



Country Profile: SERBIA

REGIONAL Comparative Analysis of Regional Policies for Adult Learning

Regional Economic Development Agency for
Sumadija and Pomoravlje

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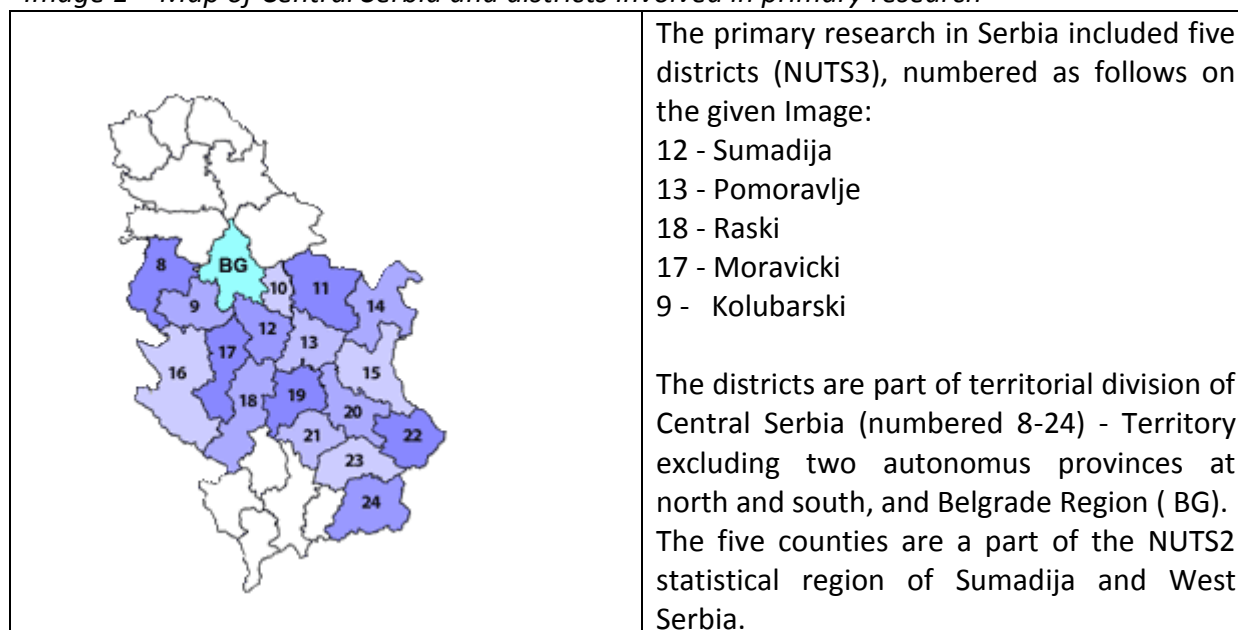
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Executive Summary

In the course of the REGIONAL project, that aims to comparatively analyse Adult Learning (AL) policy formulation, implementation and financing in 21 regions in six countries within Europe, the project partners have conducted interviews with policy makers and, in support of the interviews, analysed policy documents released between 2011 and 2014 in order to gain detailed insight into policy making processes.

In Serbia, research focused on the regions/districts (NUTS 3) identified during the early stage of project implementation, specifically, Sumadija and Pomoravlje, Raski and Moravicki districts, and Kolubarski district. As an EU candidate country, Serbia has not established administrative regions, although statistical regions are defined. Besides the relevant national laws, strategies and action plans, Regional development strategies that are available for the districts and relevant social and economic analyses have been considered. Local economic development strategies and action plans, as well as local employment plans have also been considered. Desk research allowed to identify a total of over 20 directly relevant policy documents (plus 16 local development strategies of the municipalities of selected districts).

