

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME I – IV 2002 – 2013

Gabriela Bratic, Team leader
Lidija Miskeljin
Mirjana Trkulja
Biljana Lajovic
Nevena Vranes

OPENING >>>

WORDS >>>

From 2002 to 2013, the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development (SDC) in partnership with the Serbian Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development implemented the four phases of the project “Professional Development of Education Personnel” with around 8'000'000 CHF of Swiss funds. This project contributed to a substantial change in the system of professional development of educators in Serbia, which in turn led to big improvements in the education system.

After 12 years of work with many partners at national and local level, SDC wanted to go beyond a classical collection of the evaluation and to present a summary of the project in this brochure. This includes not only the results of the project, but also a collection of the “good stories” that influenced the development of other strategic policies in education (such as adult education, recognition of non-formal education and lifelong learning). The brochure is also an opportunity to present recommendations for the future based on the partners’ experience.

The collaboration between Switzerland and Serbia resulted in the introduction of an innovative system of professional development into Serbia’s education sector. The system comprises the Institute for Improvement of Education and 12 Regional centres for competence building. These latter local institutions provide in-service training for teachers to improve their competences and skills. Teachers have then gone on to advance educational attainment in schools and, in turn, ensure greater employability of young people. The Regional centres have diversified into providing competence building services in other areas – they have trained over 100'000 professionals from the public and private sectors in vital skills needed in the labour market.

Thanks to the system of professional development, thousands of teachers, school principals and staff of education institutions took part in workshops, seminars and study tours. They studied modern trends in teaching, learned about innovations and developed skills to put new techniques into practice in the classroom. Some took part in international events to follow global developments in education. In all, professional development has become a part of teachers’ every day life.

In the new Swiss Cooperation Strategy with Serbia 2014-2017, Switzerland is building on the assets from the education sector to support a range of efforts to match human resource development with labour market demands. Young people and their employability will be in focus of Swiss-Serbian interventions.

Switzerland would like here to thank Serbian partners, from the national and local institutions, for the great professional and cordial cooperation over all these years. SDC would like to extend a special appreciation to the Regional centres’ directors and staff, Mayors and Assemblies of the cities and municipalities of Kanjiza, Kikinda, Sabac, Smederevo, Kragujevac, Cacak, Krusevac, Uzice, Nis, Novi Pazar, Leskovac and Knjazevac for their dedication and hard work in establishing and piloting new ideas in professional development of human resources. SDC warmly thanks to its long-term partner – International Management Group (IMG), who worked hard to turn paper designs into the great Regional centers premises.

Another great appreciation goes to the professional and highly committed Swiss and Finnish ‘backstoppers’ that, together with Serbian partners, made the programme results possible: Hugo Sager, Markus Diebold, Raisa Venalainen, Priska Sieber and Christine Matter – their work was much more than just a mandate.

Swiss Cooperation Office Serbia



Isabel Perich
Director of Cooperation

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY >>> 6

2. THE HISTORY & DESIGN >>> 8

- THE PHASES OF THE PROJECT >>> 9
- DIRECT RESULTS THROUGH THE PHASES >>> 9
- KEY PARTNERS, STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR INVOLVEMENT >>> 10

3. RELEVANCE >>> 11

4. MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS >>> 13

- SUPPORT TO PDP AND RELATED REFORMS AT NATIONAL LEVEL >>> 13
- WHAT HAS BEEN INSTALLED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN EDUCATION IN SERBIA AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL? >>> 13
- AND HOW THE PROJECT SUPPORTED REGIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL? >>> 15
- REGIONAL CENTRES >>> 15

5. EFFICIENCY >>> 16

- ROLE OF BACKSTOPPERS >>> 17

6. SUSTAINABILITY >>> 18

7. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS >>> 20

GRAPHS

- THE PHASES OF THE PROJECT >>> 9
- NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS OF ALL ACTIVITIES IN THE NETWORK 2011-13 >>> 17
- NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS OF ALL ACCREDITED SEMINARS REALISED IN THE NETWORK 2011-13 >>> 17

TABLES

- CENTRES' DATA AND FUNDING 2012/13 >>> 19

ANNEXES

- 1 – TABLE: ACTIVITIES AND ACCREDITED SEMINARS IN THE NETWORK 2011-13 >>> 22
- 2 – GRAPH: ACCREDITED SEMINARS >>> 24
- 3 – GRAPH: ACTIVITIES IN THE NETWORK 2011-13 >>> 25
- 4 – LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS >>> 25

¹ SUMMARY

¹ SUMMARY

In the period between 2002 and 2013, the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development (SDC) in partnership with the Serbian Ministry of Education (MoE)* implemented the project “Professional Development of Education Personnel” (PDP). This project **has contributed to the biggest changes in the system of professional development (PD) of educators in Serbia** and thus, contributing to the development of the education system.

The aim of this report is to summarize the results and achievements of the PDP, which was implemented for 12 years, between 2002 and 2013. SDC supported the MoE to create and implement a PD system that contributed to decentralization and democratization of the education system of Serbia.

The project was focused on:

- Development of PD system components;

- Capacity building of the MoE and other relevant institutions on the national and regional level;
- Establishment of new institutions;
- Supporting the development of legal and regulatory framework for PD of educators.

The project was realized in four phases. Each of the phases achieved the planned results.

As an outcome of the project activities and its good practice, PD was defined in the Law on Foundations of Education System – LFES (2003 with amendments in 2004 and 2009 with amendments in 2010 and 2013).

This Law created also institutional framework for PD by establishing a Centre for Professional Development (CPD) which functioned as an independent institution at the beginning. By the amendments of the LFES in 2004, it has become an organisa-

tional unit of the Institute for Improvement of Education (IIE).

For the first time, the CPD has introduced in the education system the following:

- a concept of PD that follows the philosophy of lifelong learning;
- a full system of PD: continuous PD in different forms and career advancement within the same profession;
- horizontal learning has been introduced as obligatory part of PD;
- non-formal/informal education has been recognised and acknowledged;
- trainings/seminars have been structured according to defined criteria;
- the staff, maintenance and functioning of the PD facilities, as well as other activities defined by the Law are financed from the state budget;
- data base of PD has been established.

The MoE and CPD staff benefited from seminars, workshops, study tours, as well as mentoring work of the project's consultants.

In the second, third and fourth phase of PDP, a **total of 12 Regional centres for professional development** (RC) was established throughout Serbia. This contributed to the decentralization of the education system. The legal framework for their establishment was created in LFES 2009.

RCs provide PD services at regional and local level to schools and educational institutions, as well to other professionals in need of competence improvement.

Thanks to such system of PD, RCs enabled a large number of teachers to take part in PD.

In fact, PD has become a part of everyday life of teachers.

RCs are a classical example of the implementation of the principle of subsidiarity, i.e. services are provided on the level, which is the closest to users without influencing their quality. In this sense, the capacity of the staff in the Regional School Authorities has been improved, as well as of the staff in the RCs. Education employees may get PD programmes and implement them based on professional capacities in their region. Besides offering accredited programmes, RCs realise other services in the function of improving the whole education system, as well as of individual PD (discussions, meetings, peer learning, classes of example, e-libraries, preparation of teaching aids, etc.).

PDP project provided capacity building in various fields to directors and staff of

RCs through workshops, seminars and study tours, enabling them also to participate in international events and thus, keep in touch with global developments in education.

