessary to expand the number of providers of CPD for vocational teachers.

There is insufficient school-based training and where it does exist it is likely to be episodic rather than an on-going component of school activities that are planned and executed in connection with the known professional development needs of teachers.

Funding of CPD for vocational teachers is the weakest link in the VET system. There are no earmarked funds for this purpose; CPD is most often funded through project funds of international organisations or NGOs and both the VET Centre and vocational schools lack resources to plan and provide CPD for vocational teachers that is coherent with needs.

Selected recommendations

1. Make provision of appropriate resources so that the responsible bodies, the VET Centre and the BDE (and in the future, the Academy for Teachers), are able to plan and deliver appropriate CPD for vocational teachers.
2. Develop a catalogue of training programmes and training providers. The catalogue should make it possible for vocational teachers and schools to identify accredited CPD programmes and providers in line with their particular needs.
3. The VET Centre and the BDE should provide training events for vocational teachers and for those with responsibility for CPD in schools to support school-wide and individual identification of training needs, analysis, planning and monitoring of CPD provision.