Image 1 – Map of Central Serbia and districts involved in primary research



REDASP performed secondary research using Internet sources of national collection of policy documents and websites of the government and line ministries – Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy, Ministry of Economy and other national stakeholders, such as National Employment Service, Serbian European Integrations Office (SEIO), National Agency for Regional Development, National coordinator for Lifelong Learning Programme – TEMPUS in Belgrade, Center for Professional Upgrading, Kragujevac. REDASP also used its own base of

strategic documents and social and economic analyses and profiles of municipalities and the region of Sumadija and Pomoravlje. Lifelong learning policy in Serbia is integrated into general education policies and is regulated and planned at the national level. As of January 2014 the new Law of adult learning has been put in force. During the period April to October 2014 of implementation of primary research most of the stakeholders still perceived it as an integral part of general education law and policy. Strategic documents of the involved districts state - as a territorial weakness in SWOT analysis - that there is no system of adult learning and lifelong learning, and thus are formulated among other priorities and strategic development measures.

A total of twelve interviews with policy makers from 5 districts were provided in the primary research. Support in identifying and contacting the stakeholders from territories other than the region of Sumadija and Pomoravlje were regional development agencies (RDA) covering these territories – Regional Agency for Spatial and Economic Development of Raski and Moravicki Districts and Agency for Regional Development of Kolubarski District. Out of 17 short listed stakeholders, 12 interviews/questionnaires were completed.

The experience of REDASP in the field of human resource and economic development was a key factor in the identification of policy makers, other stakeholders and partners for sustainable cooperation. Due to the fact that policies are formulated and regulated at the national level, the structure of the stakeholders in AL is same in the selected districts. In general, differences occur at the level of implementation or service provision in non-formal sector with NGO sector and civil society organizations that occasionally perform some AL projects, primarily related to entrepreneurial trainings. Other measures such as functional elementary education of adults, professional upgrading and qualifications are implemented through national education departments in the districts, by elementary and VET secondary schools, as well as National Employment Service and Centers for professional upgrading.

Introduction: REGIONAL Project and Serbia

The main motivation for the project *Comparative Analysis of Regional Policies for Adult Learning* (REGIONAL) is the need to identify and exploit key factors influencing adult learning policy making. In doing so, the project pursues objectives on three different levels: firstly, detailed insights into the processes of policy making and their differences across Europe will be gained, secondly, the effectiveness and impact of policies will be improved and therefore, thirdly, the project will contribute to the overall objective of reducing major geographic disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes across and within EU regions.

More specifically, on the level of insights into policy making processes REGIONAL aims at supplementing large international comparative studies that ascertain regional disparities in performance of adults but also in participation in adult learning programmes. In their communication "Adult Learning: It Is Never Too Late to Learn" (2006) the European Commission highlights how "barriers to participation by individuals may be policy-related". The project therefore grants insights into the process of policy formulation, implementation and funding to shed light on the formal aspects of policy making and their influence on adult learning.

Out of seventeen requests in primary research, twelve provided direct response. Stakeholders of Sumadija district and Pomoravlje district provided direct interviews. Representatives of REDASP visited them each in their official offices. Sumadija stakeholders provided separate interviews, while representatives of Pomoravlje district (Ministry of education branch office for the district, and Jagodina municipal administration department for education – Jagodina being the central or capital city of the district) expressed opinion that it would be useful to have a joint meeting with REDASP representative. This approach proved to be fruitful as to provide more input during the open question – deep interview, because a dialogue took place between the stakeholders. Stakeholders of Raski and Moravicki districts were summoned in the office of the Regional Agency for Spatial and Economic Development of Raski and Moravicki District. They included representatives of Ministry offices in both districts, National Employment Service offices of both districts – these included two representatives each: coordinator for the programme of functional elementary education for adults and coordinator for professional orientation. Further, the group included representative of local administration of the city of Kraljevo (central town of the Raski district). Significant input was provided by the director of the regional development agency (who hosted the meeting, but did not fill out the questionnaire). REDASP representative coordinated the meeting and interview throughout the questionnaire. At the session of deep interview, a productive discussion took place, which provided valuable input for the report, on the one hand, and on the other, was very useful for the stakeholders themselves.

Furthermore, a number of policy documents from 2011 until 2014 and those from before that period with major significance for current practice have been analysed to complement the findings from the interviews where necessary.