The establishment of RCs also contributed to better understanding of the importance of PD in the local self-governments where RCs are functioning. In cooperation with RCs, local administrations are able to plan allocation of funds for PD in an effective way.

RCs produced an impressive data bases; they cooperate with regional school authorities and monitor the results of external evaluations and needs of schools. According to these findings, RCs provide further support to the education system.

RCs are inter connected – they established a network that has become a coordinating



body of their operations (both horizontally and vertically). Integration is reflected in the harmonisation of practice, requirements and priorities of the education system in particular at the local level, with focus on streamlined access to education, easier and more accessible provision of information and quality services.

The efficiency of the system of PD has been proven to be remarkable, primarily at the local level – the services provided by the RCs decreased the related municipal budget spending, at some places, more than one third.

“The centres are fitting and fuse for the realization of the state projects.”

Extracts PDP focus group,
November 2013

The project was supported by the Swiss backstoppers, experts whose involvement increased the project efficiency. The Swiss backstoppers transmitted the Swiss knowledge and experience, mentoring, best and proven practices in the PD to the Serbian partners, at the same time showing full respect and understanding of the Serbian context and needs.

* In the course of twelve years of the project duration, the Ministry of Education has changed its name several times (Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development). Therefore, this text will only use the title Ministry of Education (MoE).

2 THE HISTORY & DESIGN

2 THE HISTORY & DESIGN

Prior to 2000, PD of education personnel was not recognised as an important factor in the education system. The Law on Basic Education just stated that teachers were obliged to take care of their PD.

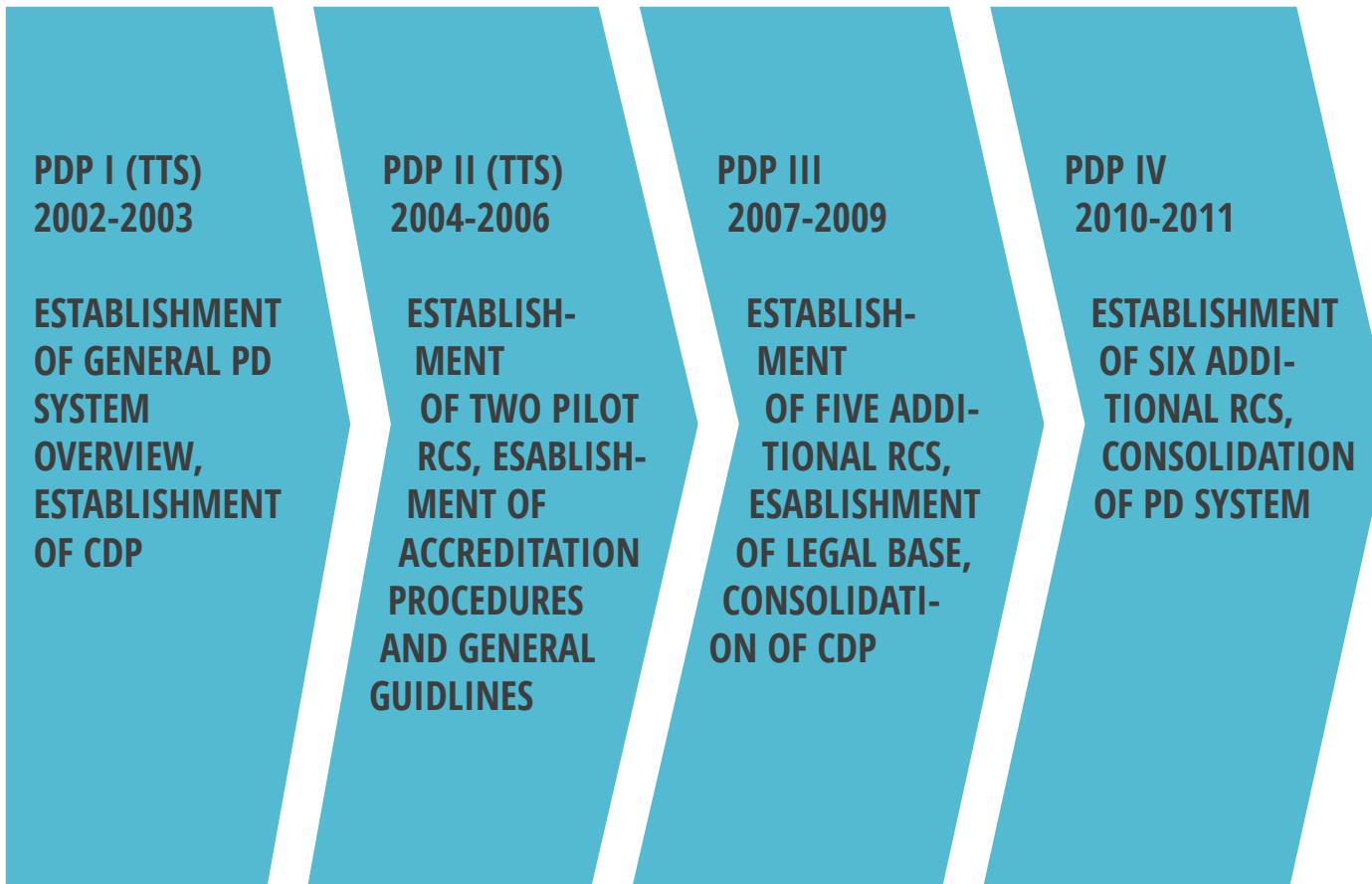
The PDP project was based on the requirements and findings of Serbian experts defined in the publication “Quality Education for All 2002-2006”, the so called “White Paper”. The MoE performed broad consultation process with representatives of various educational experts, foreign ex-

perts, teachers, as well as parents in 2001. Based on their feedback, the foundations of the education system reform were laid.

PD is one of the most important segments of any education system and training of employees in education. The “White Paper”, which was the first step in the initial establishment of the system, described in detail the segment of PD in education. The Strategy of Professional Development was designed after that, and [the financial and technical support was given by SDC](#) for its implementation.

THE PHASES OF THE PROJECT

The PDP project commenced in 2002 with the aim to establish a decentralised PD system for education personnel. It was designed to have four phases², listed below:



² All phases were within the planned timeframe; only phase four has been running from 2010 to 2013, instead of 2010 to 2011, as originally envisaged. This long term commitment of SDC ensured the sustainability of the efforts to establish a system of PD for teachers and other personnel in education. One important element of the PDP project was that it was flexible and always ready to adjust to the current education policy in Serbia.

³ Norway invested in facilities for a regional training centre in Nis.

DIRECT RESULTS THROUGH THE PHASES:

Phase 1 (2002-2003)

National level

- PD system concept established;
- Accreditation procedures and general guidelines for in-service training established and implemented;
- CPD founded and functions regularly.

Phase 2 (2004-2006)

National level

- IIE was established as an independent national institution and the CPD became its organizational unit;
- The capacity building activities of the CPD staff implemented;
- Accreditation procedures for in-service training redefined;
- By-law for teacher licensing adopted;
- By-law for PD and career advancement adopted.

Regional/local level

- Three³ pilot RCs for service and training provision on regional/local level (Uzice, Cacak and Nis) established.

Phase 3 (2007-2009)

National level

- The legal base for PD was created by incorporating project results into the new LFES;
- Procedures for establishing RCs adopted;
- Procedures for implementation and monitoring of in-service teacher training programs established and implemented.

Regional/local level

- Additional five RCs⁴ (Kikinda, Sabac, Smederevo, Krusevac and Leskovac) established.

