



Montenegro
Ministry of Education

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National implementation plan Montenegro

May, 2022

(a) Brief information on the national context and baseline

After leaving compulsory, nine-year primary education, students can choose between four-year general secondary education (Gymnasia) and VET. Around two thirds of students in Montenegro choose VET. Secondary vocational education in Montenegro is provided in accordance with the provisions of the General Act on Education and the provisions of the Vocational Education Act.

National VET priorities in Montenegro are mainly defined by national VET strategies covering four-year time periods and accompanying action plans which cover two-year time periods. Currently, VET Development Strategy 2020-24 is in place and the Action Plan for 2022-23 is being drafted. This plan will be closely linked to the National Implementation Plan (NIP).

As for adult education, the Strategy for Adult Education of Montenegro 2015-2025 and Annual Plans of Adult Education, which are designed every year, are the governing strategic documents. The leading principle of the Strategy for Adult Education of Montenegro 2015-2025 refers to creating an environment for involving citizens in the lifelong learning process with a view to developing a competitive market economy, reducing unemployment and social exclusion.

This NIP has been designed in line with the following strategic documents:

- VET Development Strategy (2021-2024)
- Adult Education Plan (2019-2022)
- Strategy of digitalization of education system (2022-2027)
- National Employment Strategy (2021-2025)
- Economic Reforms Programme (2022-2024)
- Youth Guarantee

Montenegro is currently facing with many challenges. The impact of COVID has been profoundly negative and brought: decrease of real GDP for more than 15 % in 2020; increase in unemployment rate (around 23 %); decrease in youth employment rate – from 27,3% (2019) down to 19,8% (2020).

Montenegro is also characterized by presence of structural unemployment, fewer students completing primary education and insufficiently developed mechanisms of: a) predicting skills needs; b) monitoring and evaluation of practical training; and c) tracking secondary school graduates

However, Montenegro has managed to come to certain results in VET, the most important to which are:

- Modernized VET programmes, based on learning outcomes and EQF principles;
- Dual education established;
- Increased participation of employers in dual education (from 101 companies in 2017 to 230 in 2021).

(b) Challenges and general objectives of the plan

VET system in Montenegro is characterized by a large share of VET students in four-year programmes which allows further education at universities, and a great deal of VET students does enrol into a university. However, the State has managed to increase the share of three-year students (genuine VET which is labour-market oriented) significantly in the last four years.

Quality assurance of all the processes related to VET remains a crucial task for national authorities. VET is very popular in Montenegro, but in order to keep the status it needs to improve certain

segments of the system, in particular work-based learning. In addition to increasing the number of students involved in dual education and the quality of apprenticeship, the quality of school-based model must be enhanced through the effective and efficient processes of external VET providers' evaluation and a robust self-evaluation.

VET in lifelong learning perspective is a must in challenging times. Montenegro has been struggling to increase the participation of its citizens in LLL programmes in the last decade. Although much has been done with modernizing the qualifications in the formal system and creating conditions for recognition of prior informal learning, participation rate was rather low (around 3%). There might be a several reasons for such a situation. Poor level of visibility of national qualification framework which leaves potential users in the fog and inappropriate funding models are the issues that we are trying to improve with this plan.

Greening VET system is also high on the agenda of Montenegrin economy. Being an ecological state, Montenegro fully understands the importance of sustainable development and wishes to improve the situation with green jobs and skills which has not been given the proper attention so far. Development of new green qualifications, followed by greening the existing qualifications will be in the focus of national authorities.

Montenegro is also dedicated to development of key competences through the education system. Having in mind poor results of our students in PISA testing, in particular students who opt for VET, efforts have to be made to train teachers how to integrate key competences into their teaching and turn VET schools into institutions developing all key competences with their students.

It has often been said that Montenegrin VET system is not fully in line with labour market needs. To make things better, a thorough analysis of the sectors and sectorial skills forecast is a matter of urgency. Generating comprehensive labour market intelligence which can be used for high-quality career guidance and counselling and making informed decisions on VET provision are the planned measures aiming at harmonization of VET provision with labour market needs.

The COVID-19 crisis has clearly demonstrated that modern education must be backed up an increasing use of modern technologies and digital devices. By providing the necessary equipment to VET schools and training VET teachers how to fully exploit the possibilities of digital devices and creating digital contents we hope to make the teaching and learning process in VET far more student-centred and beneficial in terms of acquiring competences needed for a good life in the 21st century.

The general objectives of the NIP until 2025 are:

- Strengthening of quality assurance in VET with focus on WBL in all its forms
- VET from lifelong learning perspective
- Harmonization of VET provision with labour market needs
- Digitalization of VET - digital school

(c) Detailed description of measures and/or their packages

Cluster I. Strengthening of quality assurance in VET with focus on WBL in all its forms
Measure I.1. Further development of national quality assurance systems, for both IVET and CVET based on the EQAVET Framework with focus on external evaluation of VET providers
Rationale/background, challenges addressed
Montenegro has developed its own QA system, comprising of regular external and self-evaluation of VET providers, external final exams, accreditation processes for VET providers, (re)licencing of

VET educators, etc. However, the system could function much better and benefit from significant improvements.

