



**THE STATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF
REFORMS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND
TRAINING IN MONTENEGRO**

**REPORT BY THE INTERNATIONAL PEER REVIEW
TEAM**

MAY 2003

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This project was commissioned by the European Training Foundation. The contents, opinions and recommendations delivered in the report are those of the peer group alone and do not commit the European Union or its agencies in any way.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express their gratitude to all those who assisted the peer team in undertaking its research and consultations and for contributing ideas, critique and proposals. The team was particularly impressed with the 'open door' policy of all key institutions and stakeholders which allowed for easy access to information and constructive dialogue with all partners. The team would like particular to thank the experts and officials from the Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the National Curriculum Council, the Commission for VET reform, Commission for Adult Education, Employment service, social partners, particularly to Chamber of commerce and Employers Union, Trade unions and Trade unions for Education, Schools, concerned enterprises, teachers and principals and others individuals and institutes. This allowed the team to undertake its research and to formulate its critical ideas and recommendations, which follow in the report.

Finally, the Peer team would like to thank the National Observatory Montenegro, for providing background materials, elaboration of a full and balanced programme and providing excellent logistical support.

FOREWORD

In 2002 the European Training Foundation launched a new Peer Review Programme in south-east European countries that are preparing or already running European Union funded CARDS¹ projects in the field of VET. The programme is a follow-up to the thematic reviews of education policy carried out by the OECD throughout the years 2000 and 2001 and is funded from the European Training Foundation's own budget. In 2002 peer reviews were carried out in Albania, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, and the Kosovo², while peer reviews in other countries will follow in 2003 and thereafter.

The focus of this peer review programme is to evaluate recent progress in VET policy development and to propose activities that could be undertaken to help bring the reform process forward. The Foundation's peer reviews aim at both policy advice and capacity building in the region. They are organised in such a way that they would:

- contribute to an exchange of policy experience and enhance learning processes among national stakeholders;
- contribute to develop policy analysis capacities in the countries of the region;
- promote, in an effective way, regional co-operation between actors involved in similar activities;
- contribute to the CARDS programming and implementation cycle.

The present (and possible future) peer review cycles of the European Training Foundation contain five phases:

- a specific review topic is agreed with the country in question;

- national background material is prepared by both the host country and the country manager of the European Training Foundation, which includes the drafting of a briefing paper;
- a peer review team is set up and pays a visit to the country;
- a public review report is formulated and circulated.

In addition, the European Training Foundation organises specific staff development activities as a follow-up to the national reviews, as well as regional dissemination events to share experience between experts from different south-east European countries and learn from each other.

Where relevant, the peer reviews of the European Training Foundation put a clear focus on assessing where the country stands in terms of meeting its requirements from the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and preparing for accession to the European Union. Experts from European Union member states are included in the review teams to compare countries against EU good practice in terms of *outcomes (what has to be done)*; and experts from candidate countries are included to share their experience in terms of suitable *reform processes (how should it be done)*.

The aim of the final reports is to give policy advice and to identify short and mid-term actions rather than providing a complete, academic analysis of the VET system and grand reform proposals. The reports contain substantiated and operational conclusions and recommendations which should allow policy-makers in the country in question to design follow-up activities.

¹ CARDS is the European Union's assistance programme to south-east European countries.

² Under international administration in line with UNSCR 1244 of 10 June 1999

The Foundation does not see the peer reviews as a one-off event but rather as a permanent cycle during which the Foundation would provide inputs into the VET reform processes in the given countries. It is, hence, planned to arrange for subsequent review missions with external peers after periods of two to three years.

All peer review documents - *Executive Summary, Briefing Note and Peer Review report* – will be made available through the European Training Foundation's website: <http://www.etf.eu.int>.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Peer Review in Montenegro has focused on assessing the state of implementation of reforms in vocational education and training in Montenegro, and evaluating the readiness of various stakeholders to bring the reform process forward. The Foundation's peer reviews aim at both policy advice and capacity building in the region.

The report presents what the team has observed during its visits, how the team understands the situation and which conclusions it draws as a basis for its recommendations. The overall purpose of the Peer Review report is to support policy makers and other stakeholders in Montenegro to take such immediate actions that will contribute to bringing the reform process forward. This includes support to finding the right arguments for project development with and funding from the donor community, including especially, the EU Cards Programme.

Education reform in Montenegro takes place in an overall unstable and complicated economical and political situation. Clearly, such a situation also provides a fertile ground for social tensions and conflicts. Under such conditions the main problems are to initiate a real reform process and to ensure the continuity of the reform. The policy principles settled in the reform of education reflect a modern vision towards education in line with mainstream thinking and policy development in Europe and therefore provide a good starting point. The key issue is now: How to make it work?

The report deals with a number of critical issues as observed and perceived by the Peer Review Team during its discussions with authorities and stakeholders in the country. The attention is given in particular to the debate about a gradual versus a systemic and integrated reform strategy, the exemplary role of the Slovene experiences for the Montenegrin reform process, the needed balance between a top-down and a bottom-up approach, the necessary and available resources and capacities, the relation between education and training of youth and that of adults within a lifelong learning perspective.

The recommendations which follow the observation of the critical issues are related to the policy learning dimensions of international experience and to give more attention to co-operation between all partners at all levels. In addition the overall findings of the team are that there was a need to develop (in the period of observation) a clear and transparent financial picture of the reform time as well to give more emphasis on the human resource development aspect of the implementation of educational change. The financial picture has been given in Strategic Plan of Education Reform for period 2003-2004 and Strategy of Introduction ICT into Education System of Montenegro.

In the relation between education and training of youth and adults within a lifelong learning perspective it is therefore recommended that the Montenegrin authorities consider the introduction of certificates in adult education training as an acute issue but it should be developed in connection with the development of the framework of the formal curriculum³. This in turn, as experience from elsewhere shows, would assume the elaboration of principles for a National Qualification Framework prior to developing standards for individual occupations and/or education programmes. The (current and future) CARDS supported project could be a good opportunity to create - in co-operation with curricular commissions for VET and Adult Education - an example of how to connect a certificate to a formal VET curriculum. This may help define the relation between certificates and formal curricula already at the start and create the framework in which the certificates become part of a life-long learning strategy.

³ Government will prepare law that will cover certification system in the second half of year 2003.

The following chapter is dealing with the role and identification of the main drivers of change as well with issues that they are facing in the process of the reform. The Team proposes to give priority to four key change issues that may help to initiate a process of change that will soon reach a point of no return:

- Capacity building and staff development for those to be involved in the VET reforms
- Developing social partnership and in particular strengthening the involvement of employers
- Adopting a broad approach to curriculum development within an overall national framework of qualifications
- Establishing a professional support infrastructure

The conclusions of the peer report are focused on the identification of possible areas of international assistance and regional co-operation. Assistance for VET is already provided to Montenegro through the current EU CARDS programme in two sectors – wood processing and tourism, and establishment of special training centres is among its goals.

