



March 2026 – Newsletter 1

Strengthening EQF Level 5 in the Western Balkans

Project Launch

The *EDU5WB Empowering VET Education at Level 5 in the Western Balkans* project, funded by Erasmus+ CBVET, officially started on 1 January 2026. This project brings together partners from across Europe and the Western Balkans to enhance the quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training (VET) by developing EQF Level 5 qualifications. The project focuses on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Albania, addressing a gap in the development of Level 5 qualifications while promoting career advancement and further learning opportunities for learners in the region.

EQF Level 5 qualifications play a dual role: they provide advanced technical and managerial skills for the labour market, and they open pathways to higher education. By combining employability with progression opportunities, these qualifications are becoming increasingly important, and EDU5WB aims to support their effective implementation in the Western Balkans, with a particular emphasis on the tourism sector and its green and digital transition.

Kick-off Meeting in Zagreb

The project began with a partner meeting in Zagreb, bringing together all participating organizations to exchange knowledge and set the foundations for collaborative work. Partners presented the current status of Level 5 qualifications in their countries and discussed challenges and opportunities for further development. During the meeting, partners also discussed the approach for conducting national analyses to map existing Level 5 qualifications in each country. This includes organizing focus groups with employers and VET experts to better understand current gaps, local needs, and opportunities for alignment with labour market and educational requirements.

Project Approach

EDU5WB combines capacity building for VET teachers and experts with the development of tangible deliverables that prepare national systems for the adoption and growth of Level 5 qualifications. The project emphasizes international collaboration, encouraging partners to explore innovative learning pathways, share expertise, and develop solutions that can be embedded in national education systems.

By focusing on the tourism sector, EDU5WB integrates green and digital skills, preparing learners for the evolving demands of the labour market. This sector-specific approach



also allows the project to produce models and methods that can inspire other VET sectors in partner countries.

Expected Impact

The EDU5WB project is expected to have wide-reaching benefits. These include:

- Strengthening VET systems and raising the quality of education in the Western Balkans
- Enhancing employability and career progression for learners
- Supporting sustainable and digital transformation in the tourism sector
- Fostering regional cooperation and alignment with EU best practices

Through its activities, EDU5WB aims to create lasting improvements in vocational education and training, contributing to a stronger, more resilient, and internationally connected VET landscape in the region.

Stay Informed

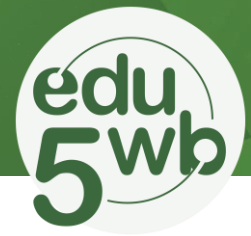
Updates on the project's activities, results, and upcoming events will be shared regularly. For more information, check our official [Facebook page](#).



Do you train or employ people in the tourism sector? Are you interested in skills development and improving workforce competences? Would you like to stay informed or get involved in project activities? Get in touch with us



Co-funded by
the European Union



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