Phase 4 (2010-2013)

National level

- By law for PD and career advancement revised.

Regional/local level

- Additional four RCs (Kanjiza, Kragujevac, Novi Pazar and Knjazevac) established;
- Network (Association) of RCs created.

KEY PARTNERS, STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR INVOLVEMENT

- National Education Council – the Council is the key institution for establishing the requirements of the education system and education reform. It is responsible for, among other things, setting the direction of development, in general, and primary and secondary education. It is also responsible for setting standards of competence for teachers and head-teachers.

- MoE – The Law on basic education gives an overall responsibility to the Ministry to ensuring that competence improvement takes place: "...Plan, coordinate and organize programmes of continuous competence improvement of educators."

- Regional School Administrations are regional departments of the MoE. There are 19 offices all over

the country, whose main role is to provide administrative and technical support to schools. In regard to PD, they "coordinate competence improvement of teachers, pre-school teachers, psychologists-pedagogues, principals and secretaries of educational institutions". They also have a role in quality assurance.

- IIE – is the lead institution in terms of the design of the systems of PD, and ensuring the relevance and quality of the content of the competence improvement programmes. The Institute's specific department for support to PD, the CPD, has the following legally defined roles:

- "preparation of standards of competency for the professions of teachers and their PD, and the competencies of head-teachers";
- "strengthening the systems of continuous competence improvement and PD of employees in pre-school, primary and secondary education";
- "approval of programmes of continuous competence improvement for teachers, pre-school teachers, psychologist/pedagogue and head-teachers".

- Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation – is the lead institution with regard to assessing the progression of students through the school system. This means setting learning targets, exams and analysing the results of exams. It also means that it can assess improvements in learning as a result of competence improvement and PD measures.

Its relevant legally defined roles are:

- "evaluation of the work of educational institutions";
- "offering expert support to educational institutions in respect of the monitoring and evaluation of the extent to which goals are achieved, general and special standards are attained, self-evaluation of institutions, preparation of materials for the examination and testing of students, expert recommendations for modifications to special standards".

- RCs – are established by municipalities as public education institutions to deliver in-service teacher training, training of other professionals and other educational tasks. The new Law on Education recognises these centres as a component within the system of education.⁵ At present, there are **12 fully functioning centres**. They are funded by a mixture of municipal funds, MoE subsidies, teachers' and schools' payments for courses and payments of other professionals.

- Schools – There are 3'551⁶ primary and 504 secondary schools and more than 108'000 educational staff in Serbia.⁷



⁴ According to the Law of Foundation of Education system from 2009, Regional centres became Centres for Competence Improvement. In this paper we use term Regional centres (RCs).

⁵ According to the 2009 Law on the Foundations of the Education System, a Centre for Competence Improvement "shall make a selection of chosen competence improvement programmes and it shall give preference to those programmes it deems the most effective for the attainment of general achievement standards".

⁶ Data from Statistical Office of Republic of Serbia for 2007, contested by the Ministry of Education.

⁷ Data from World Bank 2009.

3 RELEVANCE

3 RELEVANCE

The PDP reflects the concept of lifelong learning and European Union (EU) priorities concerning PD, Key Competences⁸, and ET 2020⁹. As well, the need for decentralization of the education system was confirmed by the Education Development Strategy 2010-2020, as a result of good practice of the project – the role of the PD institutions, in particular of the RCs, becomes more important and more visible.

The LFES in Serbia (2003) defined for the first time the PD system (developed under PDP) and the establishment of CPD. These system solutions were developing and were amended in accordance with the priorities of education reform. RCs fully get their place in the system of PD thanks to the Government Decree on the Establishment of RCs in 2004, Guidelines for the establishment of RC in 2006 and by the new LFES in 2009.

Under the Law, there are three main institutions that have the mandate to deal with the system of PD:

- MoE – development of regulatory framework;
- IIE – development of the content of the PD system;
- RCs – investment in the delivery systems of in-service training and other services.

The PD system has the following main components:

- Accreditation of in-service training and other skills-building interventions;
- Standards for teacher licensing which gives teachers the obligation to undertake in-service training;

- A **mentoring system** to support new teachers;
- A **career advancement** system, which provides incentives for teachers to progress.

The **CPD** has introduced the following in the education system for the first time:

- concept of PD that follows the philosophy of lifelong learning;
- a full system of PD with different forms of career advancement and titles within the same profession;
- horizontal learning as obligatory part of PD;
- recognised and acknowledged non-formal/informal education;
- trainings/seminars structured according to defined criteria;
- establishment of Data base of PD.

Thanks to such a system of PD, RCs enabled:

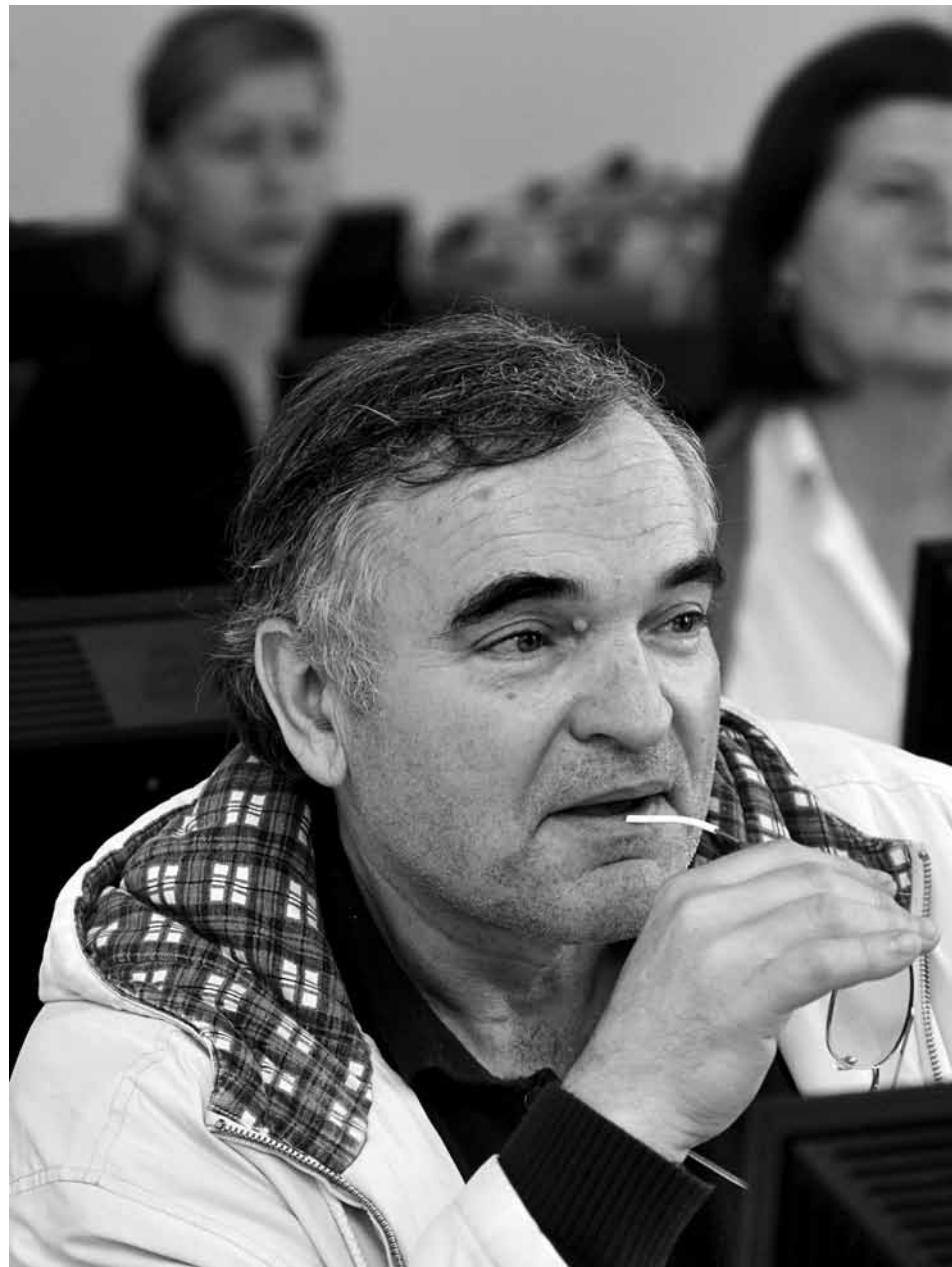
- a large number of teachers to take part in PD (from 49'330 teachers trained in 2007/08 to 108'506 trained in 2012/13) – **a triple increase!**;
- **“Professional development has become a part of everyday life of teachers”** (Dejan Stevanovic - ex director RC Krusevac);
- realisation of other services (besides offering accredited programmes), in the function of improving the whole education system, as well as of individual PD (discussions, meetings, peer learning, classes of example, e-libraries, preparation of teaching aids, etc.).