Key data for Serbia:

	Serbia	Sumadija and Pomoravlje	Rasko-Moravicki	Kolubarski district
Population (2011)	7565761	526.213	512251	174.228
Area in km ²	88361	5001	6934	2474
GDP/capita (2011, in eur)	4 543	under average for Serbia	under average for Serbia	under average for Serbia
Employment rate (2013)	45, 8	40,4	-	-
Unemployment rate (2013)	24,1	29,5	-	-

According to the Regulation on the nomenclature of statistic territorial units of the Republic of Serbia, the Region, subject of this study consists of 5 NUTS 3 areas (Sumadija, Pomoravlje, Raska, Moravica and Kolubara) and is a part of the NUTS 2 region of Sumadija and West Serbia. This statistical region also includes other NUTS3 areas (Zlatibor, Macva and Ras)

Selection of the territory of the 5 districts was decided on the basis of geographical and economic similarities and compatibility. The territory is the central part of Serbia that economically differs from more developed north and Belgrade area, as well as from the less developed south. Besides, the Regional Economic Development Agency for Sumadija and

Pomoravlje has very good cooperation with RDAs that cover the territory of the selected districts, and thus provided a great support during primary research and interviews with the stakeholders.

According to GDP the region is under average for Serbia. GDP is not officially available at NUTS3 level. Alternative indicator is Economic Aggregate, calculated as number of the employed X average gross income. When talking about the average gross earnings per employee it is under the national average in all observed areas.

Employment rate is under average for Serbia for all districts, having in mind that for Sumadija district is above the average of other observed district due to a large foreign investment in automotive industry in the center of the district - the city of Kragujevac.

Unemployment rates are above average for Serbia.

Serbia's Accession to EU and reforms

Accession of Serbia to EU is a national strategic goal. In April 2008 Serbia signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement, and received the status of candidate country on 1 March 2012. The economic reforms have led to changes in economy structure, followed by the processes such as establishment of economic institutional frame, privatization and liberalization of economy.

The condition at the labor market in Serbia during the past decade has been aggravated. The rate of employment (45,8) and activity (46,7%) of work-capable population are far below the European rates (64,4% and 71% respectively). Labor offer and demand have constantly been imbalanced, while the rate of new job opportunities is insufficient. The overall education level in Serbia has been low, with the high percentage of the illiterate and insufficiently qualified adults, which is not correspondent to the demands of economy. The high school education is the highest educational achievement of over the half of the work-capable population.

Since the national qualification frame and the quality control system have not been established, there is no stimulation to develop educational offer apart from the existing educational system. One of the consequences is the insufficient possibilities for the unemployed to acquire and develop the skills necessary for entrepreneurship and self-employment.

The problem of unemployment, accompanied by the consequences of the economic status and social exclusion remains the main problem in Serbia from the aspect of education and employment.

There are more and more initiatives and available programmes which offer the knowledge and skill development in this area. During the past years, the state has offered advantages in capital investment and a number of programmes which encourage the employment, one of which is the programme "The First Chance" implemented by the National Employment Service, and adopted the umbrella documents, such as the National Youth Strategy and National Employment Strategy (The Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 55/05, 71/05 correction and 101/07). Another AL programme is "The Second Chance" i.e. functional elementary education of adults, followed by the Law on Adult Education in force since 1st January 2014.

Policy Formulation

AL policy in Serbia is regulated at national level. From January 2014 the Law on adult learning has been in power.

National strategy of AL development was formulated through cross-sector approach. Besides the education sector, AL policies are to a great extent treated by the labour and employment sector, i.e. the line ministries and national institutions.

Legal frame and strategic documents

During the past several years in Serbia implemented are political measures that are based on national priorities and ownership. The new Law on basics of education sets good foundations and directions for future development of human resources and AL. Activating the National Education Board created significant support to continual development and monitoring of improvements of education system. The counselling role of the Committee for professional education and adult education has a number of important functions including relations with economy sector and new programmes and curricula. Serbia created two TEMPUS projects, one of which sets new frame of education and training of teachers, as stated in the Law on the basis of education and training, and implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of education and many home and foreign universities.

LAW ON ADULT EDUCATION (in force as of 1st January 2014) Regulates the area of adult education in the context of lifelong learning and for the first time regulates non-formal education. The new law enables acquiring of qualifications during one's lifetime – lifelong learning, and creates conditions for formalizing qualifications acquired through non-formal education and training. Adult education is implemented through formal, non-formal and informal education. Funds for financing AL are provided from: the budget of the Republic of Serbia, budget of the autonomous province, budget of local self-governments in accordance with the annual AL plan, directly from attendants, candidates, employees, as well as other sources.