External evaluation of VET providers plays an important role in general improvement of IVET and CVET. VET Centre is a national reference point for EQAVET and has been harmonizing its QA system with EQAVET since 2012.

A new QA Methodology (describing external evaluation of schools in Montenegro as well) was adopted in 2021. Designed together with Bureau for Educational Services, it is meant for all types of schools whereas there are some indicators specific for VET schools. These indicators need to be well-described and understood by all the stakeholders involved in the process: external evaluators, VET providers, employers and the whole system. At the same time, VET Centre does not have a sufficient number of staff dealing with QA, so they have to hire external associates who need training on this particular issue. Only trained evaluators can conduct external evaluations which will lead to improvements in schools.

Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan

This measure aims at improving QA in all learning environments (such as school-based provision and work-based learning, including apprenticeship schemes) and all learning types (digital, face-to-face or blended), delivered by both public and private providers, underpinned by a set of indicative descriptors and common reference indicators for quality assurance in vocational education and training applied both at system and provider level.

The objectives of this measure are:

- Describing a set of indicators specific for VET providers;
- Designing a competence framework for external evaluators;
- Training a pool of external evaluators;
- Conducting external evaluations of VET providers, followed by reports with recommendations.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

National VET Centre, in close cooperation with VET providers, will describe the indicators specific for VET and inform VET providers with the content. **Indicator: The document has been designed and disseminated to the VET providers.**

A competence framework for external evaluators is being done through a regional project implemented by ERISSE. Once the framework is adopted, VET Centre will commence with training of external evaluators. **Indicator: The framework has been designed and put in place. 25 external evaluators have been trained every year.**

Regular and effective external evaluation of VET providers (including CVET), with reports made public will be conducted annually and followed by VET providers designing their improvement plans based on the recommendations from the report. **Indicator: 25% of VET providers have been externally evaluated every year.**

	2022	2023		2024		2025	
	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
Describing a set of indicators specific for VET providers							
Designing a competence framework for external evaluators							
Training a pool of external evaluators							
Conducting external evaluations of VET providers							

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET

- A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges.
- B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET.
- C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand.
- D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.
- E. VET promotes equality of opportunities.
- F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.

Osnabrück Declaration

- 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET.
- 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.
- 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET.
- 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.

VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)	
Scope (national, regional, local)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local	
Beneficiaries and target groups	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National VET Centre, VET providers, external evaluators	
Responsible ministries/bodies	
Ministry of Education, National VET Centre.	
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)	
All these activities will be funded through budgets of VET Centre and Ministry of Education, whereas competence framework for external evaluators is funded through the project implemented by ERISSE.	

Measure I.2. Support self-evaluation as a complementary and effective means of quality assurance
Rationale/background, challenges addressed
<p>VET providers need to take over the responsibility for their own development. Self-evaluation of VET providers has been compulsory since 2010 and most of them do it on a regular basis. However, the process needs to be updated and modernized in line with new QA methodology. The new methodology prescribes that VET schools have to send the national VET Centre the report on self-evaluation every second year.</p> <p>There have also been numerous changes in school management teams in the last couple of years which implies the new school leaders have a limited knowledge of the process. They need to be supported, both through on-line portals/manuals on self-evaluation and training of the school quality teams.</p>
Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan
This measure will allow the self-measurement of success and the identification of areas for improvement, including with respect to digital readiness of VET systems and institutions. It will also

enable Montenegro to participate actively in the European network for quality assurance in vocational education and training and provide an updated description of the national quality assurance arrangements based on the EQAVET Framework. It will also deal with areas that are often neglected in the process: career guidance, key competences, tracking VET students, quality of apprenticeship, etc.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

A manual/ on-line portal on self-evaluation of VET providers will be designed. The purpose of this initiative is to provide support to all VET institutions involved in the process by guiding them through self-evaluation. **Indicator: The manual/portal has been designed and made fully operational.**

A training programme for conducting self-evaluation in VET schools will be designed, based on portal/manual designed so that VET providers are familiar with what they are expected to do. **Indicator: The training programme has been designed and included in the national catalogue.**

VET providers will be trained on how to conduct self-evaluation and provided with further support throughout the process, especially those that are false beginners.

Indicator: 15 VET providers a year have been trained for self-evaluation.

	2022	2023		2024		2025	
	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
Designing Manual/ on-line portal on self-evaluation in VET schools							
Designing a training programme for conducting self-evaluation in VET schools							
Training VET schools on how to conduct self-evaluation and provide further support							

EU policy priorities addressed

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- D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.
- E. VET promotes equality of opportunities.