“Regional centres are a classical example of the implementation of the principle of subsidiarity, i.e. services are provided on the level closest to the users without influencing their quality. In this sense, the capacity of the staff in the Regional school authorities has been improved, as well as of the staff in the Regional centres, education employees may get professional development programmes and realise them based on their own professional capacities in their region. ”

Snezana Klasnja - first director of CPD

⁸ Key competences in the shape of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to each context are fundamental for each individual in a knowledge-based society. They provide added value for the labour market, social cohesion and active citizenship by offering flexibility and adaptability, satisfaction and motivation. Because they should be acquired by everyone, this recommendation proposes a reference tool for EU countries to ensure that these key competences are fully integrated into their strategies and infrastructures, particularly in the context of lifelong learning (http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11090_en.htm).

⁹ “Education and Training 2020” (ET 2020) is a new strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training that builds on its predecessor, the “Education and Training 2010” (ET 2010) work programme. It provides common strategic objectives for Member States, including a set of principles for achieving these objectives, as well as common working methods with priority areas for each periodic work cycle (http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11090_en.htm).



4 MAIN ACHIEVE MENTS & HIGH LIGHTS

4 MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Support to PDP and related reforms at national level

The establishment of CPD coincides with the start of a strong reform movement in 2002. A new approach to education started from an idea, a vision, and step-by-step a system of PD was worked out and implemented. The CPD was the result of intensive work and activities of SDC and MoE. It became the main pillar of the defined concept of PD of education personnel.

With the reconstruction of premises for CPD, for the first time employees and customers got a contemporary, well equipped modern

space, appropriate for the purpose. CPD has become a source of ideas. It became a model for building and operationalisation of the RCs.

What has been installed for the first time in education in Serbia at the national level? (CPD and MoE)

Licence for educational personnel

It brought considerable changes to the existing system of novices: clearly defined procedures of induction period, as well as procedures for passing the exam for novices.

Decentralization of the system

Establishing of the RC by local self-governments, in order to better meet and decide on the local needs in education and competence building, is the strongest indicator of decentralization efforts. The other one is that, for instance, the Provincial Secretariat for Education of Vojvodina has been entrusted to conduct exams for teachers' licences according to the



Rulebook on work permit. Vojvodina got a part of the accreditation of PD programmes in the minority languages (Pedagogical Institute of Vojvodina).

Accreditation of in-service training programmes

A number of quality criteria were set out, the process of approval was defined, as well as the way how the results of these approvals could be available

to professionals and interested parties. The Catalogue of accredited training seminars has also been developed. From the beginning of the PDP (2002) until 2013, the number of accredited seminars rose from 128 up to 1'089. The structure of the training providers has changed. At the beginning, applicants were only from Belgrade. Now, 50% of the seminars offered in the Catalogue are by regional and local applicants/providers.

As one of the results of the project, MoE accredits programmes that are of special interest for the state. In the first year, MoE accredited 60 seminars and 2'000'000 EUR were allocated in the budget for the realisation of these programmes.

The Strategy of Education Development in Serbia 2020 accepted some important solutions for PD, developed under the project.

Capacity building

The project introduced the habit of using log frames, joint and participatory planning of work and finance, dynamic exchange of ideas, exchange of professional experience, different styles of work, etc. Important contributions to the capacity building, at the national and regional level, were study tours organized by the project. They helped to get a view out of Serbia, to learn about education system of other countries, to change mind settings of the participants – participants could see different, possible and efficient solutions to the system. Study visits contributed also to individual capacity building. Experience from the

study tours were disseminated and introduced in practice in schools, RCs, CPD and MoE.

The MoE, CPD and RC staff got individual trainings in, for instances, English classes, IT literacy, programme management cycle, financial issues, PR, gender, entrepreneurship, programme designing/IPA, etc. CPD was the partner of the MoE in designing laws (LFES, 2003 and 2009 and amendments in 2010 and 2013), by-laws and regulations.

Teachers' and principals' competences were defined and adopted by the National Education Council. All this was done through a broad consultative process with the participation of education employees, professional associations, representatives of universities, regional school administrations and consultants. It was a real bottom-up approach which resulted in designing, printing and distributing the following:

- "Guide for novice teachers" – six separate booklets for teachers and associates at all levels of education (2006);
- "Guide through professional development and career advancement of teachers, pre-school teachers and associates" (2007);
- "Mentor and novice teacher – guide for teachers, pre-school teachers and associates" (2009);
- "Handbook for planning of professional development and career advancement" (2009);
- "Review of the professional development system" (leaflet);
- "Gender equality in education" (leaflet).

And how the project supported regional and local level?

Regional centres are connected in a modern way and established a network that has become a coordinating body of their operations (both horizontally and vertically). Integration is reflected in the harmonisation of practice and requirements, priorities of the education system, a focus on streamlined access to education, easier and more accessible to the provision of information and quality services. The centres are fitting and fuse for the realization of the state projects.

Extract from focus group – representatives of RCs, regional school authorities and local self-governments

RCs have become an important link in the system of PD. Success, efficiency and effectiveness of the RCs have been recognised within a short time by local self-governments. Consequently, some local self-governments established their own centres motivated but its establishment was not financially supported by the project (Novi Pazar, Kanjiza, Kragujevac and Knjazevac).

The local self-government properly started to address the its establishment was needs of teachers. Resources are used in a rational way, programmes are implemented in the

immediate environment of teachers, so this enabled to increase the number of teachers who participate in the accredited programmes. Programmes of higher quality can be offered and this is motivating teachers to participate in PD. In addition to teachers and educational personnel, many other local and regional professionals were targeted for competence upgrade (physicians, pharmacists, business partners, public administration workers, industry/agriculture workers, energy and energy efficiency workers etc.).

Regional centres

In-service teacher training and other services

Until 2013, in 12 RCs (Nis, Cacak, Uzice, Kanjiza, Kikinda, Sabac, Smederevo, Leskovac, Kragujevac, Krusevac, Novi Pazar and Knjazevac):

- 419 accredited seminars were developed by the RCs;
- 30'723 total number of teachers attending trainings;
- 67'050 total number of all beneficiaries attending trainings and other forms of competence building.