The Law on the Basis of the Education System Activity of elementary education of adults is implemented in accordance with this law and the Law on adult education.

Within the frame of the Law established are:

Council for professional education and education of adults – in charge adult education, training for work, professional education and training.

Republic of Serbia also established the Institute for promotion and improvement of education and training with organisational units/ centers:

1) Center for professional upgrading of the employed in education sector

2) Center for professional education and adult education

Other relevant laws that define active measures of employment which also include AL in terms of accredited trainings in for increased self-employment and entrepreneurial skills are: The Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance, The Law on Regional Development, The Law on Youth, Labor Law, The Law on professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disability.

Strategic framework of the national education policy is well developed. Human resource development is defined as a priority, and includes adult education, in the following strategies: Adult education strategy, Strategy of development of professional education and training, Strategy of the education development in Serbia until 2020, Inter-sector strategy and action plan for career guiding and counseling, National employment strategy, National youth strategy, National sustainable

development strategy, Regional sustainable development strategies and local development strategies and Adult learning action plans.

The Adult education strategy is based on the statement that adult education is a strong factor of economic development, improvement of productivity and competitiveness of the economy, improvements of employability and reduction of regional disproportions in economic development of the Republic of Serbia.

Ministries

At the national level, the following are the ministries of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, in charge of human resources, and adult learning policies: the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Development Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Issues and Ministry of Youth and Sports.

In the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Development one of the main units is the Sector for free school, elementary education and adult education, within which functional is **Adult education group**. Activities of this group include: preparation of expert input for the law and bylaws in domain of adult learning and lifelong learning; planning and monitoring and evaluation of the processes of education, training and professional upgrading of adults and lifelong learning; initiating solutions of the problems and issues in this area; preparation of standards for space, equipment and tools for adult education; cooperation with schools, local government and social partners, etc.

Within the Ministry established and active are the Education Board, The Institute for Promotion and Improvement of Education and Training, The Institute for Quality Assurance and Evaluation of Education.

The Ministry conducts its activities through the network of district offices, 18 in total. (Included in primary research of the project REGIONAL are offices in Kragujevac (Sumadija district), Jagodina (Pomoravlje district), Kraljevo (Raska district), Cacak (Moravicki district) and Valjevo (Kolubarski district).

Most interviewees in the primary research identified formal education as the main type of AL promoted through their policy actions. This is particularly valid for local governments and ministry of education. National employment services and regional agencies promote programs that are in non-formal education system, but regulated and planned at national level in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. Centres for Professional Upgrading promote non-formal education. Non-formal education is with purpose and ultimate goal of increasing employability and meeting requirements of labour market.

In terms of the goals of their policies there is an equal share of economic on the one hand, and cultural and social on the other hand. More precisely, economic goal is not contained only in two questionnaires as a priority goal of formulation of AL policies. Ministry of Education representatives (and district offices) perceives more the social and cultural goal as from the aspect of large rate of illiteracy in the country. Other stakeholders put priority on economic goal, taking into consideration high unemployment rate both on national and local/regional levels.

Elected policy makers are representatives of local government, in particular voted as members of City council for education. Other interviewees are not elected but professional associates or organisers of particular education programmes in National Employment Service and The Ministry or the Centers for Professional Upgrading.

The Ministry and related district offices and representatives perceive adult learning through the national programme of functional elementary education for adults equally as economic

(employment) and social measure, for the social inclusion of marginalised groups (illiterate, mainly poor or living in distant rural areas far from urban centers or even rural schools). The general opinion is the same in all included districts. Relevant data about need for AL elementary education collected from the secondary research imply that according to the census conducted in 2011, in Serbia 20,76% of population has only elementary education completed; 11% has not completed elementary education, while 2,67% of population is absolutely illiterate.

All interviewees indicate that AL policy is integrated part of general education policy, although the new law on adult education is in force since January 2014. However, by the time of implementation of interviews the changes in practice and responsibilities of relevant bodies and agencies took place.

