



Overview of the Higher Education System

Serbia



February 2017

This document has been produced by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) on the basis of contributions from the Serbia National Erasmus+ Office and the authorities of the country concerned:

Ivana Živadinović, Foundation Tempus - Erasmus+ Office in Serbia

The approach and data collection have been implemented in close cooperation with Eurydice, the Network Education Systems and Policies in Europe.

This document reflects the views of the Erasmus+ Office and the Authorities of the country concerned. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

© European Union, 2017

For any use or reproduction of photos which are not under European Union copyright, permission must be sought directly from the copyright holder(s).

ISBN: 978-92-9492-399-8

doi: 10.2797/81179

For further information:

Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)

Erasmus+ : Higher Education – International Capacity Building

Postal address: Rue Joseph II, 59 B-1000 Brussels - Belgium

Contact: EACEA-EPLUS-CBHE@ec.europa.eu

Web-site: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus_en

Serbia National Erasmus+ Office

Postal address: Terazije 36, 1st floor, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia

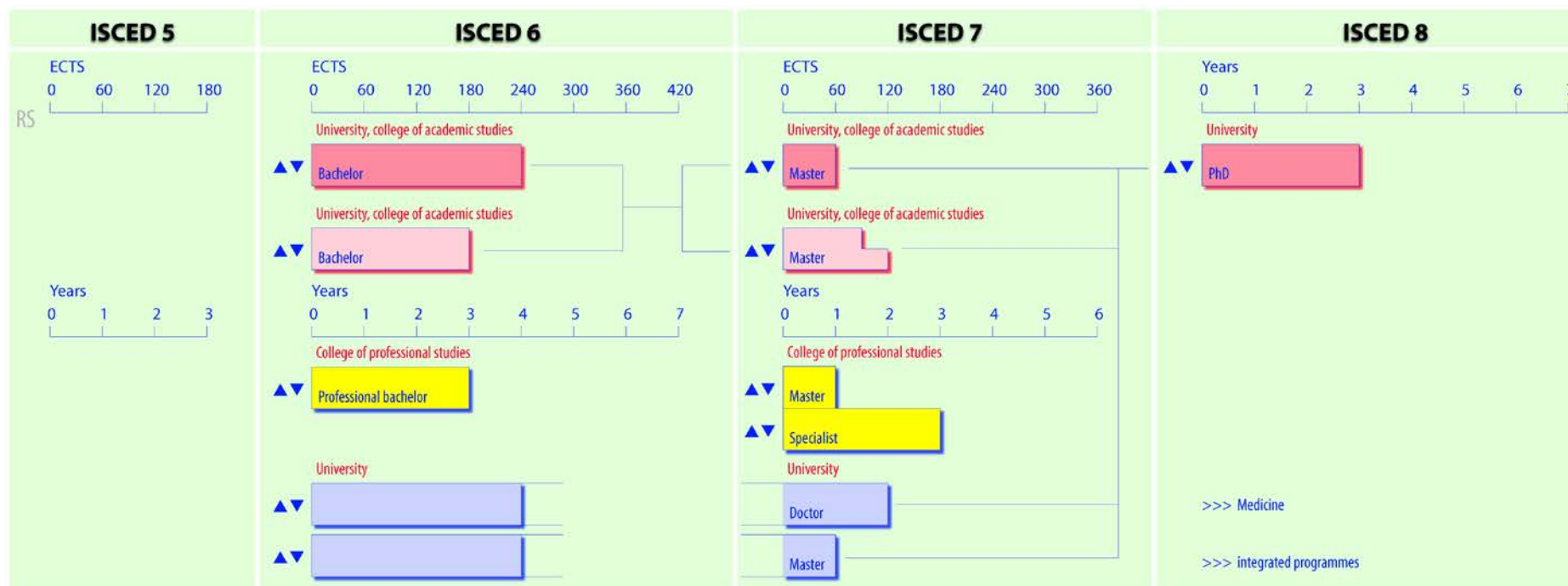
Contact: +381 11 33 42 430, +381 11 33 42 432

Web-site: <http://erasmusplus.rs/erasmus-office-in-serbia/>

Eurydice

Web-site: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index_en.php

The higher education system in Serbia



- Most common length of a Bologna cycle
- Other length of a Bologna cycle
- Professional programme

- Programme outside the typical Bologna model
- Professional programme non Bologna

ECTS:
Credits according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

		regulated at national level	decided at institutional level
All	programmes have admission requirements	▼	▲
SOME		▽	△

Table of content

1	Overview	1
1.1	Fundamental Principles and National Policies	1
1.2	Lifelong Learning Strategy	1
1.3	Organization of Private Education	2
1.4	National Qualifications Framework	2
1.5	Statistics on Organization and Governance	3
1.6	Distribution of responsibilities	3
2	Higher Education Funding	3
2.1	Public Education	3
2.1.1	Financial Autonomy and Control	4
2.1.2	Public Higher Education Fees	4
2.2	Private Education	4
2.2.1	Financial Autonomy and Control	4
2.2.2	Private Higher Education Fees	5
2.3	Financial Support for Learners' Families	5
2.4	Financial Support for Learners	5
3	The structure of the Higher Education system	6
3.1	Types of Higher Education Institutions	7
3.2	First Cycle Programmes	7
3.2.1	Branches of study	7
3.2.2	Admission Requirements	8
3.2.3	Curriculum	8
3.2.4	Teaching Methods	8
3.2.5	Progression of Students	9
3.2.6	Employability	9
3.2.7	Student Assessment	9
3.2.8	Certification	10
3.3	Short-Cycle Higher Education	10
3.4	Second Cycle Programmes	10
3.4.1	Branches of Study	10
3.4.2	Admission Requirements	10
3.4.3	Curriculum	11
3.4.4	Teaching Methods	11
3.4.5	Progression of Students	11
3.4.6	Employability	11
3.4.7	Student Assessment	11
3.4.8	Certification	12
3.5	Programmes outside the Bachelor and Master Structure	12
3.6	Third Cycle (PhD) Programmes	12

3.6.1	Organization of Doctoral Studies _____	12
3.6.2	Admission Requirements _____	12
3.6.3	Status of Doctoral Students/Candidates _____	13
3.6.4	Supervision Arrangements _____	13
3.6.5	Employability _____	13
3.6.6	Assessment _____	13
3.6.7	Certification _____	13
4	Teachers and Education Staff in Higher Education _____	14
4.1	Initial Education for Academic Staff in Higher Education _____	14
4.2	Conditions of Service for Academic Staff Working in Higher Education _____	14
4.2.1	Planning Policy _____	14
4.2.2	Entry to the Profession _____	14
4.2.3	Salaries _____	15
4.2.4	Professional Status _____	15
4.2.5	Working Time and Holidays _____	16
4.2.6	Promotion, Advancement _____	16
4.2.7	Retirement and Pensions _____	16
4.3	Continuing Professional Development for Academic Staff Working in Higher Education ____	17
4.3.1	Organizational Aspects _____	17
4.3.2	Incentives for Participation in Continuing Professional Development Activities _____	17
5	Management and Other Education Staff in Higher Education _____	17
5.1	Requirements for Appointment _____	17
5.2	Conditions of Service _____	18
6	Quality Assurance in Higher Education _____	18
6.1	Responsible bodies _____	18
6.2	Approaches and Methods for Quality Assurance _____	18
7	Educational Support and Guidance _____	19
7.1	Support Measures for Learners in Higher Education _____	19
7.2	Guidance and Counselling in Higher Education _____	19
7.2.1	Career Guidance _____	19
8	Mobility and Internationalisation in Higher Education _____	20
8.1	Student Mobility _____	20
8.2	Academic staff mobility _____	21
8.3	Other Dimensions of Internationalization in Higher Education _____	22
8.3.1	European, Global and Intercultural Dimension in Curriculum Development _____	22
8.3.2	Partnerships and Networks _____	22
8.4	Bilateral Agreements and Worldwide Cooperation _____	22
8.4.1	Bilateral agreements _____	22
8.4.2	Cooperation and participation in worldwide programmes and organizations _____	22
9	On-going Reforms and Policy Developments _____	23

9.1	Overall national education strategy and key objectives	23
9.2	Overview of the education reform process and drivers	24
9.3	National Reforms in Higher Education	24
9.3.1	2016	24
9.3.2	2015	24
9.3.3	2014	25
10	Legislation	25

1 Overview

The Republic of Serbia is located partly in Central Europe (Pannonian Plain) and partly in South-eastern Europe (central Balkans). The total population of the country is 7,186,862, with Serbs as the largest ethnic group (83.3%). In Serbia, the official language is Serbian while national minorities have the right to use their own language on national, provincial and municipality level. Currently, according to the Census in Serbia, in regard to religious affiliation, there are 84.6% Orthodox Christians, 5% Catholics, 3.1% Muslims, 1.1% atheists, 1% Protestants, 3.1% do not declare any religious affiliation, and about 2% other confessions.