Further assistance for institution building should be provided to some key players as follows: at the central level (governmental institutions), Employment Service and Association of Employers and with greater involvement of the schools and University into the reform processes as regards the trainer and teacher development.

Regional cooperation and regional partnerships can be highly beneficial in restoring and further developing some of the main capacities of the educational system in Montenegro. Neighbouring countries have already made considerable progress in a number of key areas of reform, such as labour market policy and information system, teachers and training, experiences with the VET and Adult Education Centre, quality assurance and certification, from which the country may immediately profit.

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INTRODUCTION⁴

This report is based on the results of a Peer Review undertaken in the period of September –October 2002. The review was aimed at assessing the state of implementation of reforms in vocational education and training in Montenegro, and evaluating the readiness of various stakeholders to bring the reform process forward. Members of the Peer Review Team were assisted by the National Observatory in Montenegro during their visit. The Observatory also provided the team with ample background documentation, among which analyses of the VET system and the Book of Change, the Montenegrin policy statement on education reform.

The report is structured in 4 main chapters. The first chapter places the current VET reform debate in the overall economic and political context of the country. The second chapter discusses a series of critical issues related to the reform concepts and strategies of Montenegro. The final chapter then presents the Teams understanding of possible strategic change drivers and issues with regard to the reform of the VET system

in Montenegro. The chapter concludes with a suggestion to consider regional co-operation as a means to speed up the reform of the VET system.

Although a critical tone is inherent to this report, the team wishes to stress that simplicity and feasibility were the main objectives of this exercise. The overall purpose of the Peer Review report is to support policy makers and other stakeholders in Montenegro to take such immediate actions that will contribute to bringing the reform process forward. This includes support to finding the right arguments for project development with and funding from the donor community, including especially, the EU Cards Programme. Despite the fact that evaluation is the main objective of the exercise, the report and its recommendations should by no means be seen as a verdict on the capacity of the country or people of Montenegro to progress or to adopt change.

⁴ All peer review documents - *Executive Summary, Briefing Note and Peer Review report* – will be made available through the European Training Foundation's website.

1. BACKGROUND FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING REFORM IN MONTENEGRO

1.1 A difficult economic and political context

Elements of the overall context exhibit a small country of approx. 660 000 inhabitants and a worsening economy with about 36% registered unemployment (according to international Labour Organisation was unemployment rate 21%) in 2001 and significant imbalances between demand and supply on labour market. The trade deficit was around 300 million USD in recent years, which is about 40% of the GDP of that year. The informal and grey economy develop rapidly since official work in the formal economy has become reduced due to decreased production levels of (mostly still state-) companies many of whom only work at only 50% of their capacity. The economic situation indicates the urgency of reform but also puts severe constraints on achieving this.

In addition, several other obstacles have slowed down the Montenegrin reform process in the recent past. First of all, the recent political instability resulting from the unfinished discussions about the country's future status has meant that the adoption of new laws that should underpin reform has been delayed. The state's budget is characterised by chronic under-financing (a large budgetary deficit of 82 million DM in 2000, mainly financed by foreign assistance) leading to irregular payments in the public sector (including teachers salaries) and stagnation of all public sectors, including education where the quality of provision and delivery has dramatically worsened over the past decade. The economy and the education system that is preparing its human resources are still dominated by traditional industries whereas economic development increasingly is expected to

come from services, including tourism. There is a shortage of qualified workforce for the emerging service sectors (paradoxically, the country at the same time imports qualified workers in construction from neighbouring countries), while young people become discouraged by the current political and economic situation and increasingly look for better opportunities abroad.

The private sector only develops slowly (providing only little more than 20% of employment) while there is a growing uneasiness of the social partners to take part in the reform. Generally it is hard to find reliable data on the situation of the labour market because of the existence of a large informal economy with its hidden employment and because of high levels of hidden unemployment in state companies that are still kept alive.

1.2 Education reform initiatives have remained programmatic

Education reform in Montenegro takes place in an overall unstable and complicated economical and political situation. Clearly, such a situation also provides a fertile ground for social tensions and conflicts. Under such conditions the main problems are to initiate a real reform process and to ensure the continuity of the reform. A strike of teachers in public primary and secondary schools, which has lasted several months during 2002 in protest against their present difficult economic and social situation, has created a public confusion regarding the strengths of the system and its main stakeholders to endure radical changes. But particularly the postponement of new

educational legislation (in the time of the visit of the peer teams) has had a paralysing effect on the educational reform process not only because the legal fundamentals for changes in the educational system are still missing but also because of the highly symbolic nature of new legislation for mobilisation of public awareness and support.

In spite of the presence of several serious obstacles, different studies and reports (including the OECD's recent education policy review) testify that education actually does play a major role in developing a context of democratic principles, and that the Ministry of Education and Science is truly committed to the reform of education. The Book of Changes in Education (2001) represents the main political document based on which the Government of Montenegro wishes to initiate the process of change in the educational system.

According to the Book of Change, *"the new system of education must be compatible with strategic development orientation and overall goals of the reform in Montenegro for the development of a democratic, economically prosperous and open society, based on the governance of law, peaceful interethnic coexistence, understanding and tolerance."* Based on the Book of Changes, series of debates were recently launched, a larger one, involving the general public, followed by a seminar during which the open issues have been discussed by a number of educational professionals and social partners.

The Book of Changes has been prepared in close co-operation with Slovene educational reformers and defines the following underlying principles for the whole process of strategic change:

1. *Decentralisation of the system, with the goal of empowering local communities and civil society groups for managing change.*
2. *Assuring equal opportunities and guaranteeing equal rights to education for every individual, regardless gender, religion,*

nationality, social and cultural background.

3. *Making choice possible according to individual abilities, in the sense that every student should be given the opportunity to fulfil his or her full potential and to develop into responsible citizens.*
4. *Introduction of European standards, namely establishment of standards of knowledge which are comparable with European standards, mainly related to mutual recognition of diplomas and connections to the network of universities abroad.*
5. *Application of a quality system, namely investing in innovation of education goals and programmes, better teacher education and application of educational technology.*
6. *Development of human resources, in order to reach the maximum "exploitation" of human potential, including increased mobility and better ICT skills.*
7. *Life long education, to connect formal and informal learning and reach greater flexibility in meeting the needs of the economy.*
8. *Flexibility of the system, especially in the development of new curricula, and freedom awarded to teachers and schools to develop and implement new curricula. Flexibility has consequences for the autonomy of teachers and their responsibility in pursuing the goals of the reform.*
9. *Possibilities of transfer (vertical and horizontal interconnectedness of the system, aiming at a good connection of all segments of the education system, from pre-school to tertiary education), as well as a smooth transfer between the levels.*
10. *Compatibility of curricula with the level of education, in the sense that curricula should be logically conceived according to the standards*

of knowledge and attainment for each level of schooling and training.