Need assessment regarding AL non-formal and is coordinated from the national level. Needs for formal AL are assessed at local level (in particular for elementary education for adults). Representatives of local governments indicate that they perform financial planning according to the need assessment carried out at local level, but the needs do not address to AL as separate measure, but education in general.

All stakeholders base their policy planning in accordance with the National policies and strategies. All interviewees indicate the national education strategy as the key strategy, with some references that the national strategy follows the basics of European policies implied by the EC. National ministry representative indicates Europe 2020 strategy and International documents, but not specifically.

According to the interviews, public consultations take place through existing networks of stakeholders. Consultations are performed at central national level, involving internal structures and bodies such as - National education board, Board for VET and adult education, Institutes for promotion of education. This type of consultations does not necessarily imply publishing of reports and public discussion. Representatives of the branch offices of the ministry state that the consultations are not carried out at the district level. In all sectors national or umbrella organisations provide networks and play coordinating role in consultation procedures, eg. National employment service consults with the centers for social work and national to local boards for education. Also included to different extent local and regional non governmental organisations that deal with education, social issues, unemployment, inclusion of marginalised groups, etc. The line ministry also consults universities, research centers and local school administrations. National ministry also consults representatives of economy such as national chamber of commerce, while the county branch offices do not do the same with regional chambers of commerce. At least, they do not do it as a system, but occasionally there are consultations with the chamber and business sector, especially in implementation of vocational training programmes in VET schools. City Council of Kragujevac conducts consultations. And all documents are obliged to undergo debate. However, there have not been formal consultations for adult learning policies, because they have not been defined at local level yet. There is an initiative to start the process soon, of creating local adult learning plan within local education policy or as separate action plans.

The consultation process grants mutual interest of policy makers and stakeholders, since the former receive valuable input for policy formulation and latter have the opportunity to influence policies to their benefit.

Results of consultations are not publicly available, apart from the case of national ministry of education in case they feed into publications or reports.

At local level consultations are conducted with finance departments; however there are no specific budget lines for AL in allocations for education.

All interviewees emphasise the need for more extensive and regular intra-sector consultations and multi sector approach to the issues of AL, especially with the sectors of social welfare, economy, labour market and employment.

When asked for their consideration of other cultural, social or economic policies when making AL policies, all interviewees indicated national documents such as National employment plan, National social service development strategy, National education strategy and reform plans. Only from the perspective of regional development agencies (which are also implementers of some national training courses for self employment) regional and national economic development plans are perceived as relevant and important, as well as European framework.

When designing AL policies, all interviewees mentioned to draw on specific data-sources: from National Employment Service, branch office for the district and the city and Regional Chamber of Commerce / for unemployment and labour market requirements. Besides, data of Social Welfare Centres are used for data on marginalised groups and their elementary education needs.

Policy Implementation

Education and training of adults is organised by private education services/providers, NGO and other organisations in formal system institutions, agencies, than companies and professional associations. In the system of formal education, elementary education of adults is implemented in elementary schools that applied to the call of the Ministry of Education on 2013, after completion of the pilot project and integration of the programme in the regular education system. Upon completion of elementary school, the adult learners have opportunity to continue formal education and acquire further qualifications, i.e. to attend some of the VET courses recommended by National Employment Service.

The activity of formal adult education in Serbia is implemented by the following institutions:

- in Primary Education - Primary schools. On the whole territory of Serbia there are 70 primary schools that implemented the program of functional basic adult education, of which 3 primary schools are located in the school administration for Sumadija and three elementary schools in the school administration for Pomoravlje for all inhabitants of the area;
- in Secondary Education - High School Adult Education (about 80 high schools in Serbia involved in the secondary AL programme)
- Higher education - higher education institutions: universities, colleges and art colleges in the universities, academies, applied studies, high school, high school vocational studies.

Non-formal AL education is implemented by the National Employment Service and National Agency for Regional Development through network of accredited regional development agencies.

