

Expert support for employer engagement and reform for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office



Young people are vital to any economy. Ensuring they have the skills that employers need will help their job prospects and help them to engage with the wider society.

Background

Developing vocational education and training systems that improve young people's prospects is complex in one country alone. In the Western Balkans, made up of several countries and regions that have had a difficult past, it is especially challenging.

Industry and education experts realised that their educational institutions needed to work closer with employers, so that the skills they teach match business' needs. Bringing together governments, stakeholders, providers and employers will make sure that everyone understands the problem and can collectively work on the solution.

People 1st skills

Working for the British Council via the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, our task was to deliver a framework for employer engagement and the reform of vocational education and training systems.

We organised a conference and active workshops for six of the countries and regions involved and developed a business plan for each so that businesses, education, stakeholders and governments could work collaboratively on the solutions required.

Working with the key partners, we also delivered a four-day leadership excellence course in the UK for head teachers and employers from the Western Balkans. The course helped candidates to understand the need for competence-based training, job shadowing and engaging with each other so that they can ensure that vocational training meets industry needs.

Outcomes and impact

After spending time in UK colleges, the heads of school acknowledged the need for a Balkans-wide programme to support leadership development, professional development for teachers and curriculum reform. This included developing quality assurance processes, providing flexible training based on national qualifications, better practical experience and the opportunity for international exchange programmes.

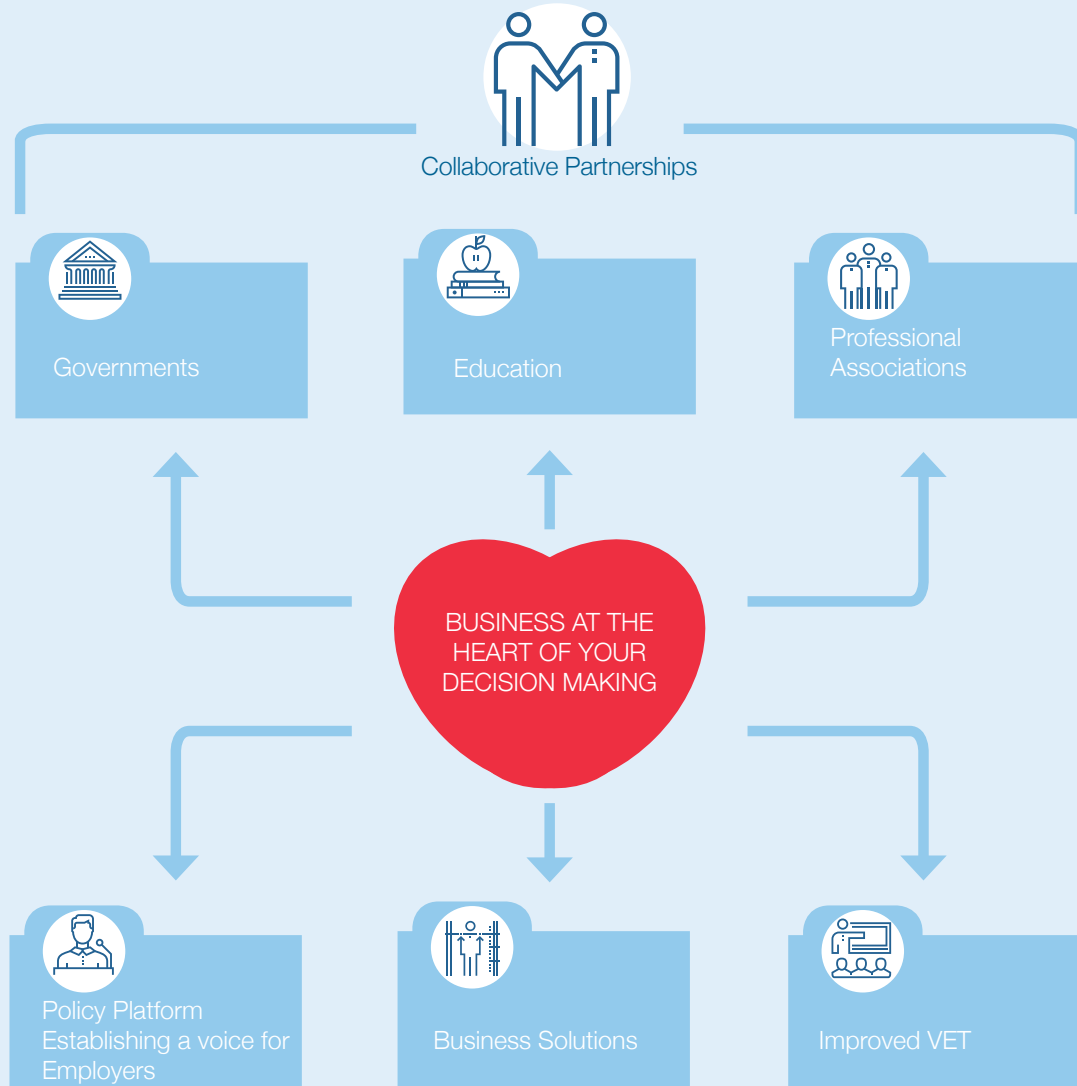
The senior country and regional British Council team have agreed eighteen different projects the programme has unfolded. This offers a real opportunity to kick-start a process of reform, improve the quality of learning and outcomes from vocational schools and help drive business and tourism development across the region.

Western Balkans Region

Client:
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

“With the help and expertise of People 1st, we have now identified a range of projects to take forward. The reform process is underway across the region and we can see very encouraging results. Managing such a diverse group has its challenges but People 1st have contributed a great deal of experience and hands on knowledge in order for solutions to be developed.”

Aleksandar Borisavljevic
Business Development Manager,
British Council, Serbia



About People 1st

People 1st delivers consultancy that enables its clients to retain staff, increase productivity and create and implement effective people strategies. We are an impartial, trusted and effective strategic partner to our clients, working primarily across the hospitality, travel, tourism, passenger transport and retail industries. From apprenticeship consultancy to occupational standards development, world-renowned WorldHost customer service training, ‘train the trainer’ programmes, labour market intelligence and insights and talent management support, we are passionate about transforming skills and development both internationally and across the UK’s visitor economy.

For more than 50 years, we have been working to help businesses to become more competitive, attract and retain people in the sector, and challenge perceptions of the visitor economy sector as low-skilled and lacking career prospects.

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