11. *Inter-culturalisation, as preparation of young people for a multicultural society, in which values such as respect for the individual, peace and tolerance are actualised.*
12. *Gradual introduction of changes, meaning that before the implementation of the changes, material and professional conditions should be provided as well as the necessary financial support.*

These policy principles reflect a modern vision towards education in line with mainstream thinking and policy development in Europe and therefore provide a good starting point for the process of education reform. Overall, the Ministry of Education appears to agree with major stakeholders in society where vocational education and training reform should be heading for. It has established a number of national councils to assist in further elaboration of the principles and in overseeing practical implementation. The Ministry also has established sound working relations with a number of donors, including the European Union and its European Training Foundation and European Agency for Reconstruction for assistance in the implementation of its reform concepts.

The key issue is now: How to make it work? How to translate these fundamental principles for education into clear objectives for reform; how to design implementation strategies that will allow objectives to be realised; how to mobilise the human, social and financial resources that will be needed; and how to secure that the reform process stays on track with sufficient flexibility based on systematic feedback regarding progress and good understanding of the obstacles and barriers that have to be overcome? All of this will have to be done in a very difficult economic and political context exacerbated further by the fact that neighbouring countries are making swift progress in reform while its own citizens increasingly become disenchanted and sceptical towards any reform initiated by the State. How to make progress from a general agreement on policy

principles towards getting the momentum for a sustainable process of reforms?

1.3 Recommendations

There is no need to stress again at this point the importance of human capital for the future of the country. The Book of Changes itself illustrates that this is already recognised by the Government of Montenegro. Moreover, the Book looks at changes in the overall education system with a clear perspective of European integration. Instead, the team would like to make at this point a few strategic recommendations which aim at breaking the current impasse in vocational education and training reform and potentially may help to change a vicious circle into a virtuous one. Each of these recommendations will be further elaborated in the following chapters.

1.3.1 Give focus to the reform of vocational education and training

There is a strong belief, both among policymakers and among the population at large, that reforms of education and reforms of economic and political system are processes depending on each other. This belief can easily lead to an attitude where the reform of education must “wait” for economic and political reforms. That would be wrong. Experience from other countries has shown that education reform by itself acts as a factor of economic and political transformation and adaptation. This is the case in particular when education reform, through its contents and ways of implementation, focuses on preparing people to be able to better cope with the uncertainties that the future has in store. Confident people, aware that they can develop the right skills and competences, will be better able to take their fate in their own hands especially when they see that there is a clear and realistic strategy for economic development which provides for an overall supportive environment. Educational and economic reforms are mutually

dependent and reinforcing. The one cannot wait for the other but both need clear focus.

1.3.2 Set clear and strategic priorities

While the Book of Changes rightly raises the need for systemic reform across the entire education and training system the time scales involved are different in various education sub-sectors. Reform of initial education and training is absolutely crucial to ensure that the young people of Montenegro are adequately prepared for their future role in a new – and largely unpredictable- environment. But it takes several years until the first graduates from a modernised system will enter the labour market. But the majority of the population is already outside the school environment and the Peer Review Team therefore welcomes the significance placed on adult education in the Book of Changes and the recent establishment of the Commission on Adult Education.

International experience suggests that it is important to address short term problems in such a way that no new or additional barriers are (inadvertently) set in place in relation to the achievement of longer term goals. This danger can be illustrated by an example. It is evidently a priority to develop detailed occupational profiles, which are relevant to current labour market conditions. However in the current, highly volatile, economic situation if these are codified in too formalistic a way new rigidities could be introduced which could inhibit the *generic* development of skills for future workforce requirements.

Given the fact that one can simply not do everything at the same time, especially not in a situation of scarce resources, it will be important to set clear priorities. Such priorities should be based on responding to most urgent needs but should also be such that they can be triggers of and supportive to mid-term and long-term reform objectives. Traditionally, education reform starts with the school system and would focus on young people first. In the field of vocational

education and training, however, the Ministry may consider to give immediate priority to adult training and to using experiences made here to flow into the reform of initial vocational education and training for youth. VET CARDS project 2001 is a good example for combination of the development of programmes for secondary schools and training programmes for adults in parallel.

1.3.3 Show vision and leadership

In the current situation which is characterised by high degrees of uncertainty and scepticism it will be important for the Ministry of Education to show leadership in the reform process. Now that an agreed policy framework has been established and key reform bodies have been installed other signals are needed to show to stakeholders and participants in education reform (teachers, students and their families, as well as companies) that the Government takes things serious and has a clear vision of how to go ahead.

Such signals would include initiative (through legislation, information campaigns and systematic consultations) and willingness to actively contribute (especially by securing a minimum level of funding to the reform process from national resources and active search for external contributions). With the organisation of the Donor Information Meeting in Brussels in April 2003, as well by the clear statements about reallocation of the national resources to the special budget line for education reform has Ministry of Education made a step forward. Leadership signals can also be given by mobilisation and appreciation of local and third party initiatives and by securing that such experiences become part of coherent and consistent national policy making. Leadership, finally, implies the use of a right mix of professional expertise and political courage for decision making.

1.3.4 Improve participation and ownership

Leadership, however, does not mean centralised monopoly of the reform process. The team has heard different views about the extent to which the reform process is "owned" by different stakeholders. Some of the persons spoken to were of the view that the consultation process had been widespread and had engaged all stakeholders. Others have argued that the reform process was largely driven from the top downwards. Such differences in views are inevitable given the different positions of all who are involved in the reform but they indicate that there is a need to secure participation and ownership also in the present phase of implementation.

In fact, the field visits and discussions have revealed some interesting areas of innovation through the initiative of individual teachers or heads of schools (public and private). But in some other schools feelings of apathy and powerlessness in the face of extremely difficult circumstances over a long period of time were also evident among teachers and headmasters. A successful implementation of the reform process will depend to a considerable extent on the transformation of a culture of passiveness - or even apathy - among those who are not convinced that reform is needed and possible. A system-wide reform cannot realistically succeed with the involvement of only a small number of believers. That is how a change process can be initiated but soon a strategy needs to be developed which will secure that a critical mass feels confident and supportive to the reforms: this can only be done through stimulating an active involvement and participation of increasing numbers of stakeholders. This will also generate new energy and release new resources into the system.