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- 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.	
VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)	
Scope (national, regional, local)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local	
Beneficiaries and target groups	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VET providers, QA teams in VET schools	
Responsible ministries/bodies	
National VET Centre, Bureau for Educational Services.	
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)	
National funds will be used except the on-line portal which might be funded by international partners (IPA, ETF, and ILO).	

Measure I.3. Reinforce work-based learning and apprenticeships by implementing the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships
Rationale/background, challenges addressed
<p>Montenegro introduced dual education model in 2017 for VET students in three-year programmes. COVID-19 had a negative impact on employers' participation and quality of the apprenticeship. In addition, VET students who are in school-based model also have to spend a certain amount of time at employers. This implies that everyone involved in the process (VET school teachers, Vet school Practical Training teachers, in-company trainers, etc.) need to understand the quality assurance system and apply it consistently.</p> <p>Two reviews of the dual education system have been conducted with help from ETF since introduction of the initiative. These reviews, and regular national reviews conducted by Ministry of Education every year, have demonstrated the need for further development of the dual education model by using the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships.</p>
Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan
Strengthen the use of quality and inclusive apprenticeships and other forms of WBL as a tool to support school/training-to-work transitions of all VET students (including vulnerable groups) and to

improve citizens' qualification levels. The quality of WBL must be improved by involving more employers in the process and providing more VET students with opportunities to gain real-life work experience.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

Quality indicators related to work-based learning in line with EF for Quality Apprenticeship will be designed and introduced to everyone involved in the process (VET teachers, in-company trainers, employers, etc.) **Indicator: Quality indicators have been designed and introduced to all the stakeholders.**

By involving more employers, we will increase the share of VET students (who are not in dual education) exposed to work-based learning in enterprises. **Indicator: Annual increase by 10% of the employers involved and students exposed to work-based learning in enterprises.**

Regular monitoring and evaluation of practical training in all forms (school-based, apprenticeship, combined) will be conducted both through external and self-evaluation of schools. **Indicator: Annual reports on the quality of work-based learning, followed by a set of recommendations, have been designed.**

	2022	2023		2024		2025	
	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
Design quality indicators related to work-based learning in line with EF for Quality							
Increase the share of VET students exposed to work-based learning in enterprises							
Conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of practical training in all forms (school-based, apprenticeship, combined)							

EU policy priorities addressed

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- C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand.
- D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.

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- 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.

<input type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.	
VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)	
Scope (national, regional, local)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local	
Beneficiaries and target groups	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VET students, VET teachers, in-company trainers, employers.	
Responsible ministries/bodies	
Ministry of Education, National VET Centre, Chamber of Economy, employers' associations.	
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)	
National funds will be used.	

Cluster II. VET from lifelong learning perspective
Measure II.1. Increase participation of citizens in a quality and inclusive lifelong learning process.
Rationale/background, challenges addressed
<p>Widening access and increasing participation to education and training throughout life and enhancing the quality of learning are key components of the EU's efforts to ensure sustainable economic growth and reinforce social cohesion.</p> <p>The Adult Education Strategy (2015-2025) defines five priority objectives: social inclusion of adults through lifelong learning education programs and activities; improving knowledge, skills and competences of adults for employability, labour market mobility and competitiveness; improvement of employee competencies; quality assurance in adult education; ensuring a flexible and sustainable adult education system.</p> <p>In order to encourage citizens to participate more in LLL programmes, we need to make sure that they fully understand the importance and necessity of being a proactive learner. Currently, it is rather difficult to find all the information about the qualifications available, local or regional providers, the process of validation of your skills that you acquired elsewhere, or incentives intended for certain</p>

programmes. Using technology for integration of all the needed information at one virtual space can be an effective way of motivating people to engage in education and training throughout their lives.

Another obstacle that often prevents learners from taking part in LLL programmes is that they frequently have to pay for the services provided out of their own pocket which may be challenging, in particular for the unemployed. On the other hand, there are so many models of providing incentives to the potential users which have not been fully exploited.

Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan

Developing relevant skills over the life course. All people need access to opportunities to develop and maintain strong proficiency in a broad set of skills. This process is lifelong, starting in childhood and youth and continuing throughout adulthood. It is also “life-wide”, occurring not only formally in schools and higher education, but also non-formally and informally in the home, community and workplaces.

Strengthening the governance of skills systems. Success in developing and using relevant skills requires strong governance arrangements to promote co-ordination, co-operation and collaboration across the whole of government; engage stakeholders throughout the policy cycle; build integrated information systems; and align and coordinate financing arrangements.