Serbia's GDP (PPP) per capita is about \$10,985 USD, which is the third highest in South-eastern Europe after Bulgaria and Romania. While on par with its neighbouring countries in GNP per capita, Serbia has not enjoyed consistent economic growth like some of its neighbours. Its annual growth, which was 4.5% in 2000, rose to 6.2% in 2005 but then dropped again to 5.7% in 2006. Income inequality is relatively low, with a Gini coefficient of 0.24. In 2012, the government of Serbia spent 4.4 % of its GDP on education.

1.1 Fundamental Principles and National Policies

In accordance with the Article 71 of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia everyone shall have the right to education.

For regulation of the higher education, the following laws are relevant:

- Law on Higher Education
- Law on Amendments to the Law on Higher Education

Besides, The Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted in 2012 the Strategy for Development of Education in Serbia by 2020, which determines the purpose, objectives/goals, directions, instruments and mechanisms for the development of education system in the Republic of Serbia by 2020.

1.2 Lifelong Learning Strategy

The application of the lifelong learning principle has been one of the central activities of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development in recent years. In the field of higher education, contribution to the development of lifelong learning system has been made through the implementation of the Tempus project "Lifelong Learning System Development in Serbia" 2009-2012. In the course of 2010, draft strategies for lifelong learning at universities were prepared and the following conferences were organized: "Bologna Process and Lifelong Learning" and "Development of Lifelong Learning: Challenges for the Education System". In addition, a social dialogue was initiated between the representatives of economy, local authorities and educational institutions in Kragujevac, Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš and Novi Pazar. A survey on employers' needs for various forms of trainings has been carried out, on the basis of which modules and courses have been defined. Five centres for lifelong learning have been established at universities, training plans and programmes have been developed on the basis of short courses and the realization of trainings has begun. The process of networking of university centres at national level is on-going, as well as their integration into regional and international networks. With the aim of popularization of lifelong learning concept, a large number of brochures and advertising material have been published.

1.3 Organization of Private Education

Institutions for all levels of education may be state (public) and private. Educational institutions have equal status, regardless of ownership or founder's identity.

Establishment and operation of educational institutions, both state and private, are monitored by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and competent authorities of the province, as competent local authorities as well as the Accreditation and quality assurance commission, and the National Council for Higher Education. When the educational inspector finds compliance with conditions for the establishment of state or private institution, the Ministry of Education issues a decision on the verification, after which the institution is entered in the register.

1.4 National Qualifications Framework

The text of the National Qualification Framework of Serbia (NQFS) for higher education which covers the qualifications in the higher education system of Serbia was adopted by the National Council for Higher Education on 23 April 2010. NQFS defines the general learning outcomes, while the programme of study within the higher education system determines the knowledge, skills and competencies adequate to educational and scientific fields and areas covered by the programme. The draft of the NQFS was issued by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) of the Republic of Serbia after the first round of consultations with stakeholders. The document is based on the legislation in Serbia as well as the EHEA documents, especially on the Recommendation on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF). The key elements of the overarching framework are the three cycles established in the Bologna Process. Appropriate descriptors which are in line with the three cycle system are developed.

NQFS also takes into account the Serbian legislation related to employment and to scientific research.

Proposal of the document National Qualifications Framework in Serbia - National Qualifications System Levels I–V was produced in October 2013 and approved by the Council for Vocational and Adult Education.

The goals of establishing the NQFS are:

- ensuring comprehensibility, clarity and transparency of qualifications and their interconnectedness;
- development of Qualification Standards which are based on the economy and society requirements;
- enabling the orientation towards learning outcomes;
- improving the access, the flexibility of paths and the mobility within the systems of formal and non-formal education;
- enabling the identification and the recognition of non-formal and informal learning;
- improving the co-operation among relevant stakeholders, i.e. social partners;
- securing the quality system in the processes of developing and acquiring qualifications;
- ensuring the international comparability and recognition of Serbian qualifications.

1.5 Statistics on Organization and Governance

Number of students (in academic year 2014/2015)	
241,054	
Public	Private
209,273	31,781

1.6 Distribution of responsibilities

In Serbia, **the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development** bears the overall responsibility for developing and implementing education policy. **The National Education Council** and **the Council for Vocational and Adult Education**, supports the promotion and development of education. These bodies are of national importance and they design, monitor and coordinate the development of education and training, as well as monitor and coordinate the interests and needs of all social partners. **The National Council for Higher Education** is responsible for ensuring the development and promotion of the quality of higher education. **The Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation** is a body established by the government with the aim of evaluation of education and providing recommendations for the provision of the system of quality education. **The Institute for Improvement of Education** is a body established by the Republic of Serbia with the aim of monitoring, ensuring and improving the quality and development of the educational system, for the purposes of performing development, advisory, research and other expert activities in the area of preschool, primary and secondary education. **The Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance** is in charge of ensuring the quality of higher education. Its aim is to contribute to maintaining and to improve the quality of higher education as well as the compliance of the education system with internationally recognized standards.

2 Higher Education Funding

2.1 Public Education

The financing of higher education in Serbia is under the mandate of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, which allocates funds directly to public higher education institutions and controls the spending of their respective funds.

Public educational institutions are primarily funded from the state budget, while private educational institutions do not receive any direct or indirect public funding. The state funding of public higher education institutions in Serbia is input-based, which means that the allocation of funds is based on the real costs of the institution in relation to the number of students due to be enrolled in the next academic year, and the number and structure of academic staff. In addition, higher education institutions, can acquire funds from tuition fees, various national and international projects, real estate, donations, consultancy services etc. According to the Law on Higher Education, a public higher education institution can acquire funds from the state for: 1. material expenditure, maintenance and investment; 2. employees' salaries in accordance with the law and collective agreement; 3. equipment; 4. library; 5. scientific research and/or artistic work, as a function of teaching quality improvement; 6. employees' scientific and

professional training; 7. training of junior teaching staff in the fields of sciences and arts; 8. work with talented students; 9. international cooperation; 10. sources of information and information systems; 11. publishing activity; 12. work of the Students' Parliament and students' extracurricular activities; 13. funding of the equipment and studying conditions for students with disabilities; 14. other (Article 59).

The financing of *private* higher education institutions is fully independent from the State. The main source of income for private higher education institutions are tuition fees.

2.1.1 Financial Autonomy and Control

The higher education institution's funds acquired from the state budget are earmarked for a particular budget line, whereas funds from other sources (own income that can come from various sources: projects, consultancy services, equipment, facilities etc.) are subject to the governance by the higher education institution itself. The spending of the institution's own income is governed by the institution's internal acts in accordance with its strategic goals. Most often, the institution's own income is spent on infrastructure and salaries (Babin, Lažetić 2009). The ratio between self-provided income and that coming from the state budget largely varies from one higher education institution to another.

2.1.2 Public Higher Education Fees

According to the Law on Higher Education, the tuition fee determines the costs of studies for one academic year (i.e. for acquiring 60 ECTS credits).

Tuition fees for self-paying students at public HEIs vary from 285 EUR to 2,280 EUR. The highest tuition fees at public HEIs are at the University of Belgrade (Faculty of Architecture and Faculty of Dentistry approximately 2,280 EUR).