A strategy seeking maximum participation and ownership can make use of several measures, such as

- Systematic dissemination of examples of where initiatives have been taken within the existing system.

- Provision of incentives for innovation.
- Exchange of experiences between different education sub-sectors within Montenegro (for example between schools and employers, between the University and other education institutions), as well as exchange with other countries in and outside the region.
- Monitoring of the success of the new initiatives and inclusion in national policy making

1.3.5 Secure sustainability and initiate strategic reform assistance discussions with international donors

In order to secure sustainability and the survival of the reforms in the long-term it will be necessary to find a good balance between the optimal use of national resources and capacities (which will both secure ownership and feasibility of the reform measures) and the mobilisation of external assistance (avoiding that the reform becomes donor-driven).

Obviously, in view of the present budget situation, Montenegro will need considerable external assistance to realise its ambitious educational reform plans. However, donors will only be ready to contribute if they can see a clear commitment from the side of the national policymakers and if they can see that there is a perspective for Montenegro to be able to finance its education by itself. Such signals could be provided by a minimum of financial resources made available locally and the presence of a clear reform vision (see chapter 1.3.3, second paragraph).

It would also not be realistic to expect that all the resources for the reform of the education and training system will be provided by the international donor community. Nor would that be a good situation in view of the need to achieve a maximum level of local ownership and embedding in the Montenegrin context. But sustainability, does not merely refer to the ability of Montenegro to finance itself its own

reformed education system but also to having the professional and institutional capacities in place to run a reformed system. Capacity building and institutional development will have to be part of

discussions with donors as much as the financing of so much needed educational infrastructure, programmes and equipment.

2. INTRODUCING CHANGES IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM – THE CONCEPT

2.1 A number of critical policy issues

This chapter will discuss a number of critical issues as observed and perceived by the Peer Review Team during its discussions with authorities and stakeholders in the country. These concern both the interpretation of some of the leading reform principles as agreed in the Book of Changes, and their suggested implementation. The intention of the team's reflections is not to question the reform principles as such. On the contrary, we believe that these are sound and generally in line with education policy making across Europe. However, based on the team's own experiences with educational reforms in a wide variety of countries, these reflections may simply facilitate urgently needed clarifications and make operational decisions more realistic and effective. In particular, we will pay attention to

- The debate about a gradual versus a systemic and integrated reform strategy
- The exemplary role of the Slovene experiences for the Montenegrin reform process
- The needed balance between a top-down and a bottom-up approach
- The necessary and available resources and capacities
- The relation between education and training of youth and that of adults within a lifelong learning perspective

The task that the Peer Review Team has set itself was to focus on issues of implementation. Before we do so in the following paragraphs, the team would like to raise a fundamental issue right at the start. While the aim of achieving a comprehensive "integral" reform of all aspects of initial education and training as well as adult education is something to be welcomed,

unless the Government places education and training at the centre of its strategy for economic and social development there is a danger that the Book of Changes becomes something of a "wish list" rather than a blueprint for stepped change. Unfortunately, at the time of our Peer Review visits (September/October 2002) there were few signs that the Government would really give high priority to education and training reform. In 2003 the education reform became one of the three priorities of the government agenda for economic reforms and country developments.

2.2 A gradual versus a systemic and integrated reform strategy

Strategically, the Book of Changes rightly argues for an overall and systemic reform of the education system and all its sub-sectors but in reality implementation – not in the least because of resource constraints – will have to be a gradual one. Actually we see this from the Ministry of Education and Science plan to spread the reform implementation to 10% of schools in the school year 2004/2005.

Multiple steps are indeed foreseen, and some priorities are expressed by the Ministry of Education and the Council for Curriculum Changes. The first step should consist of introducing new legislation. As next steps are foreseen:

- Establishment of new institutions defined by the Book of Changes (some of institutions has been already established)
- Establishing the curriculum framework
- Training the teachers

- Equipping schools with ICT (as stated by the ICT Act for a 2002-2004 strategy)
- Rationalising the school network
- Adult training introduced in the entire system
- Extensive use of social partners for developing

However, this appears to be a rather formalistic and centralised approach and there is little sense of what comes (or should come) first in terms of realistic investment in education reform. For the external observer these are merely key areas in need of reform and not even all of them. For example there is no step that foresees a reform of the financing system.

The draft educational laws in Montenegro appear to be rather heavily *input* rather than *output* or *process* oriented in comparison with those recently introduced in most other European Countries – for example there is considerable detail in terms of teaching hours per subject. While the education system of Montenegro draws on a well established tradition which places legislative reform as a prerequisite for development in the class room, the potential benefits of this approach (in terms of coherence) need to be balanced against a danger of a reform becoming largely identified with *legislative* reform as opposed to reform *at the level of practice*.

Furthermore, while the Book of Changes proposes developments across many fronts, curriculum reform in the school system evidentially is viewed as the main driver of change. This may be quite appropriate and it was made clear to us during our visits and discussions that many of the stakeholders fully recognised the complexity of curricular reform and its implications for teacher training and modernisation of textbooks and other learning materials and equipment.

There could however be alternative starting points. Educational reform could, for example, place the professional development of the existing providers of education - school teachers, adult education tutors, vocational trainers, those involved in work place training - at the centre of the process

as these are the people on whom change at the level of the individual learner is dependant. Yet another starting point for change could be the occupational profiles which were discussed in many of our meetings in Montenegro or the urgent needs for retraining of the adult population - both unemployed and employed.

It is recommended that policymakers and their advisers initiate a more strategic discussion, making good use of reform experiences of the past decade in other transition countries of the region, to prepare the most effective and resource efficient reform implementation strategy. The strategic reflections on implementation should also include considerations for stronger regional co-operation on key issues, given the fact that it is highly unlikely that Montenegro will be able to develop a complete national education system, nor are there sufficient arguments in place that it should do so.

The implementation strategy should have a limited number of priorities, with for each priority clearly defined objectives, associated with the kind of measures and activities that are foreseen to achieve the objectives, the resources needed and an appropriate time schedule. In order to allow for monitoring and evaluation indicators of achievement should be agreed as well. Project planning and implementation tools such as the logical framework approach can be used to design realistic implementation strategies⁵.

2.3 The exemplary role of the Slovene education reform experiences for the Montenegrin reform process

The Book of Changes states that “the changes in the education system in

⁵ As we have mention already before in 2003 after the field visit the Strategic Plan of Education Reform for period 2003-2004 was adopted, which includes time frame, tasks and funds.

