

Pursuant to the Article 45, item 1 of the Law on Government („The Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia“, No 55/05 and 71/05 – amendment) the Government adopts

# STRATEGY OF ADULT EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Adult education strategy is a call for creating a learning culture, social economy and organisations based on knowledge and the improvement of adult skills and achievements.

This strategy is based on the following international documents:

- Hamburg Declaration on Adult Education, UNESCO (Fifth International Conference on Adult Education /Confintea V/, “Adult Learning: A Key for the Twenty-First Century”, A UNESCO Conference in Cooperation with International Partner, Hamburg, Germany, 14-18 July 1997 ([url:http://www.education.unesco.org/educprog/uie/](http://www.education.unesco.org/educprog/uie/))
- A Memorandum on lifelong learning, Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 2000 (<http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/MemorandumEng.pdf>)
- Dakar Framework for Action, “Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments”, Dakar, 2000
- Communication from the Commission. Making a European area of lifelong learning a Reality, 21.11.2001, EC DG for Education and Culture and DG for Employment and Social Affairs, Comm (2001), 678 Final;
- “The Copenhagen Declaration”, (Declaration of the European Ministers of Vocational Education and Training, and the European Commission, convened in Copenhagen on 29 and 30 November 2002, on enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training, 2002)
- UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, Resolution of the 65th General Meeting of the German Commission for UNESCO (DUK), Bonn, 7th July 2005 ([http://www.dekade.org/mgmaterial/Resolution\\_65HVeng.pdf](http://www.dekade.org/mgmaterial/Resolution_65HVeng.pdf))

Adult Education Strategy is the instrument for the implementation of:

- The National Employment Strategy for the period 2005 – 2010, the Government, 2005;
- The Strategy for the Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Entrepreneurship in the Republic of Serbia 2003 – 2008, The Government, 2003;
- The National Strategy for the Reduction of Poverty, The Government, 2003;
- The Serbian National Strategy for Serbia and Montenegro EU Accession, the Government, 2005;
- The Strategy for the Development of Social Care, the Government, 2005;
- The National Strategy on Aging 2006-2015, the Government, 2006.

### **The main definitions**

Adult education is a social activity and a process of responding to adults' needs, irrespective of organisation, contents, level or applied methods. According to its content, objectives and organisational methods, adult education is considered as diversified and multifunctional, and could be formal and non formal, general and vocational, initial and continuing, regular and irregular.

Regarding operational, practical and organisational aspects adult education "involves all formal and non formal educational forms intended for adults over the age of 18 who do not have the status of a pupil or student." (*Strategic directions in adult education development, Ministry of Education and Sports, Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2002, page 314*).

Formal education is conducted in the school system, from primary school until post-graduate studies based on an approved curriculum, defined goals and outcomes which lead to a diploma (certificate), i.e. to the national accreditation of acquired qualifications, competences and educational levels financed by public funds.

Non formal education refers to all educational programmes and activities outside the school system. Non formal as well as formal education is organised on an institutional level, but does not lead to the national accreditation of acquired qualifications and educational levels and is usually not financed from public funds.

Initial education encompasses all educational programmes which are accomplished prior to entering the world of work in a first employment.

Continuing education refers to educational programmes taking place upon completion of compulsory education or to some categories after initial education and training or after entering the world of work. This education aims at (1) conveying knowledge, skills and competences, improvement (2) gaining new working competences or (3) further personal and professional development.

## II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### ADULT EDUCATION – SUPPORT TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Intensive social economic reform has been implemented in Serbia since 2000. After a series of long-lasting crises the economy entered a transitional phase of (slower) growth and mild recovery. Privatisation is intensive and practically the process has entered the final stage, which has a positive impact on the restructuring of the economy, the inflow of foreign funds, higher productivity and growth of small and medium sized enterprises.

The Serbian economy is still not technologically demanding in its structure and capacity and there is a significant technological gap between Serbia and the European Union. Definitive technological development and improvement in this sense could be expected only through transfer of technologies. By all means, it requires stabilisation of the political situation and an appropriate economic policy which would enable easier approach of foreign funds and companies to the Serbian economy and market. A second requirement is an adequately trained and flexible work force, capable of coping with technological innovations, new production methods, organisation of work and new products. Without new technologies and a work force capable of

using them, Serbia will be threatened by serious transitional recession.

