Types of Institutions

In accordance with the Law on Vocational Education [1], vocational education is implemented as:

- two-year lower vocational education;
- three-year or four-year secondary vocational education;
- two-year upper vocational education, as continuation of secondary vocational non-university education.

The two-year upper vocational education belongs to the post-secondary non-tertiary vocational education and it is entirely regulated by the Law on Vocational Education. Master craftsman exam also belongs to the post-secondary non-tertiary vocational education.

Vocational education is carried out by schools entirely, or by employers and schools together, in accordance with curriculum. A school can carry out the entire vocational education or it can carry out the theoretical part in school premises and practical education or part of practical education at employer’s premises.

The scope of employer-based practical education is determined by curriculum. When vocational education is carried out by school, and in that process one part of practical education is carried out by employer, mutual rights and obligations between the school and the employer, as well as the rights and obligations of students, are regulated by agreement on practical teaching.

If practical education is carried out entirely by employer - dual education, mutual rights and obligations of students and employers are regulated by individual agreement on education concluded between the employer and student’s parent, guardian or adopter. The conditions that must be met by the employer are determined by the Centre for Vocational Education.

In dual education, students of the first and second grades receive monthly compensation from the Budget of the Ministry of Education amounting to at least 10% of average net salary in Montenegro for the first-graders and at least 15% for the second-graders. For the third-graders attending dual education, the employer is obliged to pay monthly compensation, which amounts to at least 20% of average net salary in Montenegro.

Vocational education curriculum is carried out in vocational schools (which implements only vocational education curricula of different duration), combined secondary schools (which implement both vocational and general secondary education curricula) and educational centres (which implement primary school curricula, in addition to curricula for general secondary and vocational education).

In 2017/2018 school year, the educational offer of secondary vocational education comprises 67
curricula, 17 of which are three-year curricula and 50 of which are four-year curricula. Music schools carry out 14 curricula in the field of music.

Since the beginning of the reform, 41 VET curricula have been adopted at the National Council for Education. In the school year 2017/2018 implementation of 10 modular programs started and in the school year 2018/2019 another 16 educational programs. For the school year 2019/2020 a total of 15 VET curricula have been prepared, out of which 8 four years curricula, as well as 3 customized curricula for students with special educational needs.

In the school year 2018/2019 1.847 students passed the Matura exam, 3.145 students passed the external professional exam and 1.760 students passed the internal professional exam.

In the school year 2018/2019 277 students were educated in dual education with about 100 employers. In the school year 2018/2019, in the dual education there were about 570 students and about 200 employers. In the school year 2019/2020 there are about 800 students and about 270 employers in dual education.

Between the school year 2017 and 2019, 26 vocational and mixed secondary schools in Montenegro are involved in dual education.

Students with special educational needs receive education according to vocational education curricula in secondary schools, with adapted manner of testing of students’ performance during the teaching year, as well as examination at the end of education. According to these curricula, students can also receive education in three resource centres (two in Podgorica and one in Kotor). Students are enrolled in secondary schools in accordance with the decision on orientation issued by relevant municipal commissions, in accordance with Rulebook on the manner, conditions and procedure of orientation of children with special educational needs [2].

**Geographical Accessibility**

In accordance with provisions of General Law on Education [3], public institutions that carry out vocational education curricula are established in accordance with the network of institutions, as all other institutions providing education. The network of institutions is an act adopted by the Government, on the basis of certain norms and criteria. The norms and criteria for determining the network of institutions include:

1. number and age of children within a certain area;
2. specific features of the area;
3. developmental specificities of the area;
4. provision of equal conditions for acquiring education;
5. financial possibilities of Montenegro.

A public institution may be founded by the Government, municipality, capital or royal capital. A private institution may be founded by a national or foreign legal entity or natural person.

In all municipalities of Montenegro (23), students have the opportunity to receive education according to vocational education curricula. The list of schools can be downloaded here [4].

Depending on the distance of students’ place of residence to school, students may exercise the right to accommodation in a dorm and partial transport allowance, in accordance with the Rulebook on
criteria and method of admitting students to dorms and exercising right to partial transport allowance

Students are admitted to a dorm on the basis of Call for Applications announced by the Ministry of Education.

The right to partial transport allowance related to suburban and intercity transport costs, which amounts to 20% of the ticket price, can be exercised by students who travel five or more kilometres to school. Students whose parents or guardians, exercise right to social security in line with regulations on social protection, are entitled to partial transport allowance in the amount of 50% of the ticket price.