RCs realise also other services: discussions, meetings, peer learning, classes of example, e-libraries, preparation of teaching aids, etc.

RCs perform needs analyses in their regions and planning of trainings, as well as funding of trainings.

Data bases

RCs have got data bases; they cooperate with regional school authorities and monitor the results of external evaluations and needs of schools. They provide support according to these findings.

Capacity building

The capacities of human resources have been analysed and activities implemented in accordance with the needs assessment and human resource development plans as follows: courses of the English language, trainings for teamwork and communication in teams, communication with beneficiaries of the centres and organizing events, gender mainstreaming, entrepreneurship skills, literacy etc.

RCs' directors were trained for their future job in the centre, study tours were organized and a close cooperation was established between the directors and all educational institutions and bodies.

Network

Contribution of the Network, as a co-ordinating body, is also the harmonising and monitoring over the quality of the RCs, the establishment of new RCs, support to individual centres, and initiation of activities in the local community ("wake-up of the local level").

An important result of the work of the Network is the first joint training programme "Career without Barrier" for novice teachers.

It is expected that the Network, as a "strategic leader" of RCs, will continue pushing for the strategy directions of the Network, which should specify the roles and responsibilities of the Network as a new actors more in details, in particular, in liaising education with business partners, as well as in further competence development of employees in the RCs and their promotion at the market.

■■ Taking into account the entire system of professional development (starting from the initial education), the question is how to motivate faculties, who have their autonomy, that in the development of programmes related to basic education of teachers, outcomes are defined taking into account the developed competency standards for the teaching profession. Such action would contribute to the quality of teaching from internship to be higher, and the pathway to achieving this quality be shorter and faster.■■

Tunde Kovac Cerovic
– former state secretary at the MoE

One of the major challenges in the further development of the system refers to the evaluation of the effects of training programmes related to teaching and learning. The effects of the implementation of such programmes are most visible through monitoring student progress, increase of their achievement as a result of the implementation of PD programmes.

5 EFFICIENCY

5 EFFICIENCY

The efficiency of the system of PD has been proven to be remarkable, primarily at the local level – the services provided by the RCs decreased the related municipal budget spending, at some places, more than one third. For example, *in Cacak, saving of 6'000'000 RSD, or approximately 60'000 EUR, in the city budget were gained at the annual level!* At the same time, the quality of services became higher. The RCs managed to **decrease the training seminar rates from 10–30%** and to **provide the economic and affordable prices for teachers/schools.**

Furthermore, RCs are **recognized**, both by the local and national level, as **resource centres** in terms of:

- Provision of technical equipment and use of modern technologies in teaching/learning;
- Provision of PD and competence building services for teachers and other professionals at the local and regional level;
- Becoming centres of efficiency and excellences, where “services can be done quickly and be of good quality.”¹⁰

Through the work of RSs, the local governments gained the understanding of the importance of PD and competence building. Local governments are now **more willing to allocate funds** from the local budgets for the PD and to redirect them to the RCs to organise trainings. An important benefit of the RCs' functioning is reflected in the **merging of funds of different local self-governments** in the region gravitating towards the same RC.

An important outreach of the project is the **contribution to the regional initiatives and cross border cooperation** (Croatia, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, etc.). The project also contributed to the development of the **intra-sectoral approach – coaching young partners at the regional level by the**

elderly at national level, not just in education, but also throughout the social and human resource fields – such as social welfare sector, employment, health sector, etc.

The need for cooperation between the local and national levels has been established as a practice, so this project approach served as an example to other projects development: German International Assistance GIZ, EU programme IMPRES/IPA, World Bank DILS project where RCs, for instance, played an important role in realisation of other project activities.

Role of backstoppers

An added value of the project is the meeting of different cultural approaches – the project

was supported by the Swiss backstoppers, experts whose involvement increased the project efficiency. The role of backstoppers also **increased the efficiency** of the project. The approach was **practice oriented**, meaning that the experts facilitated the elaboration of the defined project outputs. The Swiss backstoppers **transmitted the Swiss knowledge and experience**, mentoring, **best and proven practices** in the PD to the Serbian partners and, at the same time, showing a **full respect and understanding of the Serbian context and needs**.

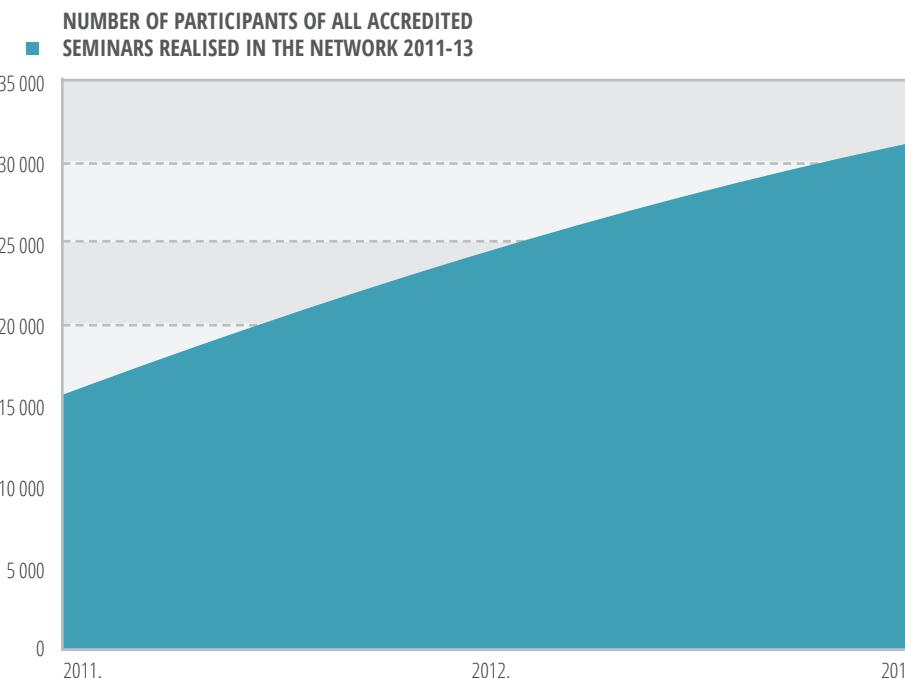
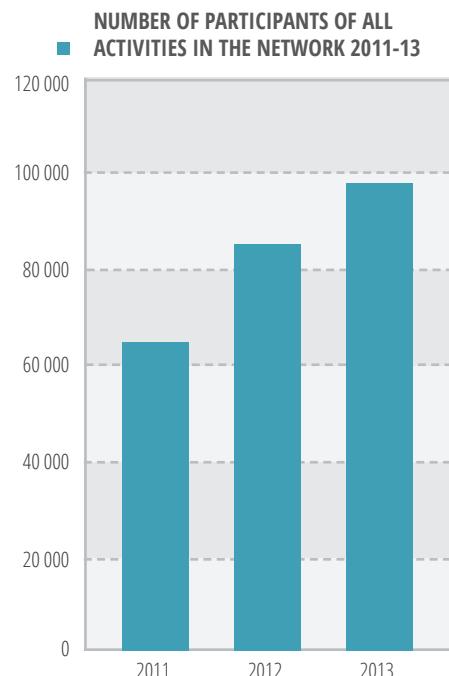
The backstoppers could operate and negotiate flexibly with the MoE or other institutions in the educational system. This **flexibility was especially necessary in the Serbian context**, since setting up the continuous

PD system required adjustments at policy, legal and regulative levels, both centrally and locally. The backstoppers were able to **advocate for continuous PD** and facilitate the necessary cooperation between departments, sections of the MoE and all project partners. This approach made high demands on breadth of knowledge and experience, as well as flexibility, on the part of the backstoppers.