In the academic year 2014/15, the ratio between budget and self-financed students in Serbia was 43% and 57% respectively (at public HEIs the ratio between budget and self-financed students is 49% and 51% respectively).

Out of all fee-paying students in the same year, 76.9% were studying at public HEIs, and 23.1% at private HEIs.

2.2 Private Education

Private universities in Serbia are functioning without government, regional or local government subsidies. The financing of private higher education institutions is fully independent from the state.

The main sources of income for private higher education institutions are tuition fees and they autonomously provide funds for their educational and scientific work. All students at private HEIs are expected to pay tuition fees that are in general higher than those at public universities. The largest share of income is obtained through tuition fees.

2.2.1 Financial Autonomy and Control

As private higher education institutions are financially independent from the state, they have full financial autonomy.

2.2.2 Private Higher Education Fees

Tuition fees range from 1,000 to 4,500 EUR per academic year.

The highest tuition fees at private universities are those at the ALFA University; at the Faculty of TV Direction tuition fees are up to 4,500 EUR (EQUIED, 2012).

2.3 Financial Support for Learners' Families

There are no structural measures meant to target learners' families. All of the existing structural measures apply to students directly.

2.4 Financial Support for Learners

Student loans

Funding for the above mentioned support mechanisms is provided by the Government, the benefits being intended for students studying at public universities and funded from the state budget. Student loans are to be refunded for those who graduate in time with 8.5 or higher average grade. Otherwise students are obliged to return the loan with due interest. In order to qualify for a loan, apart from a budget status at a public university as the initial condition, students are further on ranked according to their study success and according to their socio-economic status. The latter criterion carries a 25% share in the total ranking, which implies that studying performance is the main criterion for receiving a student loan. In the academic year 2014/15, a monthly loan instalment was 8,400 RSD (approximately 70 EUR) per student. Students receive their loans in 10 monthly instalments per year. In the academic year 2015/16, a total of 5% of the entire student body were recipients of student loans (Statistical yearbook of the Republic of Serbia 2016: 113).

Student grants

Student grants are awarded to students with excellent accomplishments (average grade has to be 9 or higher on a 5-10 grading scale). The grant amount is the same as that for loans: in the academic year 2014/15, recipients of student grants were allocated respective monthly amounts of 8,400 RSD (approximately 70 EUR).

Other social benefits

In addition to the above mentioned support mechanisms all students are entitled to subsidized transportation in all cities in Serbia, as well as to discounts for inter-city travels. Some local governments have introduced free transportation for students in their municipalities. The right to subsidized transportation is granted to all students at both public and private institutions.

The state subsidizes accommodation and meals for all students at public institutions who are funded from the state budget. In addition, subsidized accommodation in dorms is granted to those studying out of their place of residence. Prices of meals are determined on the state level. In the academic year 2014/15, breakfast was priced 40 RSD (≈0.33 EUR), lunch 120 RSD (≈0.60 EUR) and dinner (≈0.49 EUR). Monthly accommodation fees in dorms in the same academic year ranged from 1,020 RSD (≈8.50 EUR) to 2,230 RSD (≈18.58 EUR) per student. There are 8 student centres in Serbia which provide both subsidized accommodation and meals (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš, Kragujevac, Subotica, Čačak, Bor and Užice). The city of Belgrade can accommodate 12,000 students in 14 dorms, Novi Sad 3,000 students etc. Students from *private* universities and those who are not funded from the state budget have the possibility of

getting accommodation in a student dorm only on condition that there are vacant places left and at the economic prices. Approximately 7.07% of students were accommodated in dorms in the calendar year 2015.

The following student categories are not subject to tuition fees: 1. Individuals from families with lower socio-economic backgrounds; 2. Individuals without parental care; 3. Individuals from single-parent families; 4. Members of the Roma national minority; 5. Individuals with disabilities, those with chronic diseases and convalescents; 6. Refugees and displaced persons; 7. Returnees under the Readmission Agreement and deported students; 8. Individuals from families with lower socio-economic backgrounds and children without parental care.

3 The structure of the Higher Education system

In the Republic of Serbia access to higher education is open to every person who graduates from a four-year secondary school.

Serbia started the reform of its higher education system by joining the Bologna Process in 2003, followed by the adoption of the new Law on Higher Education in 2005. This law formally introduced the European Credit Transfer System, three-cycle system of study and diploma supplement. As a result, from the school year 2007/8, all newly admitted students have studied under the reformed study programmes at all higher education institutions. The Strategy for Education Development in Serbia until 2020, adopted in 2012, is also an important document seeking to identify purposes, goals, directions, instruments and mechanisms for the development of the education system in the Republic of Serbia until 2020. In other words, the Strategy is intended to shape the development of this system in the best possible way.

The higher education system in Serbia has two types of studies and 4 types of Higher Education Institutions (see below): academic studies realized at universities, and applied studies realized primarily at colleges of applied studies, and occasionally at universities as well.

Higher education is divided into three levels: First level (Bachelor Studies), Second level (Master Studies, Specialized Studies), and the Third level (PhD Studies). Higher education in Serbia is provided at universities/faculties and colleges. According to the latest 2011 census, 10.59% of the population of Serbia has higher education qualifications.

First level of studies includes:

1. Undergraduate Academic Studies (Bachelor) – last for 3-4 years, carrying 180 to 240 ECTS
2. Bachelor Applied Studies – last for 3 years, carrying 180 ECTS.

Second level of studies includes:

1. Master Academic Studies – lasting for 1-2 years and carrying 60 to 120 ECTS
2. Master Applied Studies – lasting for 2 years and carrying at least 120 ECTS for students who have previously achieved 180 ECTS
3. Specialized Applied Studies – lasting for 1 year and carrying 60 ECTS
4. Specialist Academic Studies – lasting for 1 year and carrying 60 ECTS, for students who have achieved at least 300 ECTS in previous studies.

Third level of studies includes Doctoral Academic Courses (PhD), including a minimum of 3 years of study or 180 ECTS.

In the field of medical science (studies of medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine), integrated courses are organized in the duration of 6 years and carrying a minimum of 360 ECTS. Pharmacy studies also offer integrated courses that carry 300 ECTS.

Higher education institutions organize and implement study programmes within **an academic year** commencing, as a rule, on 1 October and lasting 12 calendar months.

An academic year may be divided into:

1. two semesters, each lasting 15 weeks;
2. three trimesters, each lasting 10 weeks;
3. blocks of an aggregate duration of 30 weeks, the individual duration of which is established by the general act of the higher education institution.

3.1 Types of Higher Education Institutions

There are 4 types of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Serbia: **Universities** (*univerzitet*), **Colleges of Applied Studies** (*visoka škola strukovnih studija*), **Colleges of academic studies** (*visoka škola*) and **Academies of Applied Studies** (*akademija strukovnih studija*).

University is an independent higher education institution, which can carry out academic, and/or vocational/applied study programmes at each of the three levels of study. Faculties and art academies are constituent parts of university and – albeit separate legal entities - cannot exist independently. Both faculties and art academies can carry out academic and/or vocational/applied study programmes at all of the three levels of study.

University integrates the functions of all of its constituent institutions and units - notably faculties - through unified policies aimed at the on-going promotion of the quality of courses and improvement of scientific research and artistic creativity.

College of academic studies is an independent higher education institution entitled to organize and conduct only first and second-cycle study programmes (Bachelor and Master academic studies).

College of applied studies is an independent higher education institution entitled to organize first and second-cycle study programmes (vocational studies at Bachelor, Master and specialized levels).

Academy of applied studies is an institution that integrates several vocational study colleges. While the higher education system currently does not include any such institution, their formation is being considered with a view to ensuring better functionality. A Tempus project, Establishing and capacity building of the Southern Serbian Academy and the National Conference for Vocational Higher Education, has started considering the creation of such an academy in the Southern Serbian region.