The birth rate is dramatically decreasing, while the average life span is extending, consequently causing the constant growth of the elderly population above 60. According to data from 2002,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total population in Serbia is over 60 years of age.

Regardless of the significant percentage of highly educated and qualified human resources, the educational structure of the population is unfavourable. Almost 50% of the adult population has only the elementary educational level or less. This means that around 3 million people above 15 are without adequate working skills and competences and that huge percentage has serious problems to find and keep jobs.

The decrease of the employment rate in Serbia during the last decades is evident. The considerable reduction of vacancies and the rising unemployment rate are caused by structural and ownership changes. There is a considerable number of educated and skilled workers in the system but the percentage of unskilled workers is still very high. In the unemployment figures, unqualified and semi qualified workers are dominant, but the percentage of highly qualified unemployed workers is rising dramatically. Unemployment, and above all, inflexibility of the labour market (lack of programmes which are fulfilling the labour market demands for specific knowledge and skills, career guidance and counseling, a system for recognition of competences and qualifications and active employment measures) is a major obstacle for the entire social-economic development. In the modern business environment enterprises, employers and those looking for employment are confronted with demands for high levels of competence and adaptability which implies that more flexibility in the labour market is crucial for the social-economic transformation and transition towards new technologies and a highly productive economy.

The key problems related to the understanding and development of adult education in Serbia are

- Low level of economic development;
- Huge economic, demographic and educational disparities;
- Stagnating population growth, a decrease in the number of children/youth and increase in the number of elderly population;
- Poverty of a large number of population;
- A significant unemployment rate amongst individuals under the age of 30;
- A poorly trained/educated work force;
- The unemployed are generally uneducated/undereducated;
- There is no systematic approach to adult education development (strategic, legislative, institutional, related to human resources and financial).

Adult education and training is a key instrument for social-economic transformation and development. It should:

- Respond to labour market and individual needs for knowledge and skills;
- Increase the value of human resources and create basic support for the national social-economic development and integration with the global, especially European economy;
- Enable complete social and individual participation and improve employability and competences enabling the adult workforce to be active and competitive in the labour market;

- Improve the professional mobility and flexibility of the work force (mobility in work, profession and qualification);
- Anticipate social exclusion and marginalisation, enhance social cohesion and perception of identity and participation;
- Support individual development and personal satisfaction.

### III. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF ADULT EDUCATION

The Adult Education Policy and Strategy and identification of immediate goals and tasks are based on the assumption that adult education is:

- A manifestation of lifelong learning and an integrated part of the entire educational system;
- An important factor in economic development, the raising of productivity and economical competitiveness, the improvement of employment and employability;
- A correction of the regular education system (provides a second opportunity for acquiring relevant knowledge and skills);
- An innovative education and learning mechanism (an area with prompt reaction to the needs of the economy and labour market, technological innovations, testing and introduction of new profiles, programmes, skills, competences, which is flexible and open for new methods and forms of work and learning);
- Instrument for the protection of environment and sustainable development of the society;
- A basic way to support self development (personal satisfaction) to enable an individual to:
  - Be employed,
  - Have a better income,
  - Acquire independence,
  - Remain active and in good health,
  - Have better jobs,
  - Strengthen the family and encourage the independence of family members.

### IV. PURPOSE OF THE ADULT EDUCATION POLICY

The basic purpose of adult education policy is the development of appropriate social conditions for adult education and the basic mechanisms for adult education and training, as well as the creation of an education and training system for adults (including support and development institutions and mechanisms) whose basic characteristics are relevance, flexibility, efficiency, effectiveness, accessibility and sustainability.

#### Relevance

The adult education system is relevant if it provides knowledge and skills corresponding to the needs of potential users, or demands of an individual, the labour market, or the broader community. Relevance is secured through a high percentage of participation of all interested agents (social partners) in the adult education system (policy, programmes, finance, verification etc.) and through monitoring and identification of labour market needs and the institutional articulation of these demands and requirements.