The implications of so-called megatrends, such as globalisation, digitalisation, population ageing or migration have to be taken into account as well. It also accounts for new evidence about skills policies that work under the proper governance arrangements, including effective co-ordination and accountability mechanisms, efficient funding from different sources and information systems.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

Updating the existing national qualifications portal - Acquiring skills through life is most rewarding for individuals when they can be recognised. Learners can be helped by making the skills visible, encouraging certification for non-formal education and training, recognising non-formal and informal learning in national qualifications frameworks, harnessing technology to certify skills, and pursuing international harmonisation of recognition and certification. The information system of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), has been developed in order to provide different target groups with access to the concept of the NQF and information on qualifications that can be obtained in Montenegro. In this way, the problem is overcome that in one place, in electronic form, one can find an overview of qualifications systems in Montenegro, the content of qualifications of different levels acquired in Montenegro, an overview of institutions where certain qualifications can be obtained, information on informal and informally acquired knowledge, etc. **Indicator: NQF online portal containing all the necessary information has been updated and put in place.**

Providing information about qualifications to end-users - learning opportunities have to be accessible and flexible to meet learners’ needs. This can be achieved by first informing the adults and employers about all types of qualifications, ways of acquiring the qualifications, adult education providers, incentives for taking part in training programmes, etc. **Indicator: The campaign on participation in lifelong learning has been designed and launched.**

Strengthening financing arrangements for adult learning - Financial barriers are typically high for adults from a disadvantaged background, as well as smaller enterprises. Funding systems can make adult learning affordable for those who need it most, while also keeping public funding sustainable. This can be achieved by targeting funding to individuals (irrespective of their contract type or with whom they learn), especially those from a disadvantaged background. It can also be

achieved by coupling financial incentives with other supports, including for small-sized enterprises.
Indicator: A new, sustainable model of funding has been designed in cooperation with other stakeholders and put in place.

	2022	2023		2024		2025	
	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
Updating the existing national qualifications portal							
Awareness campaign has been launched							
A new, sustainable model of funding has been designed							

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET

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- D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.
- E. VET promotes equality of opportunities.
- F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.

Osnabrück Declaration

- 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET.
- 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.
- 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET.
- 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.

VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)

- initial VET (IVET)
- continuing VET (CVET)

Scope (national, regional, local)

- national
- regional

<input type="checkbox"/> local
Beneficiaries and target groups
<input type="checkbox"/> Adult education providers, adult learners
Responsible ministries/bodies
Ministry of Education and other line ministries, National VET Centre, Chamber of Economy, Public Employment Service
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)
National funds will be used, aided by EU funds where possible.

Measure II.2. Greening VET programmes
Rationale/background, challenges addressed
<p>Montenegro needs coherent strategies that bring together energy, environment, education and skills development objectives, policies and responsible ministries in order to adapt to climate change and shift to clean and sustainable production and consumption in ways that maximize creation of decent work and make it available to all. To do so we need to place a high premium on effective social dialogue, coordination among ministries, and communication between employers and training providers.</p> <p>Smart Specialization Strategy has selected renewable energy as one of its pillars. So far, Montenegro has focused on installing renewable energy sources (wind, solar and hydro energy). It is evident that there are no qualifications in VET system which are purely linked with greening.</p>
Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan
<p>Incentives for greening VET programmes have to be created, including education and training in green technologies and innovation, in energy efficiency, circular economy, environmental awareness, sustainable use of learning and training material, digitalisation to reduce climate effects</p> <p>We also have to define labour-market-relevant skills for the green transition that are to be incorporated in curricula and VET provision, including basic skills across all sectors and occupations and sector-specific skills in cooperation with the social partners</p> <p>An analysis of all the qualifications in energy sector needs to be conducted, and a decision has to be made in order to determine whether full VET qualifications or short, partial qualifications are going to be designed and offered through VET provision. It seems that a lot of jobs in line with renewable energy can be done through upskilling and reskilling.</p> <p>The second stream is greening the existing VET qualifications. A thorough analyses of all VET sectors and programmes needs to be conducted, followed by national guidelines to VET providers on how to incorporate green elements into teaching and everyday school activities.</p>
Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

Review of qualifications in clean energy production will be conducted. **Indicator: The review has been conducted and a list of qualifications to be developed has been suggested.**

Based on the review, missing qualifications will be designed either as IVET (full) or CVET (partial) qualifications. **Indicator: at least 3 new IVET or CVET qualifications a year have been developed.**

Guidelines on how to green VET which are either sectorial (electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, construction, tourism, environment protection etc.) or occupational-based will be designed. **Indicator: Guidelines for three sectors a year have been designed and introduced to VET providers.**

Transformation of VET schools into green schools project will be initiated. ECO schools project, which has been successfully implemented in primary schools, has been adapted for VET schools. **Indicator: VET schools apply for the green flag and at least 7 VET schools a year get one on annual basis.**

	2022	2023		2024		2025	
	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
Review of qualifications in clean energy production							
Development of new qualifications in clean energy production (at least 5 a year)							
Designing Guidelines for three sectors a year							
VET schools transformation into green, ECO schools							

EU policy priorities addressed

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VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)
Scope (national, regional, local)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local
Beneficiaries and target groups
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IVET and CVET students, VET providers
Responsible ministries/bodies
Ministry of Education, Ministry of Ecology, spatial planning and urbanism, Ministry of Capital Investments
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)
National funds will be used, and expert help is expected from our EU partners.