3.2 First Cycle Programmes

First cycle studies are offered at all types of higher education institutions in Serbia. A condition for entering a first-cycle study programme is the completion of four-year secondary education and passage of an entry exam.

3.2.1 Branches of study

Bachelor academic studies are organized at universities (more precisely, faculties or academies of arts that are members of universities) and colleges of academic studies, and can last either three or four years

(180 or 240 ECTS). Bachelor applied studies (Bachelor Appl.) last for three years (180 ECTS) and are organized at universities or colleges of applied studies. Upon completion of this level of studies, the student receives a Bachelor degree (or in case of applied studies Bachelor Appl.). A Bachelor study programme can include a final thesis that the student has to defend at the end of his/her studies, yet this depends on the specific study programme curriculum.

Main branches of higher education studies in Serbia are:

- technical and technology sciences;
- humanities and social sciences;
- natural sciences and mathematics;
- medical sciences;
- arts;
- interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary sciences.

3.2.2 Admission Requirements

The completion of a (four-year) secondary education programme and relevant diploma acquisition are a general prerequisite for joining bachelor or integrated study programmes. Specific admission conditions and procedures are individually regulated by higher education institutions.

Most institutions organize entrance exams that are usually held in early July and early September (the latter option applies to institutions which still have vacancies for new students). The ranking of candidates depends on both the entrance exam results and success in the previous level of education.

The number of new admissions is individually determined by each higher education institution, but such a number may not exceed the one specified in the work permit.

For higher education institutions, whose founder is the Republic, the Government prescribes the number of students to be enrolled in the first year of study programmes financed from the state budget.

3.2.3 Curriculum

Higher education institutions are autonomous in the creation of the contents of their respective educational curricula. However, there are some general rules regarding the curricula prescribed by the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance. In every curriculum, the list of compulsory and elective subjects should be indicated, as well as their descriptions, the number of ECTS they carry and the number of lessons they include.

For certain professions (primary school teachers, physicians, pharmacists and similar occupations) some elements of the study programmes are broadly defined by national regulations (the Law on the Education System Foundations, Law on Medical Protection and Law on Medicines). For example, the curriculum for undergraduate teacher studies needs to include 30 ECTS credits of pedagogical and methodological subjects and 6 ECTS of school practice.

3.2.4 Teaching Methods

At the majority of HEIs in Serbia, lectures are held for large groups of students. The Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance sets the rules and regulations prescribing maximum numbers of students attending a lecture for every level and every branch of studies (technical and technology

sciences, humanities and social sciences, natural sciences and mathematics, medical sciences, arts). The same regulation specifies maximum numbers of students at workshops and exercises – which are generally held in smaller groups.

There are no specific rules for first cycle studies regarding the teaching methods. Higher education teachers have to organize their lectures in compliance with the curriculum but the teaching methods they should use are not prescribed. Teaching materials such as books and audio-visual materials are commonly used in the teaching process but they are not always provided to students free of charge. Nevertheless, students are expected to refer to those materials when preparing their exams.

3.2.5 Progression of Students

Students can move on to the next year of studies once they have completed their obligations in terms of obtaining the sufficient number of ECTS. State-funded students have to obtain at least 48 ECTS in order to remain within the state-financed regime during the next year of studies. Self-financed students have to obtain at least 37 ECTS in order to be admitted to the next year of studies. The list of obligatory and optional subjects is prescribed in the study programme.

The student can pass a particular exam at any time from the moment the lectures related to it are finished, up to the start of the next year lectures. If the student fails to pass an obligatory exam before the start of his/her next year lectures, he or she has to enrol the same subject again. In the case of an optional subject, the student can either enrol in the same subject again or opt for another one. A maximum number of exam attempts is not determined. The number of exam terms per school year is 5. In the event of three successive exam failures, the student has the right to take the exam in front of the commission.

3.2.6 Employability

While cooperation between higher education institutions and employers is not formally regulated in Serbia, this issue has been recognized as a very important one in the recent years. Some HEIs have included internship programmes into their study curricula; some universities organize internship for students in cooperation with state authorities, in order for students to experience work in public administration. In addition, some HEIs have career guidance centres, which help students to find jobs or improve their qualifications in order to increase their employability.

On the other hand, there are some companies, mostly in the IT sector, which appreciate the competences of students graduating from certain faculties and offer them jobs immediately after – and at times even before – graduation.

3.2.7 Student Assessment

The success of students is continually evaluated. The student can earn a maximum of 100 points by completing his/her pre-examination obligations and relevant exams.

A ratio of points earned through pre-examination obligations and those earned at the exam is determined in the study programme. The minimum number of points that pre-examination obligations may carry is 30 and the maximum is 70 points out of the final 100. Student's exam performance is expressed from grades 5 (failed) to 10 (excellent).

Higher education institution may also establish other, non-numerical grading systems by relating the ratio of such marks to the one expressed through grades from 5 to 10.

The general act of a certain higher education institution includes precise regulations in terms of exam taking and grading procedures.

3.2.8 Certification

The authority responsible for certification is the higher education institution. Upon completion of the first level of higher education, the student receives a diploma with his/her relevant professional title, average degree and the number of ECTS earned. The student also receives a diploma supplement, which contains information regarding the level, type and content of the studies successfully finished.

3.3 Short-Cycle Higher Education

No short cycle programmes have yet been accredited in either academic or applied studies in the education system of Serbia.

3.4 Second Cycle Programmes

3.4.1 Branches of Study

In Serbia, Master studies can be organized by universities, faculties, colleges of academic studies and colleges of applied studies. The length of studies at this level is either one or two years (60 or 120 ECTS). In order to enrol a Master programme, students must have completed a Bachelor programme with at least 180 ECTS (if they want to enrol a two-year Master programme) or with at least 240 ECTS (if they want to enrol a one-year Master programme). To complete a Master study programme, the student has to write and defend a Master thesis at the end of his/her studies.

Specialist studies last for one year and can be either academic or applied. Specialist academic study programmes can be conducted at universities, faculties and colleges of academic studies. Specialist applied studies may be conducted at universities, faculties, colleges of applied studies and vocational study academies.

A specialist study programme curriculum can include a final thesis. To enrol a specialist study programme, the student needs to have completed a Bachelor programme.

3.4.2 Admission Requirements

Admission requirements and procedures at this level of studies are regulated by individual higher education institutions. A general condition for those entering the second cycle of studies is that they have completed the first cycle of studies and obtained a diploma. Another condition is the passage of the exam if so is prescribed by the particular institution. Some institutions do not organize entrance exams, but make their selection according to other criteria (average grade or some other references like working experience or academic activities in the relevant field, etc.).

If a candidate who wants to enrol a particular programme has graduated from another higher education institution and in a different field of studies, there could be an additional condition – passage of certain differential exams.

The admission procedure starts with the advertisement of the higher education institution announcing the number of students that can be enrolled in the particular study programme, eligibility details, candidate rating criteria and regulations governing the competition procedure.

The number of students is determined by the higher education institution but it may not exceed the number set in the work permit.

3.4.3 Curriculum

The curriculum is developed at the institutional level. However, for certain professions (primary school teachers, physicians, pharmacists and similar occupations) some elements of the study programs are broadly defined by national regulations (the Law on the Education System Foundations, Law on Medical Protection and Law on Medicines). Study programmes consist of compulsory and optional subjects.

The language of instruction is Serbian, but the higher education institution may organize examinations, some parts or an entire study programme in a minority or another foreign language.

3.4.4 Teaching Methods

Comparing to the first level, smaller numbers of students enrol the second level of studies. Lectures are mostly conducted for large groups of students.

The Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance sets the rules and regulations prescribing maximum numbers of students who can attend lectures for every level and every branch of studies (technical and technology sciences, humanities and social sciences, natural sciences and mathematics, medical sciences, arts). The same regulation prescribes numbers of students admissible at workshops and exercises – which are generally held in smaller groups than lectures.

There are no specific rules for the second cycle studies regarding the teaching methods. Higher education teachers have to organize their lectures in compliance with the curriculum but the teaching methods they should use are not prescribed. Teaching materials such as books and audio-visual materials are commonly used in the teaching process but they are not always provided to students free of charge. Nevertheless, students are expected to refer to those materials when preparing their exams.