**Admission Requirements and Choice of Schools**

**Law on Vocational Education**[1] prescribes the general conditions for enrolment of students in vocational schools. A person under the age of 17, who has completed primary education, may be enrolled in a school providing lower and upper vocational education, unless otherwise provided by this Law. Exceptionally, a school may also enrol persons up to the age 18, with the approval of the school’s teacher council. Certain curricula can prescribe special talents, psychophysical abilities, completion of a special education programme and work experience as special conditions for enrolment.

A person who has completed primary school, primary school according to a customized programme, or at least the seventh grade of primary school, and regularly attended classes up to the age of 15, may be enrolled in a two-year vocational school.

A person who has completed primary school may be enrolled in a three-year vocational school. A person who has completed lower vocational education may be enrolled in an appropriate grade of a three-year vocational school.

A person who has completed primary school may be enrolled in a four-year vocational school. Exceptionally, a person who has completed a two-year vocational school or a three-year vocational school and completed supplementary and equivalency examination may be enrolled in the first, or the fourth grade of a four-year vocational school.

A person who has completed a four-year secondary school or a three-year vocational school and completed the master craftsman exam may be enrolled in an upper vocational school, in accordance with the curriculum.

A candidate who has completed a three-year vocational school, completed the final exam and has acquired three years of professional experience within their profession (in tasks of a particular occupation) or has completed a four-year vocational school, vocational exam and has acquired two years of professional experience (in tasks of a particular occupation) is entitled to take the master craftsman exam.

Article 20 of **Law on Vocational Education**[1] stipulates that the enrolment of students into a four-year vocational school is done on the basis of:

1. general performance in the final three grades of primary school;
2. performance at external knowledge assessment at the end of primary school;
3. performance in two subjects at the final three grades of primary school which are significant for acquiring education;
4. results from national and international competitions i.e. awarded recognition.
The criteria are valued by a certain number of points and are described in the Rulebook on the evaluation of criteria for enrolment of students in vocational school [6]. The Ministry of Education sets the minimum number of points achieved by applying these criteria which is required for enrolment in a four-year vocational school for a school year (enrolment deadlines) by the end of the teaching year.

The number of points for the general performance in the three final grades of primary school is expressed in points which are calculated by multiplying the sum of average marks received in the three final grades by three (3). The total number of points is rounded off to two decimals. The maximum number of points a student can get according to this criterion is 45, and the minimum is 18 points.

Performance at external knowledge assessment conducted in the final grade, in mother tongue, mathematics and one subject chosen by student, is valued by giving 10 points for the excellent mark (5), 7 points for the very good mark (4), 4 points for the good mark (3) and 1 point for the sufficient mark (2). The maximum number of points a student can achieve according to this criterion is 30 and the minimum 12 points.

Performance in two subjects in the last three grades in primary school that are significant for acquiring education in a vocational school is valued by points, calculated by rounding off the sum of grades received in these subjects to two decimals. The maximum number of points a student can achieve according to this criterion is 30, the minimum 12 points.

The results of primary school students attained in individual competitions from subjects are valued by giving the following points to a candidate who has won one of the first three places in the last cycle of primary school, awards, i.e. medals:

1. international competition: first place, first award or golden medal – 20 points; second place, second awards or silver medal – 18 points; third place, third award or bronze medal – 15 points;
2. national competition: first place, or first award – 15 points; second place, or second award – 13 points; third place, or third award – 10 points.

Exceptionally, a candidate who is a member of Roma and Egyptian population gets additional six (6) points according to the principle of affirmative action in line with an adequate strategic document.

Adults complete vocational education as part-time candidates by attending instructive and counselling classes and taking exams.

A foreign national who has a temporary or permanent residence in Montenegro can be enrolled under the same conditions as a Montenegrin citizen, in accordance with the Law on Vocational Education. A person who has completed primary school abroad can be enrolled after the recognition of the certificate they acquired, in accordance with the law. The school is obliged to provide students who are foreign citizens, as well those who are Montenegrin citizens but do not speak or understand the language in which instruction is delivered, with assistance in mastering the language.

The Ministry of Education may determine the number of enrolment places for citizens of another country within the student exchange program.

Age Levels and Grouping of Students

Article 15 of the Law on Vocational Education prescribes general conditions for enrolment. A person under the age of 17, who has completed primary education, may be enrolled in a school providing lower secondary vocational education. Certain curricula may require a special talent, i.e. ability,
completion of a special education programme and work experience, as a special condition for enrolment.

