

Ministry of Education and Sports
Republic of Serbia

General policy on
international conferences, study visits
and partnerships in VET

1. Rationale for developing the policy

The successful reform of the VET system is an important precondition for the enhancement of the quality and employability of the workforce and thereby for the efficiency and competitiveness of the Serbian economy.

An important aspect of the reform is to take into account the effects of internationalisation and the development of information and communication technologies that are visibly changing not only the requirements put on the workforce in terms of qualifications and competences but also the way in which VET is designed and implemented.

Serbia faces the additional challenge of incorporating the European Union perspective in developing its VET system and responding to specific national needs.

In order to obtain the desired development, the international activities should be seen as multifaceted and they should take place not only at a national level but also on a voluntary, school-based basis.

Therefore the Ministry of National Education wishes to enhance cooperation in VET at all levels with other countries by encouraging the participation in international activities like conferences, study visits and partnerships (that further the objectives of the reform.)

The Serbian VET sector is benefiting from increasing support for the reform from several international donors. This gives opportunities for more individuals and institutions to participate in relevant international activities but it also makes it necessary to coordinate more closely and to strengthen the dissemination of information in order to ensure that the allocated funds are used to the maximum and to avoid duplications and information gaps.

This policy defines the activities that are covered by the policy and lists the general objectives that should overarch the type of international activities supported by the policy. Finally, it states the basic conditions governing all participation by Serbian individuals or institutions in the international activities.

2. Definition

- International conferences

By international conferences is meant participation in international meetings, seminars, conferences and courses focusing on issues relevant for the reform of VET in Serbia.

- International study visits

International study visits include visits to other countries by VET staff at all levels, providing a relevant input to the continued reform of VET in Serbia.

- International partnerships

By international partnerships is meant transnational cooperation organised as partnerships or twinning arrangements for professional staff or students in VET institutions providing a relevant input to the development of VET and/or to the qualifications and competences of the participants.

3. Objectives overarching the activities

3.1. International conferences

The Ministry of Education and Sports supports the participation of individual VET staff in international conferences with the objectives of:

- strengthening the integration of the European VET development perspective in the continuous reform of the Serbian VET system
- enabling networking between Serbian and European VET professionals
- facilitating professional inputs from Serbian side in the European VET debate

3.2. International study visits

The Ministry of Education and Sports supports the organisation of international study visits for Serbian VET professionals at all levels with the objectives of:

- studying the functioning of particular relevant aspects of VET systems that have successfully undergone reform
- exchanging ideas and experience on policies, strategies and approaches planned for or applied in the national VET system compared with other countries

3.3. International partnerships

The Ministry of Education and Sports supports the formation of transnational partnerships for VET school staff and students and twinning arrangements for VET staff from the Ministry and related VET institutions with the objectives of:

- reinforcing voluntary and school transnational cooperation between VET institutions in close partnership with employers and employees
- enhancing the quality, attractiveness and competitiveness of the Serbian VET system and programmes
- strengthening the intercultural awareness and competences of the Serbian VET agents and students
- developing the language competencies of the Serbian VET agents and students

- supporting collaboration links between professional VET institutions in Serbia and other countries

4. General Conditions

The participation of individuals and institutions in the above mentioned activities is governed by the following general conditions:

- Participation in international activities on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) must be approved in advance of the event and will be organised in accordance with the specific rules and procedures of the MoES and donor organization.
- Preference to support participation in international activities will be given to individuals who have already or are scheduled to participate in training in project management, who have competences in using information and communication technologies and who have acquired the necessary skills in foreign languages.
- All individuals or institutions who have received support for international activities are required to account for the financial support in strict accordance with the financial regulations of the MoES and donor organization.
- All individuals or institutions shall report on the obtained information and outputs and to disseminate this information in accordance with the more specific requirements of the MoES and donor organisation.

5. Reporting and Dissemination

All individuals or institutions shall prepare an internal report soon after finalizing the international activity.

The report shall include suggestions for dissemination activities like internal meetings for colleagues, writing of articles for professional magazines and newspapers or other ways of dissemination. In cases where the activity naturally leads to implementation of new approaches and methods, the report shall include a plan for implementation.

A copy of the report shall be submitted to the MoES library both in a hard copy and an electronic copy for registration in a database

In cases where institutions participate in international activities the report on the activities and progress made in relation to implementation of innovations shall be included in the Annual Report.