3.4.5 Progression of Students

This part is the same as for the Bachelor studies. For more information, please see Progression of Students in Bachelor section.

3.4.6 Employability

This part is the same as for the Bachelor studies. For more information, please see Employability in Bachelor section.

3.4.7 Student Assessment

The assessment of students is a continuous process based on pre-examination activities and students' success at the exam. Students earn a certain number of ECTS for each activity they conduct during the

studies. The maximum number of points that a student can achieve is 100, out of which a minimum of 30 points has to be earned through pre-examination activities. Each student's performance is evaluated from grades 5 (failed) to 10 (excellent).

3.4.8 Certification

The authority responsible for certification is the higher education institution. Upon completion of the first level of higher education, the student receives a diploma with his/her relevant professional title, average degree and the number of ECTS earned. The student also receives a diploma supplement, which contains information regarding the level, type and content of the studies successfully finished.

3.5 Programmes outside the Bachelor and Master Structure

Unlike other programs, which follow the Bologna Bachelor and Master cycles (either 3+2 or 4+1 years), programs in the field of medical science (studies of medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine) are integrated into a unique six-year cycle carrying 360 ECTS points. This type of study programme integrates Bachelor and Master academic studies into one cycle.

Studies of pharmacy are also integrated into a unique cycle, lasting five years and carrying 300 ECTS points.

3.6 Third Cycle (PhD) Programmes

3.6.1 Organization of Doctoral Studies

Doctoral studies (PhD) are organized at universities (faculties within universities) and last for three years (180 ECTS). PhD programmes involve extensive scientific research and publication of papers in scientific journals. A PhD thesis is the final part of the doctoral study programme, except in case of arts study programmes, where PhD candidates are required to create an artistic project as the final part of their PhD studies.

The PhD thesis carries at least 50% of the total number of ECTS at this level of studies. The preparation procedure and conditions for the defence of the PhD thesis are defined by the particular higher education institution's general act, subject to the opinion of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development. The institution where the PhD thesis is defended has the obligation to make it available to the public on its web page, alongside a printed version of the work, which needs to be available in the institution's library at least 30 days prior to the adoption of the commission report and defence of the thesis.

The university is obliged to establish a digital repository containing electronic versions of all defended theses, along with reports submitted by respective commissions for thesis evaluation, data about respective mentors and commission members, and information about copyright protection. All of the foregoing documentation must be made available to the public. A copy of each thesis has to be sent to the central repository of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development within 3 months. Such a repository is expected to be set up in the near future.

3.6.2 Admission Requirements

Higher education institutions individually determine their PhD enrolment rates in line with estimated needs

of society for the development of science, education and arts, but also bearing in mind their capacities in terms of space and human resources.

General admission requirements are: at least 300 ECTS, or 360 in the case of integrated medical study programs, and fluency in at least one foreign language. Candidates are also assessed on the basis of their average grades from previous levels of studies, their professional skills and previous accomplishments.

3.6.3 Status of Doctoral Students/Candidates

Both employed and unemployed students have equal rights in terms of eligibility for any particular program and a state-financed status as long as they meet all other required preconditions.

Unemployed students are entitled to all benefits and rights as those granted at the previous levels of study - health insurance, student subsidies for meals, public transport and scholarships.

On the other hand, employed students exercise such rights through their employee status.

3.6.4 Supervision Arrangements

In order to organize PhD study programmes, the higher education institution has to observe the specific selection criteria applicable to PhD teaching staff. Such criteria include the number of published papers and involvement in scientific projects.

A PhD mentor must have at least 5 works published in eminent scientific journals over the past ten years.

A PhD mentor can have a maximum of 5 students under his/her supervision at a time.

3.6.5 Employability

PhD candidates can be employed by the higher education institution (HEI) in Serbia on junior positions (research assistant and assistant) provided that the average grade of their bachelor studies was 8 or higher. The Law on Higher Education provides general framework for employing Assistants while the Law on Scientific Research defines minimum standards for Research assistant position. For both positions a PhD student status is set as a requirement.

3.6.6 Assessment

Students are assessed on the basis of their overall performance and engagement, as well as on the basis of credits earned through their exams and pre-examination activities. The PhD thesis, being the final part of the studies, is assessed on the basis of its scientific or artistic significance and contribution to the field in question. It represents an independent scientific research paper. Each higher education institution sets its general rules of application procedure and PhD thesis defence, which apply to all of its constituent departments.

3.6.7 Certification

Once the student has completed all of their examination obligations and defended his/her PhD thesis, they receive a diploma stating their official title – Doctor of Sciences. The competent certifying authority is the higher education institution where the PhD studies took place. The authorities responsible for

assessment standards are the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance.

4 Teachers and Education Staff in Higher Education

4.1 Initial Education for Academic Staff in Higher Education

Initial education, conditions of service and professional development of academic staff is regulated by the Law on Higher Education and, more specifically, by the higher education institution statutes and rules.

There are no special programmes for the initial education of future academic staff in higher education. Likewise, there are no requirements concerning particular subjects during studies, such as psychology, pedagogy, teaching methodology or other education related subjects.

Admission criteria to higher education institutions for those planning to pursue academic career is equivalent to those anticipated for any other student applying for a higher education programme. Typically, a PhD degree is required for those applying for academic staff positions, although persons with lower degree levels may apply for some positions, as explained in the Entry to the Profession section. The duration of initial education for academic staff is usually 8 years (3 or 4 years of a Bachelor degree programme + 1 or 2 years of a Master degree programme + 3 years of a PhD degree programme).

Research work and the publication of scientific papers are highly valued for students aiming for academic career.

4.2 Conditions of Service for Academic Staff Working in Higher Education

Academic staff in higher education institutions includes teachers, associates and researchers. There are several levels of titles within the teachers' profession: lecturer; professor of applied studies; assistant professor; associate professor; and full professor. Lecturers and professors of applied studies may teach only at colleges and not at a university level. Assistant professors, associate professors and full professors may teach at all levels of higher education. There are two titles for education staff working as associates: teaching assistants and assistants.

4.2.1 Planning Policy

The Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020 and respective Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for Development of Education in the Republic of Serbia 2020 encompass several actions that target HR planning:

- Improving criteria and procedures for selection and advancement of teaching staff - by establishing common selection procedure for teaching staff, establishing procedure for the inclusion of teaches from diaspora and foreign teachers;
- Development of support to teaching staff for teaching and scientific work – through improvement of quality of education and university excellence and developing support for teacher mobility at HEIs
- Adjustment of the number of teachers needed within different fields of study

4.2.2 Entry to the Profession

Recruitment of new teachers in higher education is carried out through an open recruitment procedure

conducted by the college of applied studies or university, as proposed by the relevant belonging faculty. The higher education institution determines its recruitment policy and specific requirements in accordance with the recommendations of the National Education Council. General requirements for employing a teacher or associate are:

- No previous convictions of sexual harassment or abuse, falsification of public documents issued by a higher education institution or bribery within the higher education structures;
- Appropriate education degree, documented scientific work and ability to perform teaching activities. Education degree requirements for specific titles are:
 - Teaching assistant: students graduated from Bachelor degree studies in good standing;
 - Assistant: PhD students in good standing and with strong teaching skills;
 - Lecturer: Master's degree or specialization;
 - Professor of Applied Studies: PhD;
 - Assistant Professor: PhD and published scientific papers;
 - Associate Professor: PhD and published scientific papers or other publications of considerable scientific relevance;
 - Full Professor: PhD and an extensive amount of published scientific papers or other publications of considerable scientific relevance in their field of expertise, alongside other contributions to science and higher education quality.
- Distinguished results in the following evaluations performed by the higher institution (when applicable):
 - Evaluation of scientific/research/art work;
 - Evaluation of engagement in the improvement of teaching and other educational processes;
 - Evaluation of pedagogical work. Students' opinions may be taken into account when evaluating the teachers' previous pedagogical engagement.