The Serbian part in addition learned how to think strategically and to search for the efficient and concrete solutions. This joint venture resulted in fact in designing of the efficient PD system in Serbia.

Overall, the programme approach with Swiss backstopping, focused on concrete support and solution findings, covering as direct beneficiaries over 100'000 teachers, national institutions (MoE and IIE) and 12 municipalities with Regional centres, schools, students and other professionals in Serbia, producing the overall system change and introduction of the everyday practice is a good example of efficient planning and implementation.

Extract from partners' reports - MoE and others, 2013



¹⁰ Summary assessment: Working group for teachers quotation.

6 SUS TAIN ABI LITY

6 SUSTAINABILITY

The project showed that this programme has a **model function**. It **promotes** the main pillars of the education reform: **decentralisation** and **democratisation**. Thorough reform of the Serbian education sector can only take place if the quality of teaching is improved, which puts the teachers in the centre of our focus. The project had the potential to consolidate its **leading position in systematic establishment of a PD system for education personnel**.

The staff, maintenance and functioning of the PDP facilities/institutions, as well as certain activities defined by the Law are financed from the state budget. This is contributing to the **sustainability of the PD system**.

Further, as soon as a critical mass of teachers is trained in the new teaching methods, hypothetically, the education of pupils in Serbia can improve tremendously. This hypothesis will need to be measured properly and it can be just one of the factors that will have such an impact. By focusing its support on the development of the teacher in-service training system, and not on the training itself, the project has achieved a multiplying effect.

Despite the economic crisis, there was a **great interest of municipalities to establish RCs**. For example, in 2009, 42 municipalities willing to establish a new RC applied to the MoE public call for support; eight were shortlisted.

Today, there are 12 RCs; four of them are established upon the initiative and predominantly the funds of the local self-government (Kanjiza, Kragujevac, Knjazevac and Novi Pazar). The high motivation continued to be expressed and practiced, although the financial participation of SDC was decreasing by the years (from 60% of SDC participation at the beginning of the project to 20% in 2013).

RCs have become a meeting place and place of learning of teachers in the region and educational **policy makers at the local level**. By fostering a culture of learning, the RCs **promote the concept of lifelong learning** and work on building the knowledge society at the local level.

They are:

- Places for the popularisation of good practices;
- Promotion of novelties in the system;
- Answers to various dilemma, especially concerning novelties;
- Partners of the regional school authorities in realisation of various trainings;
- Support to teachers in creating programmes of PD which are in line with their needs and interests;
- Affirmation of the community by connecting resources at the national and international level.

At the end of SDC contribution of this project, all municipalities had allocated funds for the functioning of RCs for 2014. RCs have developed capacity building plan for their staff beyond 2014 as well.

CENTRES' DATA AND FUNDING 2012/13

	NUMBER OF TEACHERS ATTENDING TRAININGS	NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN THE REGION	% OF THE SCOPE	NUMBER OF SUPPORTED SEMINARS	NUMBER OF FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED SEMINARS	OTHER ACTIVITIES FOR OTHER TARGET GROUPS	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES
UZICE	2 595	3 156	82.22	15	5	104	2 219	4 814
SABAC	3 204	4 200	56.16	13	8	36	3 259	6 463
SMEDEREVO	2 582	5 705	61.48	5	5	32	1 127	3 709
NIS	5 570	6 245	89.19	33	0	899	21 575	27 145
LESKOVAC	4 354	1 877	231.97	18	0	67	1 976	6 330
KRAGUJEVAC	355	3 800	9.34	0	18	0	0	355
KRUSEVAC	3 568	3 600	99.11	11	0	38	1 244	4 812
KIKINDA	3 427	5 200	65.90	11	8	85	3 247	6 674
KANJIZA	1 858	2 500	74.32	1	7	7	365	2 223
CACAK	3 210	2 100	152.86	16	9	33	1 315	4 525
NOVI PAZAR	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
KNJAZEVAC	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	30 723	38 383	80.04	123	60	1 301	36 327	67 050

7 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

⁷ CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Further development requires:

- that the legal framework be elaborated to include the regulations required in key areas¹¹;
- that the systems of career advancement, mentoring and other support for the continuous improvement of teachers' skills be further tested and refined;
- that systems of quality assurance are in place to ensure that in-service training achieves the required improvements in teachers' (and ultimately, pupils') performance.
- By the development of the entire system, conditions are created for the existence of continuous PD of teachers. It contributed the most directly to the realization of part of the policy of lifelong learning, as well as its promotion and acceptance.
- External evaluation in schools shows that the choice of attended seminars is mainly the result of the wish of the teachers or a forced solution and not the need or obligation of the teacher to improve certain competencies that would, in a concrete way, contribute to higher teaching quality organized by the teacher.
- For **professional advancement** it is necessary to review the existing continuous monitoring of the professional work and establish measures by which those who are advancing will have the chance to share good practice. An open issue is also the lack of consequences for the teachers if they do not fulfil their obligation concerning PD.
- The CPD now has the conflict of interest role, as it accredits and monitors the PD at the same time. Monitoring should be taken

by the regional school authorities who should have a more active role in the PD system and should work more closely with the CPD and RCs.

- The financing of PD needs to be examined; a legal requirement for in-service training has now been placed upon teachers/schools, so it is necessary to look at how this will be financed, and whether it is possible to sustain a network of providers which can deliver training of necessary quality. The national level should use funds to strengthen the established system.
- The professional advancement should be implemented in a systemic way (Rulebook).



Respective funding should be allocated in the state budget.

- Alternative and innovative methods should be considered for recognizing prior and informal learning. How to score conference attendance, for example, is something that has been already tackled by the RCs.
- The extent to which the system of in-service training is receptive to the needs of individual schools and those employed in education remains to be monitored and developed. PD should be more **policy driven and needs based**. The system of mentorship and titles should be reconsidered and possibly fused.

• The Network of RCs should be accepted by the MoE and the CPD as a source of expertise. The MoE can get good information from it, focusing on the RCs' close contacts with the schools.

- Further upgrade of the PD system requires work at three levels, according to the evaluation report (PDP III):

- First, the PD system needs to be aligned with education reform in other areas, such as curriculum development, new approaches to learning, and the forced downsizing of the public sector workforce. The policy guidance by the MoE is needed;
- Second, the institutions working on PD need to function and coordinate better together as a system. They should have joint meetings once or twice a year at least;
- Finally, each institution in the PD system requires organisational strengthening so that it can further improve its performance, which will contribute to better PD system functioning.

CPD should organize trainings to training providers in order to achieve an equal quality of accredited trainings. The approval of training providers and the content of the training need to be steered towards the **needs of the job market** (in terms of education outcomes), the **needs of the education system** (in terms of pedagogical approaches) and the **needs of curricula reform** (in terms of the content of education). This requires a serious analysis of the teacher competences required by the system, and the gap between these requirements and the current situation – for instance, analysis of the PISA is very relevant.