## Flexibility

At the core of adult education is flexibility, i.e. the ability of education providers to respond adequately and in timely manner to the demands for knowledge and skills. Mainly, flexibility is secured through modularisation, i.e. development of programmes based on labour market needs, job requirements and interests of enterprises, specific groups and individuals. Modularisation and modules are the most adequate response to the changeable world of work and social environment and the necessity of harmonising education with the needs of the economy and public sector.

## Efficiency and effectiveness

Efficiency and effectiveness refer to the maximum utilisation of adult education capacities and resources and the management of the system of adult education through quality categories. These emphasise the maximum usage of existing educational institutions (regular schools and adult education providers), establishing educational standards and the joint capacities and efforts (material, financial, human and institutional) of various management channels (ministries and agency).

## Accessibility

Adult education system is accessible to all categories of adults. It is open to various social groups: poor, refugees, adults with special needs, minority groups, people unemployed for a long time, young people without qualifications, women, elderly workers faced with the possibility of losing job, highly educated people losing jobs such as army staff etc.

## Sustainability

Relevance, flexibility, efficiency, effectiveness are the roads towards the sustainability of the adult education system. However, the system is sustainable only if it secures the necessary financial means. The sustainability of the adult education system is not based on traditional budget-oriented financing of education and training institutions, but on the development of an adequate model of financial management at the national and local level (the possibility of adult education institutions to act at the educational market and to respond to the demands of enterprises, public services, and individuals for knowledge and skills and to develop new forms of financial support to the educational programmes such as grants, vouchers etc.)

## **V. GOALS OF ADULT EDUCATION POLICY**

Adult education strategy is one of the instruments for solving many key social and economic problems in the Republic of Serbia. That is why this strategy stresses adult education and training. Through adult education Serbia has to restructure and improve human resources. It means:

- Securing the accessibility of the education and training system to all categories of adults by establishing institutional and programme pluralism in the adult education system;
- Decentralisation and a partnership approach in management and implementation activities

- in adult education;
- Quality assurance in adult education through legislation and the establishment of educational standards;

If we have in mind the urgent need for faster economic development, improvement of employment, social cohesion and democratisation of social relations, the main goals and objectives of the adult education policy in the Republic of Serbia will be:

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF ADULT EDUCATION

<b>Objective 1</b> <b>Establishing effective ways of participation of social partners in adult education</b>	<b>Objective 2</b> <b>Distribution of responsibility for adult education among relevant ministries and their agencies</b>	<b>Objective 3</b> <b>Development of various programme options and upgrading of the availability of adult education</b>	<b>Objective 4</b> <b>Development of capacity and quality of adult education and training</b>
<p>Tasks:</p> <p>1.1. Establishing an agreement regarding social partnership within vocational education and training;</p> <p>1.2. Establishment of a Council for Education and Training;</p> <p>1.3. Establishment of Local Councils for Human Resources Development;</p>	<p>Tasks:</p> <p>2.1. Capacity development for management and support to adult education</p> <p>2.2. Definition of financing models and mechanisms for adult education programmes</p> <p>2.3. Definition of monitoring and management in adult education institutions;</p>	<p>Tasks:</p> <p>3.1. Development of the elementary adult education programme</p> <p>3.2. Development of vocational education and training programmes;</p>	<p>Tasks:</p> <p>4.1. Creating a law on adult education and relevant regulations;</p> <p>4.2. Establishment of a framework system for adult education;</p> <p>4.3. Definition of educational and training standards;</p> <p>4.4. Establishment of an accreditation and certification system;</p> <p>4.5. Establishment of a guidance and counseling system;</p> <p>4.6. Establishment of a quality assurance system for education and training programmes;</p>

# 1. ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE WAYS OF PARTICIPATION OF SOCIAL PARTNERS IN ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education is a partnership activity and, furthermore, the joint responsibility of a variety of actors: the government, employers and employees, businesses, professional associations, scientific and educational institutions and individuals).

Social partnership is the mutual response of all the key actors to the challenges of socio-economic development. It is also the answer to the need for knowledge and skills for both individuals and corporations/businesses and is the basic mechanism for the planning and development of vocational adult education and training. Partnership among three parties - government, employers and employees - is the basis for human resources development and planning, along with adult education and training. Partnership is established at all levels of social organisation (national and local) and in all domains of organisation and realisation of education (planning, programmes creation, financing, accreditation, certification etc.). The expected result of establishing a dialogue and partnership is the creation of a dynamic and sustainable system of institutions and programmes for adult education and learning that is based on the needs of the economy, of the labour market, and on the realizable possibilities of society and the individual.