A visiting professor from a foreign higher institution may be employed without a recruitment procedure.

4.2.3 Salaries

Remuneration policy of the academic staff is defined by:

- The Law on Higher education
- Collective Agreement for Higher Education
- Regulation of working condition norms and standards for universities and faculties financed from the state budget
- Law on State Employees' Salaries

Salaries can vary across faculties and colleges as HEIs have own revenues aside of the funds received from the state budget.

4.2.4 Professional Status

Most commonly, higher education teachers and associates are employed on a full time basis. However, the duration of their employment may vary in accordance with their respective titles:

- Teaching assistants: fixed-term employment for 1 year, with a possible extension for another year;
- Assistants: fixed-term employment for 3 years, with a possible extension for another 3 years;
- Lecturers: fixed-term employment for 5 years;
- Professors of Applied Studies: permanent position;
- Assistant Professor: fixed-term employment for 5 years;
- Associate Professor: fixed-term employment for 5 years;
- Full Professor: permanent position.

Academic staff members are required to act in accordance with the professional code of ethics which is usually issued by each higher education institution.

4.2.5 Working Time and Holidays

Full time employees work 40 hours per week with all other specifics being determined by their contract and class schedules issued by the higher education institution. The institution determines the structure and schedule of teachers' annual and weekly obligations. Staff members are entitled to a minimum of 20 vacation days per year, which are used up during collective holidays and during breaks determined by the academic year calendar. A staff member may use paid absence days in situations determined by the institution (professional development, conferences, illness, maternity leave etc.)

4.2.6 Promotion, Advancement

Moving from a lower professional title to the next in the line (from teaching assistant to full professor) is considered career advancement. Although academic staff members have to formally undergo a recruitment process in order to earn a higher title, it is an expected sequence of events for those who wish to continue their career at the same institution.

A higher-ranking title brings a salary increase, like in any other case of teacher promotion (e.g. becoming the Head of Department, Dean, a committee member etc.). Furthermore, each year of working experience brings an increase in salary and number of annual leave days, as specified by the Labour Law.

Honourable professor emeritus title may be assigned to a retired professor for their distinguished scientific work and contribution to higher education. Professor emeritus may be involved in all teaching activities within the second and third degree levels of study.

4.2.7 Retirement and Pensions

Teachers may retire at the age of 65 with a minimum of 15 years of work. Teachers who, at the age of 65, have the status of associate professor or full professor have the right to extend their employment for a period of up to 3 years, under the terms of the particular higher institution. After retirement, teachers are allowed to keep some of their official engagements such as membership in committees or mentorship, for a period not longer than 2 years.

After retirement, teachers keep their respective titles. A very small percentage of teachers can get promoted to professor emeritus.

Pensions are determined by the Law on Pension and Disability Insurance.

4.3 Continuing Professional Development for Academic Staff Working in Higher Education

4.3.1 Organizational Aspects

The professional development of academic staff is in most cases based on scientific work. There are no requirements determined by the Law regarding professional development on this level, which is therefore most commonly optional, unless required differently by the particular higher education institution. However, professional development in the form of published scientific papers and other relevant publications is extremely important for career promotion, this being one of the criteria for the teacher's employment and earning a higher-ranking title (as explained in the section on Entry to the Profession).

Professional development can be organized in the forms of specialization, work towards a higher level of formal education, symposia, courses, study theses, congresses, seminars, conferences and similar activities. Institutions are required to provide conditions for the professional development of their staff, including the time for the completion of such engagement within regular working hours.

4.3.2 Incentives for Participation in Continuing Professional Development Activities

Hours spent on professional development can count towards working time and the institution is responsible for covering all expenses incurred in the process. A certain number of working days, as determined by the institution, is used up for professional development. If the institution budget allows so, the staff may receive additional funds for research work and participation in conferences and other important academic events. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development regularly approves funds for research work and science development, for which academic staff may apply. A special fund is available to young researchers who recently joined the academic community (PhD students, assistants and associate professors).

After 5 years of employment, the higher institution may approve 1 year of paid absence for the teacher's professional development and scientific research purposes. The institution is obliged to approve unpaid absence for the purpose of professional development, especially for participation in scientific projects and preparation of PhD or specialization thesis.

5 Management and Other Education Staff in Higher Education

5.1 Requirements for Appointment

According to the Law on Higher Education, the managing body of higher education institution is the **council** consisting of higher education institution representatives, students and founders' representatives. Members of the council are selected every three years, in accordance with the institution statute. Selection criteria, programme of work and decision making procedures are determined by the institution.

The **rector** is the executive managing body of the university; the **dean** has the same function at the faculty level and the **head** at higher schools level. These positions are given to the selected full time professors already working in these institutions. The new executive manager is selected each three years, although the same person may prolong their mandate once. The council selects the person for this position.

Other professional bodies that contribute to higher institution function are the **senate**, **scientific** or **academic councils** and **committees**, and other bodies as decided by the institution.

5.2 Conditions of Service

Further details on selection of the managing bodies, their dismissal, responsibility and other conditions of service are determined separately by each higher education institution.

The person may not be selected for any of the managing positions if they are convicted of criminal offense, plagiarism of higher education documents, discrimination, bribery or broken the professional code of ethics rules. Also, they are dismissed if anything mentioned occurs during their mandate, or if they fail to perform duties required by their position.

6 Quality Assurance in Higher Education

6.1 Responsible bodies

According to the Law on Higher Education, the National Higher Education Council is the body responsible for quality assurance and improvement in higher education. It consists of 21 members, chosen by the national parliament. Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance is the body formed by the National Higher Education Council. It consists of 15 members – professors from different academic fields of study. Within the quality assurance scope, the Council and the Commission realize the following tasks:

- Monitor the higher education development and its compliance with European and world standards;
- Propose the higher education policy to the Ministry
- Suggest the policy about higher institutions enrolment
- Propose legislation documents within higher education
- Propose higher education standards to the government
- Determine self-evaluation standards
- Determine external quality assurance standards and procedures
- Determine standards for accreditation of academic programmes and higher education institutions.

6.2 Approaches and Methods for Quality Assurance

Quality assurance methods are defined by the Bylaw on Standards and Procedures of External Quality Assurance in Higher Education. This document is proposed by the National Higher Education Council and adopted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development. It regulates the procedures for evaluating the fulfilment of higher education institution duties in terms of quality assurance.

The Commission performs quality assurance procedure as part of its annual plan, or by order of the Council, the Ministry or higher education institution. Upon the quality assurance procedure, the Commission is required to submit a report to the ordering party. The Council is responsible for evaluating the results of quality assurance procedure, specified in the report. Final results are sent to the higher education institution and the Ministry.

Defined standards of external quality assurance are described below:

- Usage of internal quality assurance results are the starting point for the external quality assurance procedures
- External quality assurance method is based on assessing the current situation at a higher education institution in line with predetermined quality standards

- Areas of external quality assurance are: teaching, teachers, research, students assessment, textbooks and literature, library and IT resources, space and equipment, non-teaching staff, management and transparency;
- Result of external quality assurance are determined on the basis of predefined criteria and they include recommendations for future quality improvement;
- Participants of external quality assurance are: higher education institution along with its management and teaching and non-teaching staff, the Commission, the Council, reviewers, students, economy representatives and foreign quality assurance experts.
- External quality assurance principle is to be directed towards quality improvement;
- Report consists of analysis and assessment of fulfilment of standards, identified flaws and suggestions for quality improvement;
- Frequency of external quality assurance procedures is at least once in 8 years for higher education institution quality and at least once in 5 years for curriculum quality;
- External quality assurance procedures are improved and adjusted in line with changes in higher education policy and practice.

Self-evaluation and internal quality assurance of academic programs, teaching and work conditions are defined through the general act of each higher education institution, as defined by the Law on Higher Education. Higher education institution defines its own internal documents and procedures required for internal quality assurance. Self-evaluation takes place in intervals of not more than three years. Students' rating of academic programmes quality is a part of quality assurance procedure. Information about procedures and results of self-evaluation are submitted to the Commission.