Montenegro will be based on the development of an original strategy, inspired by positive traditions and heritage which would incorporate the new tendencies of a modern society and the successful solutions of the developed education systems in Europe.”

In reality, and mainly because of severe resource constraints, education reformers have thus far relied heavily on foreign experience – in particular from Slovenia⁶ -, especially in drafting the overall reform concept. That appears to be little problematic as the principles for education reform from the Book of Changes are fully in line with current European education policy making. Indeed, the Slovenes themselves have relied heavily on European trends and developments when drafting their White Book. Problems may be more severe when adapting the principles to the Montenegrin context for implementation as in this phase the impossibility of simple “policy taking” becomes immediately obvious. It is one thing to copy goals and objectives for an education reform programme and quite another to make these work in reality.

At this point then, what has been said in the previous paragraph on strategic priority setting and implementation becomes even more important. Slovenia is not the only transition country where the initial reform strategy has focused on legislation-cum-curricular reform. While Slovenia has been relatively successful with implementing this strategy (partly because it has been far less dependent on external donors to do so and because it has experienced far higher levels of policy continuity as compared to most other countries), recent assessments have clearly revealed that the strategy has not always been grounded on the right assumptions (such as the readiness of the private sector to become involved in delivery of vocational education and training) and also has had its short comings (fully separated developments of infrastructures for initial and adult education and training) and costs

⁶ Along with Slovenes reform has been conducted with experts from England, Ireland, Scotland, Romania.

(cumbersome and slow standards and curriculum reform procedures with relatively conservative outcomes; sub-optimal school network and practical training facilities). These reform experiences are currently being addressed in a second phase and need to be carefully analysed on their implications for the Montenegrin reform strategy.

It is therefore recommended that the Montenegrin policymakers pay more attention to the policy learning dimensions of international experience. This does in no way mean that they should give up their present close co-operation with Slovene experts. On the contrary, that co-operation – much as it has been appreciated in the past when Slovenia has been one of the very few with an interest to assist – should continue in the future especially as mutual understanding has made so much progress. The co-operation should actually be even more intensified but with a far more active policy development role from the side of the Montenegrin partners. Moreover, where resources become available, and in the same spirit of co-operation with Slovenia, the Montenegrin educational reformers should profit from reform experiences elsewhere as well, including from neighbouring countries from former Yugoslavia.

2.4 The need to balance between a top-down and a bottom-up approach

Although the Book of Changes refers to the principle of decentralisation of the educational system, the actual approach adopted for the reform process is firmly top down. Although representatives of schools are included in the various national bodies and commissions the Peer Review Team has not found many instances of inclusion of local initiatives within the centralised reform approach. In fact, during the discussions with key persons from the reform process more importance was given to improving communication and co-ordination at the

central level (such as between the different ministries and national commissions) than to enlarging the role of schools or increasing their autonomy within the overall reform process.

Given the fact that Montenegro is a small country, such an approach can be regarded as a viable political option for ensuring an equitable distribution of resources allocated to the process of change and for better steering of the overall process. The approach may also be explained by the fact that priority is being given to a national curriculum reform in which – it is fair to say – some 800 teachers from various schools will be engaged as curriculum developers. But involving a large number of teachers in a top-down reform process is still not the same as including bottom-up initiatives in developing a national reform process.

The Peer Review Team has met with several representatives from local VET reform initiatives, such as from the tourism and personal care sectors, and it has also heard that several schools would be able to initiate innovations in case some form of material or financial support would be made available. In fact the cases of local innovation were – partially – financed from grants provided by the employment service, which has appeared to be the main supporting institution for such local initiatives.

It is recommended that national policy makers give greater thought to promoting and supporting local VET reform or innovation initiatives. This will free already available capacities for change and would also contribute to increased ownership of the reform. However, a good balance for top-down and bottom-up reform needs capacities to provide support to grassroots initiatives as well as for securing that the latter contribute to overall VET reform.

2.5 The necessary and available resources and capacities

The Montenegrin VET system has been starved of necessary funds and investments for more than a decade and would need considerable funds to bring facilities and teaching standards up to average European quality and relevance levels. Such funds are currently not available within the Ministry of Education and also the financial assistance provided on a project basis by the employment service, welcome as it is for individual schools and training centres, does not provide any structural solution to the problem. The Government has not given priority to education and training within the allocation of budgetary funds so far. Against this background it will be hard to see the international donor community filling the gap alone, especially in view of other countries in the region competing for donor assistance. Adequate financing however is crucial for successful reforms.

The Peer Review Team has surprisingly found little serious debate concerning the financial implications of the reform programme, nor has it been confronted with any serious financial planning related to the implementation of the reforms. It also encountered some – unrealistic – high optimism that finances would be provided from outside the country or - to phrase it perhaps more correctly – there is widespread opinion that reforms can only be implemented if financed from abroad. That is unlikely to happen even though perhaps not all potential sources have been adequately contacted and there is likely to be more funds for education reform to be reserved from the EU Cards programme.

It is recommended that the Montenegrin authorities urgently develop a clear and transparent financial picture of the expected costs of the education and training reforms as well as of the potential national and foreign sources that could be used for covering the costs. Such financial planning may also contribute to effective priority setting, including for local and international

funding, as well as to a better integration of ongoing local initiatives – either funded from local or foreign funds – into the national VET reform strategy.

While adequate funding is perhaps a necessary condition for successful education reform, it is not sufficient by itself. There is also the need to have sufficient capacities in place to absorb funds and spend it well and according to the objectives of the reform. We know from reform experience from other transition countries that this is a frequently underestimated and neglected issue. The risk is high that reforms will be implemented by those who provide the funding if local professional capacities are not sufficiently developed or made use of. There will undoubtedly also be in Montenegro a considerable need for capacity building both for what has to be done during implementation of the reform as well as afterwards to secure its sustainability.

It is recommended that the Montenegrin authorities give more emphasis on the human resource development aspect of the implementation of educational change. Further efforts need to be stepped up to increase capacity building for the policy development and management at national level (Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education and Science, Employment Service). But capacity building does not only refer to having professional project management capacities in place to run the reform process itself. It includes in particular attention to a reform of the training of future teachers and - perhaps even more urgently - the need for professional development and support for teachers, trainers and school managers already employed across the system. Simultaneous development of local capacities will further contribute to ownership and sustainability.