## TASKS

In order to establish effective participation of social partners in adult education it is necessary to develop the preliminary conditions and framework for institutional dialogue and action, which will require the following:

### 1.1 Establishing an agreement on cooperation among the social partners regarding vocational education and training.

The agreement regulates the relationship between the partners, their duties and responsibilities, scope of actions, the way in which the partners cooperate.

### 1.2 Establishment of a Council for Education and Training.

Members of the Council are representatives from the government, trade unions, and employers. The Council considers and proposes strategy for adult education, national qualifications framework, accreditation standards for programmes and institutions, measures for the improvement of vocational education and training, models for financing adult vocational education and training.

### 1.3 Establishing Local Councils for Human Resources Development.

Members of the Local Councils are the representatives of local government, employers, trade unions, Chambers of Commerce, professional associations, educational institutions and scientific and research organizations and associations. The main purposes of Local Partnership Councils are to – through the education and training measures - support economic and employment policy

development at local level, decrease unemployment, develop individual initiatives and entrepreneurship, and help the restructuring of the economy through the development of a local strategy for adult education and the development of human resources.

The Local Partnership Councils are responsible for:

- Analyzing and monitoring the current state of human resources development, employment and adult education;
- Identifying the needs and priorities of adult education and human resource development;
- Collecting and distributing information regarding adult education and training programmes and, furthermore, distributing information regarding the needs of the labour market, such as required competencies and qualifications; and
- Suggesting models and measures for financing and investing in adult education and training.

### Strategic steps

1.1.1. Through the Socio-Economic Council of the Republic of Serbia, the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs, representative employers' associations founded in the Republic of Serbia and representative Trade Unions - Agreement on the establishment of social partnership in the field of adult education;

1.2.1 According to the Agreement on social partnership the social partners make the decision to establish a Council for Vocational Education and Training;

## 2. DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADULT EDUCATION AMONG THE RELEVANT MINISTRIES

Adult education is one of the basic instruments for the implementation of the Government's socio-economic reform programmes related to:

- Improvement of the productivity and competitiveness of the economy;
- Increase of employment and greater mobility of the labour force;
- Increase of social cohesion;
- Reduction of poverty and social marginalization;
- Protection of environment and achieving sustainable development.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned, the engagement of public institutions is necessary in certain fields and aspects of adult education. This implies division of responsibility and authority for regulation, management, financing, co-financing certain costs or adult education and training programmes. Since the strategy is an integral part of economic and social policy and the employment and labour force development strategy, adult education involves various sectors. At the operational-strategic level, this means that adult education is the responsibility of:

- The Ministry of Education and Sports;

- The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs;
- The Ministry of Finance.

#### TASKS:

Establishment of public interest and efficient distribution of assignments and responsibilities for adult education through:

##### 2.1. Capacity development for management and support to adult education

A system of financing, development, monitoring and management of adult education institutions and programmes need to be established in the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs.

##### 2.2. Definition of financing models and mechanisms for adult education programmes

The Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs need to define the state sources of financing adult education, procedures and criteria for funds allocation.

##### 2.3. Definition of monitoring and management in adult education institutions

By establishing co-operation and co-ordination between relevant ministries related to adult education development the Ministry of Education and Sports and Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection define ways and procedures of management and monitoring of adult education institutions.

#### Strategic steps

2.1.1. Establishment of an Adult Education Unit (sector/department) within the Ministry of Education and Sports, and the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs;

2.2.1. Establishment of an inter-ministerial team for financing models and a financial management strategy for different adult education programmes;

2.3.1. Establishment of an inter-ministerial team for strategic co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of the effects of the policy and strategy within adult education;

2.3.2. Establishment of an inter-ministerial team for the provision of information related to adult education programmes and training as well as labour market needs for work force, knowledge and skills.