Measure II.3. Promote key competences as part of qualification and curricula requirements in VET qualifications in line with the National Key Competence Framework
Rationale/background, challenges addressed
<p>The focus on key competences and how they are developed is on the school based learning. The school-based part is designed to deliver a range of broad competences aiming to support and provide perspectives to the practical learning in companies. In addition, Montenegrin framework for key competences development has been developed and is to be adopted by National Council for Education, with learning outcomes for 8 key competences by levels of education.</p> <p>On the one hand, all the revised VET programmes have key competences incorporated. On the other hand, knowing that vast majority of under-performers in PISA are in VET, more emphasize needs to be given to this issue.</p>
Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan
<p>A good number of VET teachers has been trained on how to integrate key competences in VET teaching through the IPA project Integration of Key Competences in Education System of Montenegro (2019-2021). These trainings need to be continued in addition to designing guidelines for VET schools on integration of key competences in teaching and learning, introducing new initiatives such as teaching in English (other foreign languages) in certain VET curricula/subjects and adopting the whole-school approach to improvement of key competences.</p>

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

Further delivery of training for integration of key competences – All the VET teachers need to be trained on this topic and this programme will be given high priority by national VET Centre. **Indicator: 200 VET teachers have been trained a year on integration of key competences into their teaching.**

Designing school policies for development of key competences – VET schools will be supported in designing their own policies on how to tackle key competences development. **Indicator: 10 VET schools a year have been supported by VET Centre in designing their own school policies on key competences.**

Conducting studies and surveys on the quality of key competences development – Key competences in VET will be a subject of national/international studies and researches, the findings of which will be used for further improvement.

Indicator: Biannual studies on the quality of key competences development have been conducted.

	2022	2023		2024		2025	
	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
Training VET teachers on integration of key competences							
VET schools developing their own policies about integration of key competences							
Studies and surveys on the quality of key competences development							

EU policy priorities addressed

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VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)
Scope (national, regional, local)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local
Beneficiaries and target groups
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IVET students, VET providers,
Responsible ministries/bodies
Ministry of Education, National VET Centre
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)
National funds will be used.

Cluster III. Harmonization of VET provision with labour market needs
Measure III.1. Develop national and regional skills intelligence systems including skills anticipation
Rationale/background, challenges addressed
<p>Implementing skills reforms effectively is a complex task, since skills policy is located at the intersection of education, labour market, industrial and other policy domains. This implies the need to coordinate and collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders, including ministries, officials at all levels of government, students, teachers, workers, employers, trade unions, and many others. Inter-sectorial reforms are often associated with very complex redistributive trade-offs as they are characterised by distribution and redistribution of resources across and between sectors as well as levels of government. Therefore, when designing and implementing skills policies, governments often face enormous political and technical challenges.</p> <p>The idea of this measure is to foster a whole-of-government approach, bringing together relevant ministries to better understand the country's goals for the future, identify the priority areas for action, as well as to design and align skills policies to improve that particular country's skills performance. In addition, different stakeholders will be engaged to improve our understanding of the current skills challenges and opportunities; solicit their perspectives on what policy responses are needed and supported; validate policy recommendations; and build support to take joint action to implement policies.</p>

Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan

Identifying, analysing, synthesising and presenting quantitative and/or qualitative skills and labour market information. These may be drawn from multiple sources and adjusted to the needs of different users.

To remain relevant, skills intelligence must be kept up-to-date and adjusted when user needs change. This requires the expert-driven process to be continuous and iterative.

To support users' decisions, findings need to be presented in a way understandable to the specific users. This may involve presenting combinations of quantitative data that would not necessarily convey the intended message if presented standalone; or blending quantitative with qualitative information. While in some cases, a simple graph may be sufficient, in others more advanced visualisations could be more suitable to transmit a complex message in a user-friendly format.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

	2022	2023		2024		2025	
	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
Training sectorial committees							
Conducting sectorial skills analyses							
VET provision is updated and in line with LM needs.							

Training sectorial committees on how to conduct sectorial skills analyses will be delivered by international and national experts, with help from ETF or ILO. **Indicator: Three sectorial committees a year have been trained on conducting skills analyses.**

Conducting sectorial skills analyses and anticipation of skills needs in the most profitable sectors (ICT, Health tourism, Food production, Sustainable tourism, Renewable energy) will serve as a basis for development of new and revision of existing VET qualifications (both in IVET and CVET). **Indicator: Three sectorial analyses a year have been conducted.**

Making informed decisions on VET provision in line with sectorial analyses is the final step in this cycle. **Indicator: VET provision (both IVET and CVET) take sectorial analyses into account and offer qualifications in line with labour market needs.**

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET

- A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges.
- B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET.