2.6 The relation between education and training of youth and that of adults within a lifelong learning perspective

There are two topics, which are alluded to in the Book of Changes, which did not feature prominently in the course of the discussions with the Peer Review Team. These relate to (i) equal opportunities and (ii) lifelong learning. While the delivery of these objectives is not easy, if the reform process could address these in serious ways from the beginning then Montenegro may be better positioned to avoid some of the mistakes made in the process of educational change over the last twenty years in other European Countries. Significantly, the lifelong learning approach advocated in the recent EU Paper on Lifelong Learning addresses the benefits of adopting a broader view of adult education rather than simply a narrow vocational training approach. This seems particularly important when the pace of change makes the prediction of medium term skill requirements and associated employment opportunities extremely difficult - if not impossible to predict.

It appears to the Peer Review Team that, given the - very understandable - decision to dedicate a great deal of energy and resources in Montenegro to curriculum reform in the formal school sector there are lessons which might be learnt from experience of other countries. These can be framed in the form of *six key questions*, which we suggest might usefully be asked at every stage in the implementation of the reform process:

- To what extent does the curriculum assist in the development of *generic* occupational skills, which the education and training system should deliver to prepare young people and the unemployed for a range of employment situations (and not merely for one specific occupation or job).

- To what extent might the education and training needs of adults be constrained or, alternatively, enhanced by proposed changes?
- To what extent will this particular teaching approach help learners to develop a capacity for continuing learning in the future ("learning to learn skills")?
- To what extent are existing/newly qualified teachers involved in this development?
- To what extent do existing/newly qualified teachers have access to the professional development opportunities which they need to help them to deliver the new curriculum utilising new pedagogic methods?

In the course of our meetings we had the privilege of encountering many able and dedicated people committed to the development of the best education and training system for young people and adults for their country. The Team found however that much of the discussion focused on the issues of legislation and regulation rather than questions of the needs of students and learners. We would suggest that one practical way in which it might be possible to access the extent to which the proposed structures are likely to support the flexibility desired by the Book of Changes would be to "test" them against the cases of individual learners (young people and adults) in real life situations and to identify where the possible gaps, problems, rigidities might arise. This is particularly important when considering the extent to which the system is likely to both meet the *current* continuing education needs of the employed and the unemployed population of Montenegro as well as the *future* lifelong learning needs of the population as a whole.

The Book of Changes mostly uses the term 'lifelong education' and hardly ever 'lifelong learning'. If not an option of the translator, then one can understand that the new concept does not have a very clear idea of what is behind. This may also be concluded from how the framework for curriculum is defined in the concepts of VET and Adult education.

The concepts speak of rather traditionally designed curricula which do not provide space for flexibility, possibilities for horizontal and vertical transitions between programmes are defined very traditionally, for instance: "*Transition from a 3-year to a 4-year programme cannot be done during education.*" (Book of Changes, p. 58). Issues such as the development of key qualifications and competencies are not distinctly addressed.

Looking at the adult education concept it seems to be a duplicate of the VET concept. The way in which the adult education curriculum is defined suggests that it is mostly about second chance and remedial (vocational) education and training. '*Lifelong education*' is even seen as a special type of curriculum in adult education (Book of changes, 7.5. Curriculum, first paragraph, p. 68.). On the other hand, the concept opens a possibility for assessment and certification of non-formal and informal education and the opportunity for connection of formal and non-formal education and training, which can be considered as a tool or an element of a strategy for implementing the LLL concept. The concept of LLL as one of the principles on which the reform is built will become a simple phrase unless distinct phases of implementation are not clearly outlining strategies for its application throughout the lifelong learning cycle, inside and outside formal education and training.

It seems justified that building an overall legally based framework for the development of curricula is defined as a priority. However the high level of unemployment caused - among others - also by great discrepancy between the required skills and those obtained from schools demands urgent interventions in the field of adult vocational training and labour market centred training. Both Employment Service, who plays a key role in training of the unemployed and various training providers claim they would need certification levels comparable to school certificates, in order to improve the situation on the training market. The development of the certification mechanism in adult education is thus likely to be a priority, which should not be postponed till

laws are passed and institutions and procedures are established.

On the other hand introduction of certificates outside the frame of formal curricula without considering main principles on which VET and AE are supposed to be built may lead to the establishment of a parallel system of vocational qualifications. The Slovenian certification system makes a case proving that it is very difficult to integrate such a parallel system to the formal VET system. If this happens, the certification cannot be in position to facilitate and promote recognition of non-formal and informal learning. The fear that vocational training of adults could develop as a parallel system is reinforced by the idea of creating special training centres attached to the Employment Service.

It is therefore recommended that the Montenegrin authorities consider the introduction of certificates in adult education

training as an acute issue but it should be developed in connection with the development of the framework of the formal curriculum. This in turn, as experience from elsewhere shows, would assume the elaboration of principles for a National Qualification Framework prior to developing standards for individual occupations and/or education programmes. The (current and future) CARDS supported project could be a good opportunity to create - in co-operation with curricular commissions for VET and Adult Education - an example of how to connect a certificate to a formal VET curriculum. This may help define the relation between certificates and formal curricula already at the start and create the framework in which the certificates become part of life-long learning strategy.

3. CHANGE DRIVERS AND CHANGE ISSUES

Any education reform programme has to find the right balance between vision and leadership on the one side and participation and ownership, on the other. It also has to balance wishes and resources and short and long-term issues. This is all part of developing a realistic and feasible implementation strategy and some of the key issues involved have been presented by the Team at the end of the first chapter of this report. The second chapter has provided some further considerations and suggestions for immediate actions to bring the reform process forward taking into account some of the particularities of the Montenegrin context. The question now is: who is going to do all this and – also – how can the balance between the different objectives and choices be established. What could be the main elements of a strategy for implementation: who are the main change drivers, what are the main change issues, and how can the reform be financed? Based on its discussions on these issues with a wide range of people in the country the Team would like to present its strategic recommendations in the following.

3.1 Change drivers

In terms of policy formulation, clearly the Ministry of Education has been the main initiator of changes so far. It has established the national councils and commissions that have undertaken most of the policy developmental work and it will give these bodies a legal status. Other ministries in the Government and also the main organisations of employers and workers have remained rather passive. The latter still largely believe that education and training is the responsibility of the state and even if they do not, they simply do not avail of capacities to become actively involved. The main partner for the Ministry of Education has been the Employment Service as it has been forced to respond to urgent training needs on the restructuring labour market. But the Service

itself is undergoing restructuring in order to take up the new challenges posed by the changes in the employment system.

Although several schools and other local stakeholders, including People's Universities, seem to be interested to become included in the reform process, there are no mechanisms that would enable and stimulate local stakeholders for playing a key role in implementation and development of reforms. In fact, while some schools are very active, it is also true that many schools are waiting for the Ministry to precise the expected role of schools in the implementation of reforms. The ministry is relying very much on the active involvement of individual teachers in the development and implementation of new curricula while apart from the national councils there is no professional support structure in place that could assist them in doing and co-ordinating the detailed technical work that is now being required.