As of 2017/2018 school year, in accordance with Article 38 of the Law on Vocational Education and Article 20 of the Law on Gymnasium, a class can have maximum 28 students. Exceptionally, a class can have up to 32 students, following the approval of the Ministry of Education. The curriculum for gymnasium may define that a class or a group should have less students.

Rulebook on norms and standards for obtaining funds from public revenues for institutions that implement publicly valid curricula stipulates that one class in vocational education institution may have at least 26 students, or 15 learners for curricula of upper vocational education, in accordance with the relevant curriculum.

Exceptionally, the Ministry may allow forming classes with smaller number of students for scarce areas of work. If a call for applications was announced in order to form a single class for a particular curriculum, the class may be formed with at least 20 students.

If students with special educational needs are included in a class, i.e. a group in a vocational school, the number of students in that class may be reduced by up to 10%, as compared to the smallest number of students in a class defined by this Rulebook. Maximum two students with special educational needs may be included in one class.

When forming groups for taking general education subjects in a vocational education institution, from students of the same grade, the group is formed up to the full number of students in one class defined by law, and the number of students in that group cannot be less than 26.

The number of students in a group for following professional theoretical subjects and practical instruction is determined in accordance with curriculum.

As a rule, the number of students in a group for elective subjects is equal to the number of students in a class, but there cannot be less than 20 students of one class.

A group for taking elective subjects in vocational schools can be formed from students of several classes of the same grade or different grades if the syllabus is the same. The number of groups for teaching foreign language is larger than the number of classes by one. If an institution has one or two classes of one grade, two or three groups for taking elective subjects can be formed.

The number of students in a group taking practical education within certain curricula is defined by these curricula, yet if this is not the case, the number of students in the group can be lower by 30% of the number of students defined by the mentioned Rulebook. The number of students enrolled in the education program can be 8, 12 or 16.

At institutions providing secondary music and ballet education, the number of students in the solo, instrumental and ballet group is at least 10, for choir of at least 16, and orchestra of at least 12 students.

**Organisation of the School Year**

General Law on Education prescribes that school year and teaching year, as a rule, start on 1 September. Educational work (teaching year) includes two terms, i.e. four classification periods. The beginning of a teaching year, the time of organizing educational work and classification periods during the teaching year are defined by school calendar which is adopted by minister in charge of
educational affairs at the beginning of each school year.

Teaching year lasts at least 180 working days, i.e. 220 working days with practical education. For students of final (third and fourth grade), it takes at least 165 working days. If the total number of periods defined by the curriculum a certain subjects has not been carried out, the teaching year is extended until the defined number of periods is completed, but not for more than 10 days.

For the 2019/2020 school year school calendar indicates that the school year begins on Monday, September 2, 2019 and ends on Friday, June 12, 2020. The teaching year for the final grade students ends on Wednesday, May 20, 2020.

The winter break begins on Tuesday, December 31, 2019 and ends on Sunday, January 26, 2020. The summer break begins on Saturday, June 13, and ends on Sunday, September 1, 2020.

The first classification period begins on Monday, September 2, and ends on Thursday, October 31, 2019. The second classification period begins on Tuesday, November 5, and ends on Monday, December 30, 2019. The third classification period begins on Monday, January 27 and ends on Tuesday, March 31, 2020. The fourth classification period begins on Wednesday, April 1, and ends on Friday, June 12, 2020.

For students who have an individual education contract, the time for organizing practical education is realized in accordance with the law and the individual education contract.

For students who have taken practical instruction in school workshops, practice is carried out during the summer break, and the summer break for these students begins after the completion of vocational (apprenticeship) training. The duration of training is determined by the curriculum.

**Organisation of the School Day and Week**

Teaching is conducted over a five-day working week. Exceptionally, in case of making up for a working day, teaching may also be organized on Saturday.

Students may have up to 32 periods in a week, yet the weekly load may not be over 35 periods, including both compulsory and elective activities. One period takes 45 minutes. For the same or related study areas block schedule classes may be envisaged. Students may have maximum seven periods of instruction in a day.

During a teaching day between the first and the second, the third and the fourth, and the fifth, the sixth and seventh period students have a 5 minute break (short break), and between the second and the third and the fourth and the fifth period, a 15 minute break (long break).

Educational work at an institution may be suspended only in justified cases (epidemics, natural disaster, etc.). For suspending the work of an institution in case of epidemics, it is necessary to obtain the opinion of a competent health institution. The decision on suspending the educational work up to five days is made by a principal of the institution, and longer than five days by the Ministry, i.e. by the founder in case of a private institution.

In accordance with [Law on National and Other Holidays](#), a student is entitled to absence during state and religious holidays he/she celebrates.