Osnabrück Declaration

- 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET.
- 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.

<input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.	<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.
VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)	
Scope (national, regional, local)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local	
Beneficiaries and target groups	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IVET and CVET students, VET providers, sectorial committees	
Responsible ministries/bodies	
Ministry of Education, sectorial committees, line ministries, employers' associations,	
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)	
National and EU funds will be used.	

Measure III.2. Establishment of a graduate tracking system
Rationale/background, challenges addressed
<p>Quantitative and qualitative data on skills and the labour market are the necessary building blocks to facilitate the work and decisions of various stakeholders in VET' (for example policy makers, social partners, local VET providers, career counsellors and learners). But these groups have different information needs and vary in terms of their understanding of key concepts or experience in using and 'translating' data so that it becomes useful in their context. It is the role of national</p>

authorities to identify information requirements, use appropriate data, tools and techniques, and develop tailor-made solutions to present the outcomes so that they meet user needs.

Labour market information systems, institutions for social dialogue, and labour market mediation services are prerequisites for being able to anticipate future skill needs and to adapt skills development systems accordingly.

The Ministry of Education of Montenegro is striving to achieve a better matching between supply and demand of skills on the labour market by increasing the pertinence of VET. It calls for developing more effective feedback loops between VET and the labour market.

Enrolment policies in both IVET and CVET are not sufficiently evidence-based, partly due to the low quality of LMI and unknown outcomes of IVET and CVET students.

Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan

There is a great need for high-quality LMI and more thorough understanding of the labour market trends. To do so, we must have the data on outcomes of VET. Quality LMI will also be used for career guidance and counselling services.

The aim would be to capture the labour market and educational trajectories of all students and graduates from the VET system. Such a system would allow monitoring whether students successfully integrated into the labour market, progressed in education, dropped out of the education system or are neither in education, nor training, nor employment (NEETs). Among other benefits, the information generated would provide systematic intelligence to assess the effectiveness and pertinence of VET provision and develop evidence-based policies and programmes, adjust the provision of career guidance and allocate financial resources more effectively.

Finding out where IVET and CVET students go after completion of a programme /course (do they get employment, go to university or register with PES) will help us get the full picture of the system. Finding out about the quality of skills and knowledge acquired in IVET and CVET for an occupation by using online surveys will help us make the necessary changes.

Getting a full picture on labour market and trends that could inform the system on missing qualifications in IVET and CVET could match better the VET provision to labour market needs.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

Establishment of a graduate tracking system based on administrative data, and gradual monitoring of IVET and CVET outcomes (designing methodology, reaching agreement with key stakeholders on data exchange, preparation of the technical issues, etc.).

Conducting online surveys with IVET and CVET graduates on qualitative issues (designing online questionnaires to be used, motivating students to participate in surveys, preparation of the technical issues, etc.).

The indicators can be seen in the table:

	2022	2023		2024		2025	
	II	I	II	I	II	I	II

Tracking graduate students by combining administrative data	Dual education students		4-year students from 2 sectors		4 year students from 3 more sectors		all IVET and CVET students tracked
Conducting online surveys with VET graduates	50% response rate		55% response rate		60% response rate		65% response rate
EU policy priorities addressed							
Council Recommendation on VET				Osnabrück Declaration			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.			
VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)							
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)							
Scope (national, regional, local)							
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local							
Beneficiaries and target groups							
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IVET and CVET students, employers, Ministry of Education							
Responsible ministries/bodies							
Ministry of Education, University of Montenegro, Taxation Agency, Public Employment Service							

Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)

National funds will be used.

Measure III.3. Strengthening Career Guidance and Counselling (CGC) in VET schools

Rationale/background, challenges addressed

It is getting more and more complicated to catch up with all the changes that are happening around us which requires individuals to become real lifelong learners, to acquire new competences to cope with change and to adapt and further develop existing competences. In addition, there is a growing demand for valid information on the changing labour markets and future prospects. Never before has a need for supporting people to manage their more frequent and complex transitions within and between education and work been so great. Career development support – that is lifelong career guidance and counselling, and in particular career education, is the buzzing word throughout the world, and more and more reviews and international researches are investigating the state-of-play and impact of it on the successful transitions we make in our lives.

Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan

A good deal of the infrastructure necessary for the career guidance system has been set up to some extent (strategies, training programmes for school CG advisors, manuals on how to provide the support at schools, piloting the so-called Centres for Informing and Professional Counselling, etc.). However, due to a good number of different stakeholders involved in the process impaired with poor coordination and cooperation mechanisms, the system does not function as a whole but rather as fragmented pieces of a unit which lacks coherence and cohesion.