It is obvious that for the task of implementing VET reforms concepts the Ministry of Education can no longer be the sole driver, nor will it be able to completely rely on the various expert councils and commissions that it has created: it needs to involve social partners, professionals, practitioners, including teachers and trainers, and parents. But in order to be able to involve them it also needs to create the conditions that these partners can develop the necessary capacities to play their role, including the one that has been foreseen for them in the Book of Changes.

3.2 Change issues

The Team proposes to give priority to four key change issues that may help to initiate a process of change that will soon reach a point of no return:

- Capacity building and staff development for those to be involved in the VET reforms
- Developing social partnership and in particular strengthening the involvement of employers
- Adopting a broad approach to curriculum development within an overall national framework of qualifications
- Establishing a professional support infrastructure

3.2.1 Issue 1: Capacity building and staff development for those to be involved in the VET reforms

There is no single blueprint for the implementation of change. What is evident however from experiences in other countries is that the cornerstone for any strategy has to lie with gaining "ownership" of the reform and change process and getting people involved as much as possible. However, ownership can only be developed if there is some space for people to develop their own ideas. In other words, involvement cannot be simply limited to asking them to implement what has been developed in detail elsewhere.

All reform stakeholders treat implementation as a problem of financial support and technical equipment. There is not always proper understanding of the need for training to be able to fulfil the new roles and functions that are required during the process of implementation. But at the same time, in one way or another all the partners the Team has met have raised some concern about their capacity to deliver as outlined in the Book of Changes. The issue of supporting and enhancing the capacity of the existing teaching force was raised in meetings with all stakeholders. A crucial matter therefore lies in the identification and provision of support for those teachers and trainers and, in particular school principals and members of the inspectorate, who are committed to the reform as a *process* rather than simply as a new administrative procedure.

Thus, there is a critical need to support change agents and advocates at whatever level they are placed - school principals, new junior teachers, NGOs, public and private sector employers. Teachers and trainers as change agents need support and training but they also need authority and some degree of autonomy to become partners in the change process.

3.2.2 Issue 2: Developing social partnership and in particular strengthening the involvement of employers

The key actors on the labour market and in the education system are aware that education and training programmes needs to be better adapted to employers' needs so as to improve the employability of people. However, social partners have few capacities to actively participate in the implementation in the reform. It will be imperative to involve in particular employers in the development of a modern qualification system, which is of relevance for the skills and competences that are or will be needed on the labour market.

3.2.3 Issue 3: Adopting a broad approach to curriculum development within an overall national framework of qualifications

Curriculum is the pillar of reforms and the core of the learning processes but it is not a static collection of contents but a dynamic an highly flexible instrument to organise learning contents and approaches relevant to the needs of individual learners. But the understanding of curricular issues can be narrow (limited to hours and textbooks) and broad (including the overall learning process and environment). It is the latter approach that has to be developed with a clear and balanced focus on inputs, processes and outputs. This can only be done within the context of a National Qualification Framework that can integrate different levels

of qualification standards and different (formal and informal) learning paths.

3.2.4 Issue 4: Establishing a professional support infrastructure

The development of a national framework and the continuing development of curricula assume the presence of a professional support institution, such as a Centre for Vocational Education and Training, which should preferably cater for the development needs in initial and adult education and training. Centre for Vocational Education and Training was established in May 2003.

4. POSSIBLE AREA OF ASSISTANCE AND REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

Assistance for VET is already provided to Montenegro through the current EU CARDS programme in two sectors – wood processing and tourism, and establishment of special training centres is among its goals. More small scale interventions can be implemented to assure short training and professional development programmes for change agents and local leaders at the level of individual Institutions (Schools, Peoples Universities, employers). Potential adult educators should be educated as well. These programmes could be delivered with outside expert assistance. Also small scale investment to provide individuals and groups to spend periods of time in other parts of Europe to attend programmes and to engage in study visits can provide significance value added.

Further assistance should be also provided to teachers and trainers, who represent key agents in the whole educational reform. In order to assure that existing trainers and teachers fully engage in professional development, one suggestion may be to introduce alternative managerial schemes like job rotation. Similar initiatives have been piloted in Scotland and Denmark whereby people who are unemployed are trained to take positions of those in employment while those in employment engage of some form of up skilling or retraining.

International links and exchanges are very important for the development of a Centre or Institute as a focus of expertise of education innovation and development, in order to stimulate initiative which will be attractive to young teachers and potential teachers. There is an urgent need to draw on high quality research to feed into future training including the training in basic psychological and sociological issues for VET techers and trainers, who may be experts in their own particular subject but who lack a background in educational matters.

Further assistance for **institution building** should be provided to some key players as follows:

- Consolidating the management and communication functions at the central level (governmental institutions), in order to assist the large dissemination of reforms and their adoption at the grass roots level.
- Adequate support for improving the stronger role of both Employment Service and Association of Employers to achieve the expected results of the reform. New research would be needed for identifying training needs and adequate new job profiles.
- Greater involvement of the schools and University into the reform processes as regards the trainer and teacher development. The University should act as facilitator providing Commissions with innovative knowledge and expertise.

Regional cooperation and regional partnerships can be highly beneficial in restoring and further developing some of the main capacities of the educational system in Montenegro. Neighbouring countries have already made considerable progress in a number of key areas of reform from which the country may immediately profit:

- Development of a labour market information system and developing the monitoring and evaluation approaches to provide timely and relevant information for VET policy making.
- The turbulence of the labour market in transition economies discourages any effort of planning. Nevertheless, regional experiences show that there are useful instruments for LM research, which can optimally serve both local levels (county, region) and central planning through National Development Plan or National Action Plans for Employment.

- Teacher and trainers training – with a special emphasis on in-service training and the training of trainers in adult education.
- The educational reform could place the professional development of the existing providers of education - school teachers, adult education tutors, vocational trainers, those involved in work place training - at the centre of the process as these are the people on whom change at the level of the individual learner is dependant. In this respect, there are experiences to be learnt from the reforms in other countries, so that resources in Montenegro are not unilaterally spend to curriculum reform in the formal school sector.
- Establishment of a national VET and Adult Education Centre⁷, with the dual role of providing support to schools and policymakers. The regional experience on the development of adult education confirms that national professional institution may be an important driver of the development of the field. Skill development of a cross section of people from a range of backgrounds in relation to the education and training of adults should also be a high priority for investment. Some of these people moving into adult education could perhaps be newly qualified unemployed school teachers who might benefit from short training programmes, exchanges, partnerships etc.
- Expertise for setting up systems for quality assurance and certification, based on a reform of a new “nomenclature” of occupations or National Qualification Framework. Transition countries in particular face large processes of industrial restructuring. Various regional experiences can be relevant for the proposed roles in certification and accreditation processes. Matching supply and demand arises nowadays at EU level as one of the political criteria of quality in VET. Moreover, more

assistance and exchange can be developed in synergy for achieving a new knowledge economy at regional level, since there is a current political for introducing ICT in the educational system of Montenegro (as stated in the 2002 ICT Act of the Ministry of Education and Science).