Accreditation of higher education institutions is done by the Commission according to the Bylaw on Standards and Procedures of Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Academic Programmes.

7 Educational Support and Guidance

At university level, career guidance is provided through university and faculty career development centres. Almost all universities have career centres which organize career workshops, provide counselling and offer internships.

7.1 Support Measures for Learners in Higher Education

No information available

7.2 Guidance and Counselling in Higher Education

7.2.1 Career Guidance

Unlike many other European countries, in which university career services have a long tradition, first career development centres were opened at Serbian universities only seven years ago, which provide career information and organize educational activities related to career management such as workshops, lectures and training courses. Many centres provide individual guidance and counselling both on-premises and online. The centres have very active cooperation with the business community and organize internship programmes and other work-testing opportunities for their students, as well as joint events with companies. Their services are available to the students and also to the alumni and

prospective students. Apart from providing career guidance and counselling services, these centres usually provide information on educational mobility opportunities.

It should be noted that apart from the career centres at the university level, there is a number of career centres at member faculties of these universities. University career centres have established good mutual cooperation, which resulted in the creation of the Association of Career Centres of Serbian Universities in 2012.

In order to support the development of talented youth, the Government of the Republic of Serbia established the Fund for Young Talents. Operating within the *Ministry of Youth and Sports*, the Fund has awarded scholarships to over 8,500 students and school pupils. In order to provide them with support for their further professional and educational development, the Fund has established the Centre for the Career Guidance and Counselling of Young Talents. This career centre provides career guidance and organizes career workshops and related events, and cooperates with the business community in supporting talents to obtain practical work experience through internships and similar programmes.

8 Mobility and Internationalisation in Higher Education

For the time being, there is no particular national strategy dealing with internationalisation and mobility, but the overall Strategy for Education Development in Serbia by 2020 envisages the adoption of a strategy which will include the mobility of international and local students and teachers. In this document it is also envisaged that by year 2020 at least 20% of students should have some kind of international experience during their study period. Accordingly, but also due to the fact that the opportunities for international cooperation in higher education are increased in last few years, the higher educations (HEIs) from Serbia are becoming more active when it comes to setting up the conditions for the development of cooperation with the institutions from other countries. Almost all universities and many colleges in Serbia have established bilateral and multilateral cooperation with universities in the EU countries, the USA, Canada, Asia and other regions. This cooperation is focused mainly on mobility of students, study visits, exchange of teaching staff and research.

There are several initiatives, one of them coming from a Tempus project coordinated by a Serbian HEI, which stipulate the adoption of national and university strategies for internationalization, and the incorporation of standards for mobility in the accreditation standards for HEIs. HEIs from Serbia are very active in the EU programs for international cooperation, especially in the previous Tempus programme, but also in Erasmus Mundus and Lifelong Learning Programme. There is a great interest for participation in all kinds of projects within the new overall programme - Erasmus+ as well. Other significant programmes for student and academic staff mobility are: CEEPUS, Campus Europae etc.

The predominant obstacles for the increase of mobility at all levels of education in Serbia are problems with funding.

8.1 Student Mobility

The new, overall programme of the EU for education, youth and sports, Erasmus+ offers new possibilities for Serbian HEIs for participating, among other, in the parts of the programme devoted to mobility. Higher education institutions from Serbia have been participating in a significant number of Erasmus Mundus projects, especially in the part of the programme that supported the establishment of exchange networks between institutions of higher education from the Western Balkans and the EU. These networks resulted in acquiring valuable experience within the common European academic and cultural context and were

considered to be a good preparation for Serbia's participation in mobility programmes in the future. Erasmus Mundus exchange networks have had a systemic impact on the international cooperation of universities during the five years of their implementation.

The universities in Serbia which participated in the Erasmus Mundus action 2 projects are the University of Belgrade, University of Novi Sad, University of Kragujevac, and University of Nis. Six university exchange networks have been funded (some of them are still running): BASILUES, JoinEU-SEE, SIGMA, ERAWEB, EUROWEB and STEM. From 2014 there are two new partnerships (exchange networks) with participation of institutions from Serbia: TECH-WB and SUNBEAM, while two previously existent networks, SIGMA A and EUROWEB, acquired funding for the next period. There were over 150 Joint Erasmus Mundus Master and some 40 joint PhD programmes for which students could apply within Erasmus Mundus Action 1. All these programmes lead towards joint or multiple diplomas. During the past seven years, more than 400 students from Serbia were awarded scholarships for attending EM joint Master and PhD courses at prestigious EU universities.

Serbian HEIs also participate in the CEEPUS programme. This is an academic exchange program for students and professors from Central and Eastern Europe. The program is based on an international agreement signed by the following member states: Austria, Albania, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Czech Republic, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Serbia. Student exchange is organized within university networks. Each of the networks has a certain number of target subjects. The cooperation is based on the correspondence between universities' institutes and faculties which are active in the same academic field.

The outbound mobility of national students is promoted and funded through the Fund for Young Talents. This fund was set up by the Government and it is run by the Ministry of Youth and Sport. The Fund was established in order to support young and talented people as a result of the aspirations of the Serbian Government to provide the best conditions for education, vocational training and rewards for best secondary school and university students. Also, the Fund annually awards scholarships for up to 800 top university students in the final year of first degree study, as well as a maximum of 400 studies of second and third degree at the universities of the Member States of the European Union (EU) and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and provides awards to secondary school students for their achievements in recognized competitions at home and abroad.

The improvement of the system for recognition of foreign degrees is one of the most important features of the mobility process that Serbian authorities are working on. The recognition for the purpose of employment is assigned to the ENIC/NARIC centre which has been founded within the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, whereas the recognition for the purpose of further education has stayed under the regulation of the HEIs.

The great majority of foreign students go to universities compared to the number of those who go to the colleges of applied studies.

Possibility for distance learning is envisaged by the Law on Higher Education. Some of the universities have reached the accreditation standards for conducting this kind of lectures, but the number of students included in this kind of practice is still very low.

8.2 Academic staff mobility

Serbia has actively participated in the Tempus programme since 2001, when it joined the first Call of Tempus III phase (2001-2007), up until the Call in 2013. That was the last Call of Tempus IV phase

(2008-2013), when the programme ceased to exist, i.e. it has been replaced by the Erasmus+ programme. Throughout the entire period (2001-2013) Tempus has been the largest financial instrument of support to the modernization of higher education in Serbia and it provided, inter alia, teaching staff capacity building through mobility periods spent abroad. Institutions responsible for organization and coordination of mobility in the education system of Serbia are the HEIs. The authority responsible for the overall internationalisation policy developments is the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.

8.3 Other Dimensions of Internationalization in Higher Education

8.3.1 European, Global and Intercultural Dimension in Curriculum Development

Serbia has entered the Bologna process by the adoption of the Bologna Declaration in 2003 and the adoption of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 2004. The objective of these actions was the harmonization of Serbian education system with the education systems of EU countries; in other words, the entrance into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Accordingly, Serbia has adopted the Law on Higher Education in 2005 as the reform law which was intended to make these goals legally binding for all higher education institutions (HEIs) in Serbia.

8.3.2 Partnerships and Networks

No information available.

8.4 Bilateral Agreements and Worldwide Cooperation

8.4.1 Bilateral agreements

Almost all universities, and many colleges, in Serbia have established bilateral cooperation with universities in the EU countries, the USA, Canada, countries in Asia and other regions. This cooperation is aimed at increasing the number of students coming to Serbia, and focuses on research and delivery of some teaching programmes, sometimes as joint or double degrees.

By 2012 the Republic of Serbia had signed around 23 bilateral agreements related to higher education with countries from different regions, half of them members of the EU.

8.4.2 Cooperation and participation in worldwide programmes and organizations

"World in Serbia" is a project of the Government of Serbia which provides scholarships for all levels of studies for students coming from the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement. It is envisaged that the students who come to Serbia attend the preparatory year to study Serbian language.