Strengthening the CGC process at primary and secondary schools by offering a systematic provision of this support to students and training school leaders and school teams. The training would include Interpretation of LMI, Using technologies for CGC, involving parents, leading group and individual CGC activities, motivating students to take part in CGC, close cooperation with employers/employer organisations etc.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

The existing training programmes for CGC school teams will be revised and adapted to VET provider needs. A revised training programme will be delivered to VET providers. **Indicator: The revised programme in line with VET providers' needs has been designed and VET schools teams have been trained.**

Career education curriculum for VET schools will be designed and delivered through the so-called free part of curriculum. **Indicator: Career education curriculum for VET schools has been designed and introduced to VET schools.**

CGC in VET schools will be regularly monitored and evaluated. **Indicator: CGC is the subject of both external and internal evaluation of VET schools. Biannual reports on the quality of career guidance have been designed.**

	2022	2023		2024		2025	
	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
Revision of training programme for VET school teams							
Training VET schools on CGC		30% of VET schools		30% of VET schools		40% of VET schools	
Designing CGC curriculum for VET schools							
Drafting biannual reports on the quality of CGC in VET schools							

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET

- A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges.
- B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET.
- C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand.
- D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.
- E. VET promotes equality of opportunities.
- F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.

Osnabrück Declaration

- 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET.
- 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.
- 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET.
- 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.

VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)

- initial VET (IVET)
- continuing VET (CVET)

Scope (national, regional, local)

- national
- regional

<input type="checkbox"/> local
Beneficiaries and target groups
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IVET students
Responsible ministries/bodies
Ministry of Education, National VET Centre
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)
National funds will be used.

Cluster IV. Digitalization of VET - digital school				
Measure IV.1. Support the development of digital infrastructure for learning and teaching purposes				
Rationale/background, challenges addressed				
High-quality VET in 21 st century is difficult to imagine without having modern digital devices facilitating teaching and learning process. The equipment in most VET schools, primarily computers and other devices are rather out-of-date, often out-of-order and does not meet the need for effective teaching and learning. So far, the focus of providing equipment was to install 10-15 computers into one specialized room which was used for teaching the subject called ICT. Other classrooms were out of focus and are generally poorly equipped.				
Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan				
The following objectives have been identified: Physical and Virtual Learning Spaces are designed for digital-age learning The digital infrastructure is planned and managed A range of digital learning technologies supports anytime/anyplace learning				
Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline				
This particular measure aims at: getting new equipment (computers, OHPs, printers, etc.) which will replace old devices at VET schools thus enabling all the learning spaces to have at least one computer per classroom; providing all the VET schools with fast Internet which will cover the entire school area; getting necessary licences for the programmes used; getting needed educational software by sectors so that students can have virtual experiences. The measure involves determining the needs of VET schools for equipment, making the list of everything needed, tendering process and distribution of the equipment to VET schools. Indicator: All the VET schools have been equipped with a number of new devices.				
	2022	2023	2024	2025

	II	I	II	I	II	I	II	
Distributing equipment in VET schools (EIB)								
Distributing equipment in VET schools (state budget)								
EU policy priorities addressed								
Council Recommendation on VET				Osnabrück Declaration				
<input type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.				<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.				
VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)								
Scope (national, regional, local)								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local								
Beneficiaries and target groups								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VET schools, IVET students, VET teachers								
Responsible ministries/bodies								
Ministry of Education								
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)								

European Investment Bank and state budget.

Measure IV.2. Support VET educators by equipping them with the adequate skills and tools for and through digital technologies

Rationale/background, challenges addressed

VET teachers and trainers face challenges such as no access to equipment and internet connection required to offer distance learning; lack of digital skills and competences to make efficient use of the platforms; no experience in e-learning and other distance learning pedagogies in VET, especially for teaching practical components; concerns over privacy issues, copyright and data protection.

The crisis with COVID-19 has demonstrated that most teachers lack adequate digital skills. The experience has shown that lack of skills is particularly obvious in digital assessment.

Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan

This measure intends to provide support to VET teachers by designing relevant training programmes for digital skills, and training VET teachers on certain topics either online, face-to-face, hybrid model, or by enabling them to go through the programme at their own pace through self-learning.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

The very first thing to do is to conduct training needs analyses (TNA) for VET teachers and thus determine priorities in training. **Indicator: TNA has been conducted and clusters of digital skills have been identified.**

The next step is designing new training programmes/adapting the existing ones on the basis of TNA. **Indicator: Based on TNA, at least 5 new training programmes have been designed and accredited by a relevant institution.**

The final step is extensive training of VET teachers on various aspects of use of digital devices in their teaching. **Indicator: Minimum 200 VET teachers a year have been trained on digital skills in teaching.**

	2022	2023		2024		2025	
	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
Conducting TNA							
Designing training programmes							
Conducting training sessions							

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET	Osnabrück Declaration
<input type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.
VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)	
Scope (national, regional, local)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local	
Beneficiaries and target groups	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IVET students, VET teachers	
Responsible ministries/bodies	
Ministry of Education, National VET Centre	
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)	
National funds and EU funds will be used.	