### 3. DEVELOPMENT OF VARIOUS PROGRAMME OPTIONS AND UPGRADING OF THE AVAILABILITY OF ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education and learning is a starting point for achieving social aims and goals related to developing social organization which allows a complete social participation, support initiatives,

openness entrepreneurial spirit and, furthermore, enhance the value of human capital, productivity, and efficiency, as well as the goals related to environment protection and sustainable development. Consequently, it is necessary to provide a variety of institutions and programmes and diverse means of obtaining adult education (e.g. a spectrum ranging from formal education to distance learning).

The creation of a wide-ranging network of institutions and organisations for adult education has the following aims:

- To widen the realistic possibilities for adult learning and education;
- To create a well organised market of educational programmes and services where institutions/organisations would provide and offer educational and training programmes to organisations under equal conditions and adopted standards;
- To meet the need for knowledge and skills of both the labour market and the individual.

It is necessary to secure, in accordance with standards and equal conditions, the implementation of adult education programmes and trainings in:

- Schools for primary adult education and in common primary school with licence to work with adults;
- VET schools and Centres for Continuing Education, i.e. adult education;
- Higher education institutions and their subsidiary institutions (Training and continuous education centres);
- People's universities, worker universities and open universities;
- Enterprises and their associations;
- Associations;
- Cultural institutions;
- Private organisations for education and training;
- Professional associations.

If we have in mind the present educational profile of the work force and the large unemployment rate, the creation of proper conditions for the development of educational programmes will be necessary as well as training that would meet the needs for knowledge and skills of the following groups:

- Illiterate persons and persons without primary education;
- Persons without occupation or qualification;
- Unemployed persons;
- Redundant workers;
- The employed – especially categories with risk of losing job;
- Entrepreneurs and persons planning to start private business;
- Persons with special needs;
- Ethnical minorities and Gipsy population;
- Women
- People from villages

It is necessary to secure the availability of education and learning for these target groups via three basic groups of programmes.

- Elementary education programmes;
- Vocational education programmes;
- Training programmes for the labour market.

## TASKS

### 3.1. Developing elementary adult education programmes

Literacy programmes and elementary education programmes are the key to the distribution of social justice and rights. Apart from gaining basic knowledge and skills, these programmes are designed to advance the capacity for:

- Social integration;
- Obtaining the right to work, more specifically, the right to obtain and retain employment;
- Understanding cultural and ethnic diversity and the need for tolerance;
- Improving health and health care;
- Continuing individual development;
- Environment protection.

In order to increase employment opportunities and expedite entrance into the world of work, it is necessary to develop programmes and institutions that address the specific literacy and educational needs of the adult population that varies in age and social standing. These programmes are dedicated to employed and unemployed people, with a particular emphasis on certain target groups that include youth (up to the age of 25), women, refugees, groups with special needs and ethnic minorities all of whom lack basic education and qualifications. There are two main programmes for elementary adult education that are specifically designed to replace the existing adult education system which is both expensive and ineffective. These programmes are:

3.1.1. *Preparatory programmes for achieving standards of basic elementary education.* These programmes are built on elementary education standards, more specifically; they lead to certain elementary education outcomes.

3.1.2. *Integrative (work oriented) programmes of elementary education and training.* These programmes combine elementary education with training for specific jobs – i.e. personal and social competencies required for certain jobs and skills related to job searching. The purpose of these programmes is to provide entry into the labour market and/or further education, more specifically, into different programmes of vocational education. At the same time, gaining elementary education and vocational training has a motivational value for adults and contributes to solving the problem of unemployment. These programmes are financed through the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Affairs, and interested employers. Integrative programmes may be conducted through a school, or via internship programmes. In that case, the company is accredited for training in certain specified fields (it has trained and accredited instructors and technical equipment for specific professions and jobs).

## Strategic steps

3.1.1.1. Regional departments within the Ministry of Education and Sports develop regional plans for literacy courses and elementary adult education;

3.1.1.2. The Ministry of Education and Sports develops a methodology of formal elementary education adjusted to adult education;

3.1.1.3. The Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation develops standards of elementary adult education and tests for its verification of achievement,

3.1.1.4. Schools for elementary education and formal elementary schools in regions where schools for adult education do not exist develop preparatory programmes for adults in order to achieve standards of elementary adult education;

3.1.2.1. The Centre for Vocational and Artistic Education develops methodology for integration of vocational education programmes into adult education programmes;

3.1.2.2. Schools for elementary adult education and formal elementary schools in co-operation with Workers', National and Open Universities, and vocational schools implement the integrated adult education programmes.