Since it is likely that not all training needs can be addressed at once, the PD will look to the MoE to make a judgment on priorities for PD in line with national educational and economic requirements.

- The RCs could be engaged to assist in the above mentioned testing and rolling out of the various systems. Their involvement could be on a contracted basis, through the MoE.
- It is important to establish also RCs in Belgrade and in Novi Sad.
- Business orientation, which does not harm the core mission of the RCs, is an important element of further functioning of RCs. Income gained in this way should be invested in the training programmes and thus, provide trainings to teachers/other professionals for a lower price.
- RCs should promote mobility of the teaching staff and open to Erasmus plus, for example, and other relevant programmes.
- RCs should start to cooperate more closely with universities/faculties.

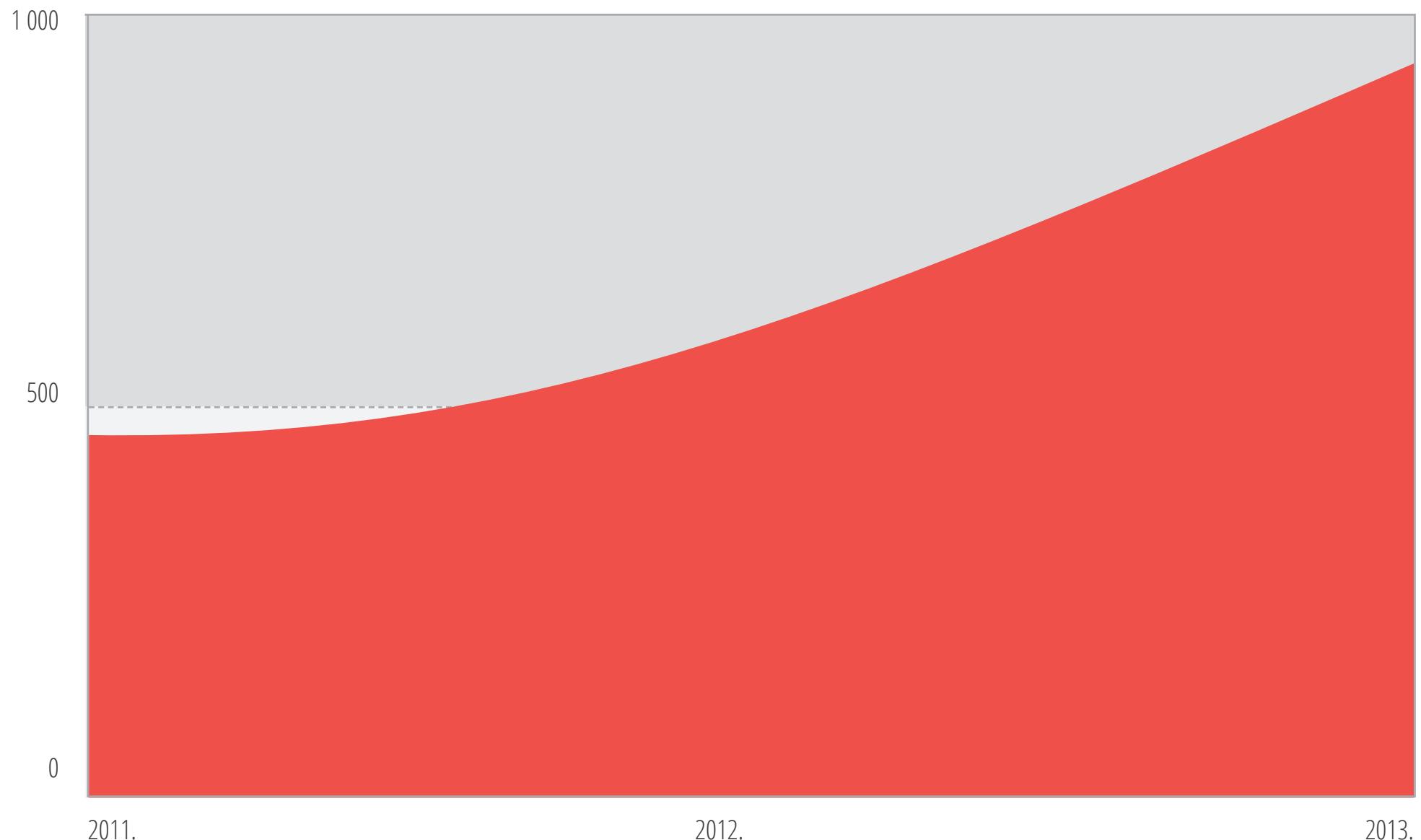
¹¹ These areas are defined in the Law, Article 129 paragraph 6: "The minister shall prescribe the priority areas for a three year period, forms of professional development, programmes and manner of organization of continuing competence improvement, conditions, bodies in charge of deciding on the procedure of title acquisition and advancement, title acquisition during professional development of teachers, pre-school teachers and psychologists/pedagogues, as well as the certificate form proving the completion of required programmes."