Serbia for Serbs from the region is a project of the Government of Serbia providing scholarships for students of Serbian nationality, who live in the Western Balkan region.

Requirements for a candidate to get a scholarship are as follows:

- to belong to the Serbian national minority, and have the citizenship of one of the countries in the region, to be under 21 years of age for the bachelor's degree studies, under 25 years of age for master's studies and under 35 years of age for doctoral degree studies;

- to have an outstanding performance in secondary school in order to enrol on the bachelor's studies and an average grade above 8.50 in order to enrol on the master's studies and a master's degree total of 300 ECTS in order to be able to attend doctoral studies;
- to have a communication level knowledge of the English or Serbian languages and to return to and live in the country he/she came from.

The bachelor's, master's and doctoral studies will be organized at state universities in the Republic of Serbia and the scholarships will be granted for those qualifications, i.e. study programmes, that are needed by the Serbian community in the country in question.

9 On-going Reforms and Policy Developments

9.1 Overall national education strategy and key objectives

In October 2012, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Strategy for the Development of Education in Serbia by 2020. This comprehensive document covers all goals, objectives and mechanisms of education system reforms on all levels of education in Serbia. The Strategy was created in compliance with a holistic and open approach to education and its development.

The most important goals of the Strategy are:

- Increasing the quality of educational processes and outcomes to the maximum attainable level;
- Increasing the population coverage at all education levels;
- Achieving and maintaining the relevance of education and conforming the education system structure to the needs of individuals, and to those of the economic, social, cultural, research, education, public, administrative and other systems;
- Increasing the overall effectiveness in the use of education resources.

The Strategy focuses on the following education sections:

- Social care for children and early childhood education and care;
- Primary education;
- General and art secondary education;
- Vocational secondary education;
- Bachelor and Master academic studies;
- Doctoral studies;
- Applied studies;
- Teacher education;
- Adult education.

In order to achieve the education goals, specific strategic policies, activities and measures are defined separately for each level of the education system.

Since the adoption of the Strategy in November 2012, a number of activities proposed by the Strategy have been realized. The main legislative change was in 2013, when Amendments to the Law on the Education System Foundations were adopted. This allowed for the approval of new procedures and other legal documents, such as the following: Law on Primary Education, Law on Secondary Education; Law on Adult Education; Amendments to the Law on Higher Education; Standards of Achievement in Primary Education; Standards of Textbook Quality; Bylaw on Pupil Assessment in Primary Education; Proposal of the New Concept of Final Examinations in Secondary Education; Amended Instructions for Final

Examination Procedures; National Qualifications Framework in Serbia – National Qualifications System Levels I–V; and others.

In line with the Strategy, the new Action plan was adopted in February 2015 with a view to accomplishing the goals set in the Strategy

9.2 Overview of the education reform process and drivers

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development is the main body in charge of managing all education-related activities, as well as one of the main drivers in the education reform process.

The Ministry participates in the creation of the Serbian Government's policies by preparing draft bills, other legal acts and proposals for the development strategies and activities to the Government ; it initiates the reforms and new legal acts and participates and contributes to the designing of new bills in the field of education; it prepares and issues legal acts such as bylaws (regulations), instructions and legal orders; it oversees and evaluates the status of the current education system, determines its consequences and acts in line with them or proposes reforms to the Government.

The Government is responsible for final preparation and proposal of new bills, while the National Assembly approves the bills so they can come into force. Individual national deputies or groups of deputies may also propose the new bills to the Assembly. It also supervises the work of the Ministry. The main consultative bodies of the Ministry are the National Education Council and the National Education Council for Higher Education.

9.3 National Reforms in Higher Education

9.3.1 2016

The new **Strategy on Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2016 to 2020** was adopted by the Government. The Strategy, among other goals, aims to increase the quality of PhD programmes through 1) improving the higher education financing model, 2) supporting quality and outcomes of higher education and effectiveness of researches conducted at HEIs, 3) promoting internationalization and mobility for young researchers – students and teaching staff, 4) inclusion of the best Master and PhD graduates in research projects and encouraging the return of students who graduated at foreign HEIs, and 5) supporting and financing research projects coordinated by young researchers. The corresponding Action plan is expected during 2016.

9.3.2 2015

- ENIC/NARIC Serbia (European Network of Information Centres in the European Region/ National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union) has been established in 2015. This body regulates the procedures for recognition of diplomas acquired abroad, for purposes of employment. The establishment of ENIC/NARIC represents a significant step for Serbia, as it facilitates student mobility and international cooperation in the area of higher education. Recognition of diplomas for purposes of continuing education is decided upon by the higher institutions in question.
- Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020 defines the individual activities determined by Strategy objectives and priorities, develops

procedures for implementation, timelines, key stakeholders and facilitators, monitoring instruments and progress indicators, as well as reporting procedures and assessment methods of the effects of planned strategic measures.

9.3.3 2014

- The cooperation agreement in the field of higher education was signed between the Republic of Serbia and the Holy See. This agreement will ensure collaboration with catholic universities across Europe and will allow Serbian student to use libraries founded by the Holy See.
- The Amendments to the Law on Higher Education were adopted.

10 Legislation

- Law On Higher Education in the Republic of Serbia, *Закон о високом образовању Србије*
(<http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/%D0%97%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD-%D0%BE-%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%81%D0%BE%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BC-%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%9A%D1%831.pdf>)
- Law on Amendments to the Law on Higher Education (<http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Zakon-izmene-i-dopune-visoko-2014.pdf>)
- Strategy for Development of Education in Serbia by 2020 (http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/strategija_obrazovanja_do_2020.pdf)
- Action plan for realization of the Strategy for Development of Education in Serbia by 2020 (http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Akcioni_plan.pdf)
- Career Guidance and Counselling Strategy (http://www.nsz.gov.rs/live/digitalAssets/1/1336_skvis_strategijakarijernog.pdf)
- Bylaw on Standards and Procedures of External Quality Assurance in Higher Education (<http://www.kapk.org/images/stories/pravilnici/Pravilnik%20o%20standardima%20i%20postupku%20za%20spoljasnju%20proveru%20kvaliteta.pdf>)
- Bylaw on Standards and Procedures of Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Academic Programmes (http://www.kapk.org/images/stories/pravilnici/pravilnik_o_standardima.pdf)
- Bylaw on Textbook Quality Standards (http://www.zuov.gov.rs/dokumenta/propis-206-Pravilnik-standardi_kvaliteta_udzbenika.pdf)
- Bylaw on Teachers and Education Staff Licensing (<http://www.kapk.org/images/stories/pravilnici/Standardi%20i%20dopune%20standarda%20za%20akreditaciju%20ustanove.pdf>)
- Bylaw on Continuing Professional Development of Teachers and Education Staff (<http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Pravilnik-o-strucnom-usavrsavanju-nastavnika...-novi-pravilnikdoc.doc>)
- Standards and the Amendments of the Standards for Accreditation of a Higher Education Institution (http://www.kapk.org/images/stories/pravilnici/Standardi_i_dopune_standarda_za_akreditaciju_ustanove.pdf)

HOW TO OBTAIN EU PUBLICATIONS

Free publications:

- one copy:
via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>);
- more than one copy or posters/maps:
from the European Union's representations (http://ec.europa.eu/represent_en.htm);
from the delegations in non-EU countries (http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/index_en.htm);
by contacting the Europe Direct service (http://europa.eu/europedirect/index_en.htm) or
calling 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (freephone number from anywhere in the EU) (*).

(*) The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

Priced publications:

- via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>).

Priced subscriptions:

- via one of the sales agents of the Publications Office of the European Union (http://publications.europa.eu/others/agents/index_en.htm).

Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency

Erasmus+ : Higher Education - International Capacity Building (CBHE)

Write to us:

Erasmus +
Rue Joseph II, 59 (J-59 04/33)
B-1000 Brussels
Belgium

Visit us:

Rue Joseph II, 59
B-1000 Brussels
Belgium

Fax: +(32 2) 299 4530**Website:**http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/library_en**General questions about CBHE:**EACEA-EPLUS-CBHE@ec.europa.eu