By participating in the education program of additional education of the unemployed by NES, the learners get the opportunity to gain new knowledge and thus increase their chances of finding a job. These are free programs for additional education: job practice, acquire practical knowledge, clubs for active job search, retraining and additional training, training in starting their own business, training

for active job search, training for the needs of the labor market, functional basic adult education and others.

National Agency for Regional Development, as the institutions of the Republic of Serbia, implement the national policy of balanced regional development across the developed network of regional development agencies, in accordance with the Law on Regional Development.

Regional Development Agency performs the tasks of preparing and implementing professional development programs for the development of enterprises and entrepreneurship, then for the development of infrastructure and the development of institutions and organizations, as well as for improving the capacity of local governments.

There is also a considerable number of practitioners who are still under-utilized, including experienced teachers, enthusiasts, educators and school principals. Many of them are internal or external agents of change and the developers of the curriculum that work on a number of pilot projects.

Civil society sector in Serbia gained more and more importance and influence on the political level. Since 2003, the Federation of NGOs of Serbia (FENS) representing civil society. According to the NGO Civic Initiatives major issue in the development of human resources in order to achieve that non-formal education and training are more recognized, in which the civil sector plays an important role, BIP (Business Innovation Program), BSC (Business Start-up Center), USAID.

Primary research showed that stakeholders agree that there is a significant lack of coordination between national and local levels. While national level is conducting promotion of functional elementary education for adults, it is conducted in direct communication with schools, local government authorities are often not informed about the process and procedures, thus cannot react. From the experience of ministry of education office for the district of Pomoravlje, some municipalities other than the centre of the district had much better information about the national programme of functional elementary education of adults, and provided support to learners in the form of organised transport for them. On the territory of the central town there are no elementary or secondary schools that implement the program. The local government representative confirmed that there is willingness of the local government to support the implementation of the program, but better information and coordination between the local and national level is necessary.

According to the results of the primary research, share of experience is indicated as with national and regional chambers of commerce, National Employment Service, as well as with other district offices of the Ministry of Education, especially in domain of functional adult education, through regular communication and at seminars. Also indicated is exchange with partners from districts and regions with traditionally good cooperation. E.g. for Sumadija district it is South Moravian region of the Czech Republic. However, from all answers it is indicated that there is an overall problem of lack of or insufficient coordination and sharing of experience with other national and regional stakeholders and partners.

Evaluation system as perceived from the aspect of district branch offices of the national Ministry of Education includes monitoring of quality of work and standard in schools and review of feedback from employers. For them, monitoring and evaluation refers to the methodology of implementation of functional elementary adult learning/teaching process in the schools that

implement the programme. Central national ministry uses data and records from the National Employment Service and Statistical Office of the RS. The main indicator for National Employment Service is number of employed after attending NES training courses. The answers concerning evaluative system for AL programmes revealed that there is no unique quality assurance system. Most interviewees agree that more should be done in terms of evaluation of AL policies. There have been indications in the course of discussions that more correlation in evaluation should be established with statistics on effects of AL programmes on employability of beneficiaries of AL programmes.

Only the national Ministry of Education representative indicated awareness of PIAAC (Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competences) and AES (Adult Education Survey). No other interviewees indicated awareness of European or international educational surveys.

AL Funding

According to the Serbian budget for 2011, based on the ETF budget, the share of education in the overall budget is 16.85%, which amounts to € 1.35 billion. Structurally, the total education budget 48% goes to pre-school and primary education, 21% in secondary education, 22% on Higher Education, 8% of the student standard and 1% covers the work of the Ministry of Education and other central bodies such as the National Education Council and institutes.

The sums allocated from the budget are not getting a whole, but the state determines which share is for salaries, which for material costs, etc. (i.e. earmarked or line-item budget).

For formal adult education there is no special part of the budget, so it is not possible to determine how much is allocated for the adults in the budget for primary, secondary and higher education. According to the National Strategy for AL Development, funds for AL policies are provided from: the national budget, from the budget of autonomies provinces, from local government budget in accordance with local action plans for AL development, than from national and international donors through projects, from students, business sector and other sources.