- Assistance for facilitating school networking and social partnership of schools at the local, national and international level. The new concept of VET and adult education in all reforms of the transition countries put great emphasis on social partnership There is a critical need to support change agents and advocates at whatever level they are placed - school principals, new junior teachers, NGOs, employers etc. The Adult Education and VET Commissions in Montenegro should continue to act as important fora for all stakeholders, and their role to be associated with the identification of benchmarks and monitoring of progress in relation to the achievements of the reform process

⁷ Centre for Vocational Education and Training established by governemntal decision will cover youth and adult education and training in Montegegro.

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ANNEX 1

List of individuals and institutions consulted

Monday, 30 September 2003	
Ministry of Education and Science	
Predrag Ivanovic	Minister of Education and Science
Radovan Damjanovic	Deputy Minister of Education
Slobodan Backovic	Coordinator of the education reform

European Agency for Reconstruction	
Regina de Dominicis	EAR
Mišo Palandacic	VET project Montenegro
Ivana Petricevic	VET project Montenegro

Chamber of Commerce	
Miodrag Cauševic	Vice President
Mitar Jovanovic	President of the SMEs Union
Stevan Karadaglic	Head of Economy Development Sector
Rosa Ostojic	Senior Advisor for Labour and Education

Employment Office – panel meeting	
Vjera Kovacevic	Head of the legal issues department in Ministry of Education
Perko Vukotic	President of the National Curriculum Council
Nataša Živkovic	Secretary of the National Curriculum Council
Željko Raicevic	Commission for VET reform
Maljota Nuculovic	Commission for VET reform
Zora Bogicevic	Commission for VET reform
Duško Rajkovic	Principal of Mechanical-engineering school
Milojica Zindovic	Holding company »Radoje Dakic«
Ljiljana Garic	Commission for Adults education reform

Tuesday, 01 October 2003	
Ministry of Labour	
Slavoljub Stijepovic	Executive Minister of Labour
Radojica Popovic	Secretary in the Ministry of labour
Zdenka Burzan	Senior Advisor in Ministry of Labour

Trade Unions	
Svetozar Bulatovic	Vice President in Trade Unions
Vukašin Zogovic	Trade Unions for Education
Danilo Popovic	President of Trade Unions
Nataša Vukašinovic – Bojovic	Advisor for Education

Employment office	
Dimitrije Radulovic	Deputy Director in Employment office
Mišela Manojlovic	Deputy Director in Employment office

Djordjije Polovic	Senior Advisor in Employment office
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Mechanical-engineering school:	
Duško Rajkovic	Principal
Goran Šcepanovic	Head of school workshops
Dejan Gojkovic	teacher
Bosiljka Milošević	Deputy Principal

Electrical engineering school:	
Dragoje Radonjic	Principal
Dragan Kecina	Deputy Principal
Djina Markuš	teacher
Dragan Sandic	teacher
Ranko Ljumovic	teacher
Gordana Tasic	teacher

School for construction and geodesy	
Živko Icevic	Principal
Branislav Dašic	teacher
Jadranka Djurkovic	teacher
Tanja Jokic	teacher
Branko Pavicevic	teacher
Tanja Radevic	teacher

School for trade, tourism and catering	
Slobodan Stojanovic	Principal
Janko Pekovic	Deputy Principal
Dragan Dragojevic	teacher
Zoran Klikovac	teacher

Peoples university – Podgorica	
Rasenko Cadjenovic	Director

Wednesday, 02 October 2003	
Steel company – Nikšić	
Dragan Nikolic,	Head of the personnel department
Savo Radulovic	Head of the production sector
Božidar Perišić	Head of the personnel and general legal issues department
Ranka Draškovic	Chief of the legal issues department

Peoples university – Nikšić	
Milisav Cipranic	Director

Faculty of Philosophy	
Ratko Djukanovic	National Curriculum Council member, Professor in the University of Montenegro
Blagota Mrkajic	Professor in the University of Montenegro

School for electrical engineering and metalurgy	
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Dragan Perovic	Principal
Djoko Markovic	teacher
Slavko Bojovic	teacher

Thursday, 03.10.2003	
Parents association	
Ljubiša Nenezic	Director
Ljiljana Milonjic	Executive Secretary

VET project Montenegro	
Ivan Mitrovic	Director of the Employers Union

Chamber of commerce – panel discussion	
Dragan Mirotic	Aluminum Combine Podgorica
Brano Djuretic	AD »Plantaže« Podgorica
Slobodanka Krtolica	AD »Plantaže« Podgorica
Anka Knežević	AD »Plantaže« Podgorica
Ranka Draškovic	Steel company Nikšić
Božidar Perišić	Steel company Nikšić
Ružica Todorovic	Ship construction company Bijela
Ljiljana Garic	Ministry of Education and Science
Anita Mitrovic	Gastro club »Mitrovic« – Milocer
Vuko Mitrovic	Gastro club »Mitrovic« – Milocer
Mijo Nikcevic	Beauty saloon »Šarm« - Podgorica
Olgica Nikcevic	Beauty saloon »Šarm« - Podgorica

University of Montenegro – panel discussion	
Perko Vukotic	President of National Curriculum Council
Ivana Petricevic	VET project Montenegro
Željko Raicevic	Commission for VET reform
Vukašin Zogovic	Trade Unions
Vjera Kovacevic	Head of the legal issues department in Ministry of Education
Zora Bogicevic	Commission for VET reform
Branislav Dašić	Commission for VET reform
Radoslav Milošević – Atos	Commission for VET reform
Ivan Mitrovic	Employers Union
Predrag Mitrovic	Employers Union
Savo Pejovic	Education inspector, Ministry of Education
Slobodan Backovic	Coordinator of the education reform

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Zora Bogicevic	Commission for VET reform
Perko Vukotic	President of National Curriculum Council

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Momo Sekulic	
Zoran Ukropina	
Vasilije Kovacevic	
Ivan Jevric	
Dragan Kecina	
Djina Markuš	
Slavojka Vojinovic	
Branko Pavicevic	
Tanja Radevic	
Leposava Vuksanovic	
Snežana Vukicevic	