ANNEX 1: TABLE - ACTIVITIES AND ACCREDITED SEMINARS IN THE NETWORK 2011-13

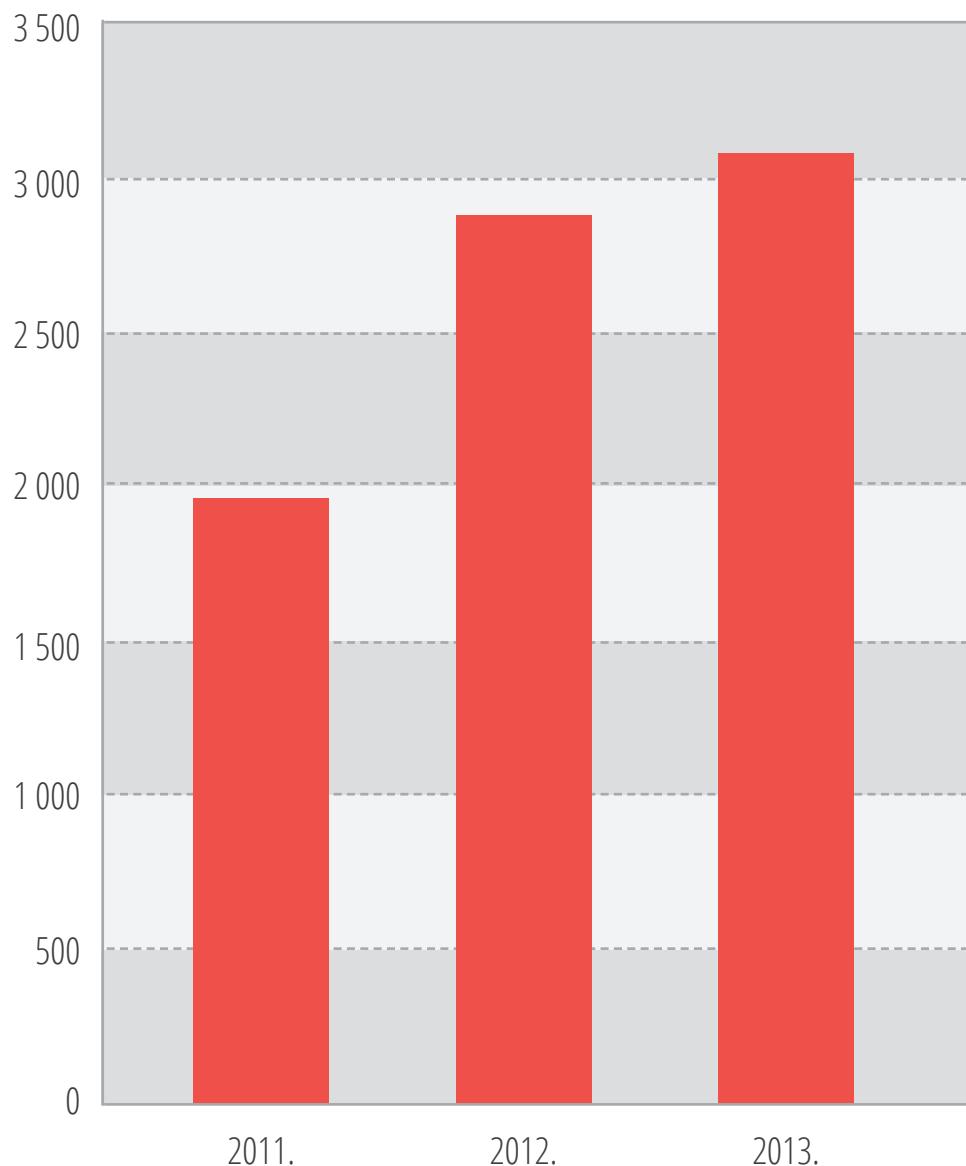
CENTRE	YEAR	ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS				OTHER ACTIVITIES		ACTIVITIES - TOTAL		
		NO. OF ACCREDITED SEMINARS IN AND OUTSIDE OF THE CENTRE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	HOURS	OTHER ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	NO. OF OTHER CENTRE'S ACTIVITIES NOT RELATED TO EDUCATION	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF SEMINARS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES IN THE CENTRE	
UZICE	2011.	38	1 048	11 498	16	318	104	2 219	158	3 585
	2012.	52	1 540	17 550	20	535	164	2 990	236	5 065
	2013.	46	1 211	13 125	37	1 195	163	2 321	246	4 727
	TOTAL:	136	3 799	42 173	73	2 048	431	7 530	640	13 377
SABAC	2011.	56	1 892	20 848	34	1 312	36	3 259	126	6 463
	2012.	97	3 309	25 823	43	1 615	49	2 120	189	7 044
	2013.	110	3 405	37 917	58	1 782	55	2 953	223	8 140
	TOTAL:	263	8 606	84 588	135	4 709	140	8 332	538	21 647
SMEDEREVO	2011.	82	2 434	34 424	38	1 278	23	1 950	143	5 662
	2012.	99	2 655	36 452	37	1 875	36	1 780	172	6 310
	2013.	124	3 268	37 108	41	1 900	48	2 450	213	7 618
	TOTAL:	305	8 357	107 984	116	5 053	107	6 180	528	19 590
NIS	2011.	115	3 372	38 108	27	2 229	899	21 575	1 041	27 176
	2012.	213	5 807	63 610	29	2 108	720	18 575	962	26 490
	2013.	135	3 597	33 090	80	4 299	498	19 963	713	27 859
	TOTAL:	463	12 776	134 808	136	8 636	2 117	60 113	2 716	81 525
LESKOVAC	2011.	36	1 352	456	83	3 002	70	2 293	189	6 647
	2012.	83	2 537	980	88	2 560	64	1 899	235	6 996
	2013.	86	2 356	1 036	104	3 416	75	3 355	265	9 127
	TOTAL:	205	6 245	2 472	275	8 978	209	7 547	689	22 770
KRAGUJEVAC	2012.	50	1 567	624/19 556	12	479/2 876	3	90	65	1 657
	2013.	36	1 043	431/12 743	16	722	7	510	59	2 275
	TOTAL:	86	2 610	0	28	722	10	600	124	3 932

CENTRE	YEAR	ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS				OTHER ACTIVITIES		ACTIVITIES - TOTAL		
		NO. OF ACCREDITED SEMINARS IN AND OUTSIDE OF THE CENTRE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	HOURS	OTHER ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	NO. OF OTHER CENTRE'S ACTIVITIES NOT RELATED TO EDUCATION	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF SEMINARS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES IN THE CENTRE	
KRUSEVAC	2011.	69	1 666	21 855	63	1 512	56	1 568	188	4 746
	2012.	147	5 097	61 164	75	2 446	71	2 642	293	10 158
	2013.	140	3 700	43 442	94	2 519	95	7 925	329	14 144
	TOTAL:	356	10 463	126 461	232	6 477	222	12 135	810	29 075
KIKINDA	2011.	51	1 216	18 307	77	2 211	85	3 247	213	6 674
	2012.	120	2 524	32 154	115	2 322	89	3 394	324	8 240
	2013.	158	3 778	45 763	63	1 452	179	4 653	400	9 865
	TOTAL:	329	7 518	96 197	255	5 985	353	11 276	937	24 779
KANJIZA	2011.	18	444	6 591	9	470	11	304	38	1 218
	2012.	34	809	10 631	7	298	53	853	94	1 942
	2013.	28	700	8 284	152	3 391	51	1 258	231	5 349
	TOTAL:	80	1 953	25 506	168	4 159	115	2 397	363	8 509
CACAK	2011.	81	2 125	25 500	62	1 728	62	2 540	205	6 393
	2012.	99	3 228	34 644	60	3 320	74	9 123	233	15 671
	2013.	134	6 502	36 871	51	2 300	77	3 896	262	12 698
	TOTAL:	314	11 850	97 015	173	7 348	213	15 559	700	34 762
NOVI PAZAR	2012.	21	533	5 520	3	295	/	/	24	828
	2013.	36	1 087	11 304	4	268	/	/	40	1 355
	TOTAL:	57	1 620	16 824	7	536	0	0	64	2 183
KNJAZEVAC	2013.	24	632	9 096	1	171	/	/	25	803
	TOTAL:	24	632	9 096	1	171	0	0	25	803
TOTAL NETWORK WHOLE PERIOD		2 618	76 434	743 124	1 599	54 849	3 917	131 669	8 134	262 952

■ ANNEX 2:
GRAPH - ACCREDITED SEMINARS IN THE NETWORK 2011-13



■ ANNEX 3: GRAPH - ACTIVITIES IN THE NETWORK 2011-13



■ ANNEX 4: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CPD	CENTRE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
EU	EUROPEAN UNION
GIZ	DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FUER TECHNISCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT
IIE	INSTITUTE FOR IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATION
IMPRES	AN IPA FUNDED PROJECT FOR IMPROVEMENT OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN SERBIA
IPA	INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE
LFES	LAW ON FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION SYSTEM
MOE	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
NEC	NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL
PD	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
PDP	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION PERSONNEL PROJECT
RC	REGIONAL CENTRE
SDC	SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION
TA	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

IM PR INT

Swiss Cooperation Office Serbia
Francuska 6, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia
Tel: +381 (0)11 728 7021; 728 7022
E-mail: belgrade@eda.admin.ch
www.swiss-cooperation.admin.ch/serbia/

Print:
Alta Nova d.o.o.
Ugrinovacki put 16a, 11080 Belgrade, Serbia
E-mail: info@altanova.rs
www.altanova.rs

Design:
Polovinas design studio
Sanja Polovina
E-mail: polovinas.design@gmail.com
www.polovinas.com

Photographs:
Swiss Cooperation Office Serbia
Dragan Kujundzic

Belgrade, April 2014



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Cooperation Office Serbia
Embassy of Switzerland
Швајцарска канцеларија за сарадњу за Србију
Амбасада Швајцарске