3.2. Development of vocational education and training programmes.

Establishing a flexible and dynamic system of adult education, more specifically, continuing education and training that is capable of responding quickly to the needs for knowledge and skills, that will allow each individual to acquire an initial vocational education and pre-qualification, in addition to further training, and which refreshes knowledge, skills, work and life competencies that are crucial to the economy and the overall social development of the country. Different groups of vocational education and training programmes are developed in the field of vocational training and education:

3.2.1. *Initial vocational education programmes.* These are adapted modular programmes of secondary vocational education for adults that lead to a qualification, a certain level of education for certain jobs/professions. These programmes are adapted according to outcomes, content, duration, and method of organisation and implementation of learning. They are first and foremost designed for young people from age 18 to 30, who dropped out of the formal educational system for various individual and social reasons and who would like to complete their secondary vocational education and acquire a qualification for certain professions. These programmes are financed by interested individuals, companies and local and regional agencies for employment.

3.2.2. *Labour market programmes.* These are short-term programmes and learning packages forming specific work competencies that are designed to meet labour market needs, the needs of certain employers, specific target groups or individuals. Through these programmes individuals are trained for jobs/work places that provide them with fast entrance into the labour market, especially when it comes to:

- The unemployed, especially those who have lost their jobs, or are at risk of losing their jobs;
- Individuals who lack professional qualifications or competencies (especially women, youth without qualifications, and people with special needs).

The main purpose of these programmes is the reduction of the qualitative and quantitative imbalance between offer and demand on the labour market, especially improvement of the attitude to the labour market and preparation of individuals to return to the working world. Apart from that, these programmes are designed to reduce gender and generational differences and to help specific categories follow the structural changes (women, refugees, officers and military personnel, marginalised and ethnic groups). The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs is in charge of these accredited/certified programmes. The Ministry has an important role in identifying the needs for certain knowledge and skills and for the design and accreditation of programmes.

In this group, *Key competency/personal qualifications' programmes* are included as well. These are short term training and learning programmes that are geared towards developing work effectiveness, flexibility and employability. These programmes enable the individual to gain different skills, such as:

- *Information and communication skills* (foreign languages, computer skills etc.);
- *Personal skills* (critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making);
- *Interpersonal skills* (team work, empathy, and conflict resolution);
- *Self-employment skills* (active job seeking, planning, guiding own career, and how to start one's own business).

These programmes are co-financed through the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs, local communities, businesses, and individuals.

3.2.3. *Continuing education programmes.* These programmes are reflecting and responding to labour market needs as well as to the needs of economy, public sector and individuals in different educational sectors. These programmes offer a wide spectrum of knowledge and skills that have an impact on the professional development of the employed. The important place within this type of programmes belongs to the programmes that have a huge economic impact and are intended for the employed with a university degree. Such programmes are: entrepreneurship, e-business, starting your own business, production management, financial management, quality assurance etc. They are carried out in educational institutions from secondary schools to university, i.e. in their centers for continuing education.

3.2.4. *Education programmes for environment protection and sustainable development.* These programmes should ensure application of the principles of environment protection and facilitate introduction of the concept of sustainable development in the process of acquiring knowledge and skills which have influence on the professional development of the employed. These programmes will make them aware of the impact of each activity/occupation on environment and of the ways to make the impact minimal. These programmes will also provide better understanding of the concept of sustainable development of society.

Labour market and continuing education programmes may be combined with key competency qualifications and job searching programmes and may be presented as a uniform learning package that meets the needs of the employer, labour market, and the individual.

## Strategic steps

3.2.1.1. The Centre for Vocational and Artistic Education within the Institute for the Improvement of Education develops methodology and the procedure for adjustment of the education programmes for adults;

3.2.1.2. In accordance with the labour market needs, the Centres for Continuing Adult Education implement adjusted programmes of initial elementary adult education;<sup>1</sup>

Upon the establishment of an accreditation and certification system these (adjusted) programmes are conducted in formal secondary vocational schools, Workers', National and Open Universities and other institutions/organisations which meet the required adult education standards.