The reform of education in Serbia was strongly influenced by foreign donor investment. In such manner the AL programme of Second Chance was financed by EU from 2010 to 2013 and included 70 elementary and about 80 high schools in Serbia. This is an advantage in the sense that the country could become acquainted with a number of modern concepts and best practices. However, pilot projects can only help in stimulating development, but they require additional efforts of the State in order to be implemented at the system level. The Second chance, or the functional elementary education of adults has been implemented in the regular education system after the project ended in September 2013, and with the Law on AL issued in 2014 received full legislative background. However, the effective implementation is still under desired level of efficiency, due to lack of coordination and funding, especially the legal regulation of financing the AL policies.

From the results of the primary research, local governments only finance the operational cost of schools. There is no separate budget line for financing AL policies. Local governments are willing to support initiatives for AL policies of individual institutions and organisations if started through other funds and programmes. Local government finances grants and operational costs of institutions/schools, as well as organisation of seminars. These include AL initiatives / no special budget line. It is indicated that level of awareness of local governments, institutions and end beneficiaries about importance of AL policies and actions is still very low.

Financing actions arising from policy for the ministry and county offices are grants, scholarship for adult learners, financing of schools that have enrolled the adult education programme. Also addressed are support to partnership between business and education; promotional campaigns and seminars.

Ministry pays salaries for the teachers who implement the education of adult learners, based on the reports from schools, fund of classes; pays scholarships and books for learners. Knowing that the policies and programmes are regulated and financed from national level, answers regarding funding and arising activities are generally the same from county to county. The government/ministry finances the scholarship and institutions that implement the programme. The schools that brought decision to take part in the governments programme, and implement it in their area, had the operational tasks to motivate and mobilise the adult learners, as well as the teachers who are accredited for the programme. The funds are transferred directly to the schools. In addition, some municipalities participate by financing transportation costs for adult learners, especially those who travel from distant rural areas.

PPP are not indicated except for the county of Sumadija, where noted some partnership between businesses and technical schools, where business pays minimal financial support, i.e. covers the cost of lunch during the practice course, and sometimes transport. Otherwise they seek fund for transport from LG. Sources of funding are mainly indicated as public funding and in cases EU funds. Information about the share of funding was difficult for the interviewees to provide without input from finance department, which indicates that the representatives of the stakeholders who were willing to participate and are nominated by management are more of operational and implementation oriented individuals. Only in couple of cases the opinion of 80% national and 20% of local budget was indicated. Also ETBI (Education and training board for implementation) receives its funding via ETBs who in turn are funded from central government.

Key findings

The deep interview of the involved stakeholders provided opinions about weak points of education system and correlation with AL policies.

Shortcomings of the education system are particularly visible at the secondary level in the field of adult education. Only a small number of programs for vocational education and training has been reformed and implemented in pilot schools while at the state level retained fragmented curriculum and other school unevenly developed.

Providing adult education remains weak and requires reform of the content, methods and infrastructure. It is necessary to develop the competence of teachers and school leaders. The methodology of teaching and learning requires a reform of the educational system, and should make use of the initiative for the development of educational competencies of educators.

A significant problem is the lack of a clear national qualifications framework and its harmonization with reformed higher education, which now induces new knowledge after completion of study.

Very significant criticisms related to the lack of practice during training, especially in the field of higher education. Criticism usually comes from employers who show a lack of work motivation in a large number of highly educated people.

Data obtained from the labor market indicate that the majority of inactive and unemployed people looking for work, graduates from secondary school. This shows that the relationship between labor market and secondary education, including vocational, waned in the years of transition. It is generally believed that higher education is too theoretical and does not provide instruction to students when it comes to the skills required in the labor market, which indirectly leads to the education system is more driven by supply rather than demand. Within the guidelines for the development of human

resources and AL policies have been raised to the level of economic policy, since investment in skills development in education is crucial for competitiveness in the globalized market.

Better involvement and mediation of social partners, especially employers, in defining AL policy is important, since their contribution to the process of determining these policies provides a better connection between the labor market and education.

One of the key problems in the development of education and training for adults is poor correlation between formal and informal education. Lack of public financing and cost-sharing mechanism between the government and enterprises and the lack of incentives for companies and individuals hampers the development of education and training for adults. The prevailing concept insists on the needs of individuals and addresses issues of literacy, but neglects the training you are looking for companies, especially the development of training / learning by doing. More is managed by the offer, because very little space to analyzing and responding to the needs of the economy, and favors the formal work-based programs should be centrally developed and accredited.