Measure IV.3. Creating digital contents for teaching and learning

Rationale/background, challenges addressed

Digital contents used in VET enable learners to learn at their own pace, at the convenient time, to go back to the same materials over and over again, and learning in the environment to which they are used to.

VET teachers and educators in Montenegro have poor experience in creating digital teaching content. To make things worse, there are no textbooks for a good number of sectors/VET programmes/subjects which implies that VET educators have to find their own ways of tackling the issue. Moreover, the culture of sharing teaching and learning materials is not wide-spread

Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan

The following objectives have been identified:

Digital Content and open educational resources (OER) are widely promoted and used;

Curricula are redesigned or reinterpreted to reflect the pedagogical possibilities afforded by digital technologies;

Staff and students are the creators of contents;

Content repositories are widely and effectively used.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

Basically, before any training a comprehensive training needs analyses should be conducted in order to identify gaps in knowledge. **Indicator: The TNA has been conducted and a training programme has been developed.**

Once the TNA has been done, a training programme will be designed and tested. **Indicator: the training programme has been developed and included in the national catalogue.**

As the issue is digital contents, training workshops will be delivered online to all the VET teachers with tutorials on how to create digital contents. **Indicator: workshops will be delivered for minimum 200 VET teachers a year.**

The practice of publishing/uploading and sharing of digital contents in general will be promoted.

Indicator: An online platform will be set up and VET teachers will upload their digital materials there for sharing with their colleagues (trained teachers are expected to upload at least one digital material a year after the training).

	2022	2023		2024		2025	
	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
Conducting TNA							
Designing training programmes							
Conducting training workshops		200 VET teachers		200 VET teachers		200 VET teachers	

Setting up the online platform								
Uploading digital materials					200		200	
EU policy priorities addressed								
Council Recommendation on VET					Osnabrück Declaration			
<input type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.					<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.			
VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)								
Scope (national, regional, local)								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local								
Beneficiaries and target groups								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IVET and CVET students, VET teachers								
Responsible ministries/bodies								
Ministry of Education, National VET Centre, VET providers								
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)								
National and international funds will be used.								

(d) Governance of the implementation of the plan

Precondition for implementation of NIP and VET Development Strategy is the cooperation of all the partners.

Implementation of activities implies division of the mandate among government institutions, education providers, employers' associations and other partners, and their coordination as well.

Necessity of permanent dialogue and cooperation of public and private sector in VET is directly dependent on the cooperation and the environment in which it is realized.

There is also the necessity of establishing cooperation with Youth Guarantee working group. As the Ministry of Education has its representative in the working group for Youth Guarantee programme, we will be closely cooperating with it and try to coordinate our activities to large extent.

In order to monitor the implementation of the plan, Ministry of education intends to set up the Coordination Body for monitoring the OD-NIP and action plan of VET Strategy for 2022 and 2023 on the principle of partnership. The body will involve all the stakeholders relevant for VET: the Ministry of Education, the VET Centre, the Chamber of Economy, the Employers Federation, the Public Employment Service, VET providers, etc.

The coordination body will be tasked with: monitoring implementation of activities; quarterly analysis of achievement of the plans, annual evaluation of what has been done, recommendations for planning activities for the year to come.

(e) Expected effects of the plan

VET plays a key role in Montenegro's education market, offering a system where learners develop skills and gain qualifications that meet labour market needs. Around two thirds of all secondary school students are enrolled in the Montenegrin VET system—a reflection of the importance of VET as a learning provider for the varying educational needs, capabilities, and personal circumstances of the Montenegrin population.

This NIP, and Action Plan for VET Strategy 2022-23, will set out the activities in the field of VET in the future period. All the activities proposed should bring about improvements in VET provision and delivery, thus creating better employability of graduates from VET and their skills needed for a modern labour market.

All the benefits of VET can be realised through improving the quality of vocational education and training. While there are many high quality providers, consistently achieving quality remains a fundamental issue for the sector, preventing the effectiveness of many reforms.

Skills development and educational attainment are strong drivers of employability and income, and so equitable access to learning opportunities is also a critical driver of productivity and a priority for VET. Access to participation in education and training in

Montenegro must be widened, and educational attainment levels must continue to improve, particularly for disadvantaged groups.

The NIP aims to position Montenegro's VET system as responsive, dynamic and innovative, delivering an excellent standard of education and training and supporting Montenegrins to obtain the skills they need to participate and prosper in the modern economy.

Establishment and nurturing strong quality assurance culture which in turn continually improves the VET system, enabling VET students to acquire practical skills in a real-work environment, greening and digitalisation of VET, better insight into labour market trends and shifts in skills needed for 21st century, will help Montenegrin economy cope with all the challenges it is facing nowadays.

Given the structure of the Montenegrin economy which is to large extent service-based, making it vulnerable to global events and crisis, and internal and external migrations of our population, one has to be very careful in planning and implementing long-term strategies and policies related to VET and skills development.