3.2.2.1. The Centres for Continuing Adult Education develop and implement programmes/modules for labour market needs in accordance with information on the social economic situation in the region, training needs and the unemployed population. Upon establishment of an accreditation and certification system these programmes are conducted in formal secondary vocational schools, Workers', National and Open Universities and other institutions/organisations which the required adult education standards.

## 4. DEVELOPMENT OF CAPACITY AND QUALITY OF ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Capacity improvement in adult education and training means the development of the legislative framework and financial possibilities for the work of institutions and organisations for adult education and training. Obtaining quality in adult education and training means:

- Meeting the needs of the individual, local community, and labour market;
- Developing education and training standards;
- Attaining the objectives and outcomes of adult education and learning;
- Achieving equality among different educational institutions and the ways of obtaining

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<sup>1</sup> The Centres for Continuing Adult Education within the secondary vocational schools are specialized educational units intended for professional education and training of adults focused on economic growth and the development of the region through quick response to economy and labour market needs for a mobile and flexible work force and qualitatively meeting needs for knowledge, skills and work competences of employees as well as of unemployed. The staff of the centres mostly consists of teachers with necessary knowledge and skills for research, creating curriculum/modules of education and training and instructors capable of working with adults. Their operation is also based on co-operation and partnership with enterprises and associations. They provide curricula/modules that are based on the economy and needs of the regions where they operate. (CARDS VET Reform Programme –PIU, Regional Training Centres component, Belgrade, 2004.)

## education and training

### TASKS

4.1. *Passing a law on adult education and relevant regulations.* In order to develop adult education, there must be an adequate legal framework and because of this a special law must be introduced that regulates the work of institutions and organizations for adult education and training. Such a law would, furthermore, regulate the institutional norms and standards, education and training standards, issues of accreditation or certification, financing, and any other issues related to the functioning and development of adult education and training.

4.2. *Establishment of a financial system for adult education.* Adult education is financed from:

- The budget of the Republic of Serbia,
- The budget of the local self government,
- Enterprises and private employers,
- Individuals
- Associations
- International organizations and programmes.

In the area of adult education it is necessary to:

- Reallocate budget funds and allocate one part to adult education. Decrease the school population and reduce the number of schools in Serbia which is opening the possibility for financing adult education;
- Change from a passive to an active employment policy including the allocation of resources for conducting training for the unemployed and potentially unemployed aimed at finding employment or retaining jobs;
- Apply a stimulating tax policy for employers and individuals that invest in adult education and for institutions and organisations who implement programmes of adult education that are of crucial importance for economic development and increase of employment;
- Form training funds together with introduction of loans for obtaining initial qualifications and pre-qualification;
- Establish an accreditation system for institutions and programmes and stimulate individuals and companies to invest in education and training;
- Increase investments in training for unemployed people in nationally accredited programmes at the level of local community and enterprises.

4.3. *Establishment of education and training standards.* Quality assurance in adult education, effective management of institutions and programmes, monitoring and control, are all based on standards system. In the field of adult education and training institutional and organizational standards are established, in addition to standards for programmes, teachers, teaching, organizers, assessment, and evaluation.

4.4. *Establishment of an accreditation and certification system.* Development of work force

mobility, quality assurance, and recognition of qualifications and competencies require the establishment of a system of accreditation for education and training programmes.

4.5. *Establishment of a counseling and guidance system.*

4.6. *Establishment of a system for supervision of quality of education and training programmes.* In order to ensure quality in adult education and training, it is necessary to establish:

- Systematic monitoring – regularly obtaining information on projects, programmes, and other activities of adult education institutions;
- Assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of adult education and training programmes;
- Evaluation, i.e. formal assessment of achievements of programme, institutional, social and individual aims and outcomes of the adult education and training programmes.

## VI. ACTION PLAN

The Government will adopt the Action Plan for the implementation of this Strategy by April 30<sup>th</sup> 2007.

## VII. FINAL PART

This Strategy will be published in the “Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”.

No:  
In Vrsac,  
December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006

GOVERNMENT

President,  
Vojislav Kostunica