Main challenges/problems in policy formulation

In the primary research, the interviewees themselves were given the opportunity to identify major challenges and the main drivers in policy making and implementation as well as the major tools they use in these processes.

All interviewees indicate the low level of awareness of institutions and centralised system as the main challenges. More space should be given to regional institutions; LG should be more involved in the processes of decision making and policy formulation. Repeated comment refers to lack of communication and coordination between local and national levels, and scarce interest of local level, too.

Another prominent challenge is low awareness of the opportunities, due to lack of coordination between the different levels of government, as well as between the relevant sectors. For the local self-governments the main challenge will be programming and programme budgeting. Policies might have already been formulated, but no correspondent financing plans nor AL funds.

Insufficient promotion of AL opportunities is also noted as a challenge by two interviewees.

Representative of RDA, also presenting Kolubarski county indicates complexity of theme for our conditions and circumstances, such as constant change of political structures, thus change of strategies and directions of development; Lack of funds, as a baseline challenge.

Concerning the main drivers in policy making, the interviewees provided answers that refer to: education reforms; National employment service and chamber of commerce involvement, that should be encouragement to cross-sector cooperation (education, labour market and private sector – businesses); National employment strategy and EU standards set as requirement for candidate country (reduced illiteracy and unemployment rate); Involvement of civil society organisations. The most frequently repeated answer refers to the programs of National Employment Service, followed by the education reforms defined in accordance with EU standards and requirements.

Moreover, in a dynamic and uncertain business environment conditioned by the degree of success of the company is its ability to understand, accept and promptly react to the benefits and threats of the external and internal environment. Timely knowledge of future opportunities and training of employees in the company to creating differential advantage, outran the competition, affirmed the

human resource development as a permanent challenge and a task that must be continually exercised. Willingness to initiate investment in this area and manage them effectively, has long been a critical premise of the vitality of enterprises in developed countries. Best practices should be incorporated in AL policy planning and revision and stimulate the establishment of public private partnerships in this area.

One of the key problems in adult education and training is a weak correlation and connection between the formal and non-formal education. Lack of public finance and mechanism of sharing costs between the public and private sectors/enterprises, as well as lack of incentives for the enterprises also aggravates the development of adult education.

The prevailing concept insists on needs of individuals and solves the problem of illiteracy, while neglecting the needs of enterprises, especially training at work, for specific profiles needed in economy. It is mainly being decided on the basis of offer than requirement, and little space is dedicated to analysis and assessments of market requirements. Dominant is a formal approach, based on programmes that are defined and accredited at central level, not taking in account economic and social differences of territories.

Conclusions

All initiatives in education and training emphasize the importance of lifelong learning and adult learning, as well as the attitude that learning must encompass all forms of learning (formal, non-formal and informal) to promote personal development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment opportunities. As a result of that there should be better validation of non-formal and informal learning, and their clear social and formal recognition. Passing of the new Law on Adult Learning in 2014, should set solid basis for further development of legislative and institutional framework for improvement of regulation and implementation as well as financing of adult learning policies and measures in Serbia.

Education policy including adult learning has been considered mainly from the aspect of economic development. This understanding requires urgency of developing better coordination between policy makers and key stakeholders in Serbia, including other ministries and social partners. It takes a stronger concentration on competitiveness in terms of social inclusion, and this investment in skills can easily lead to the expansion of public education. Education policy that is increasingly linked to economic policy, where the strategic development of human capital is considered a central issue for ensuring competitiveness in the global economy requires concerted action of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Economy.

The problem is still that Serbia has no legal regulation of non-formal education, and stagnation in this respect. It is essential to regulate this area as well and raise education and civil status to a higher level, which would also contribute to economic development. State authorities are often ineffective in solving this problem, even when there is a strategy.

Education Development and application of international standards in adult education are advocated mainly by individual institutions and non-governmental organizations, while the system still scarcely recognises the effects of AL policies although good legal framework exists. Coordination between institutions, sectors and governmental levels is still insufficient in this area.

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