

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.

Our solutions

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

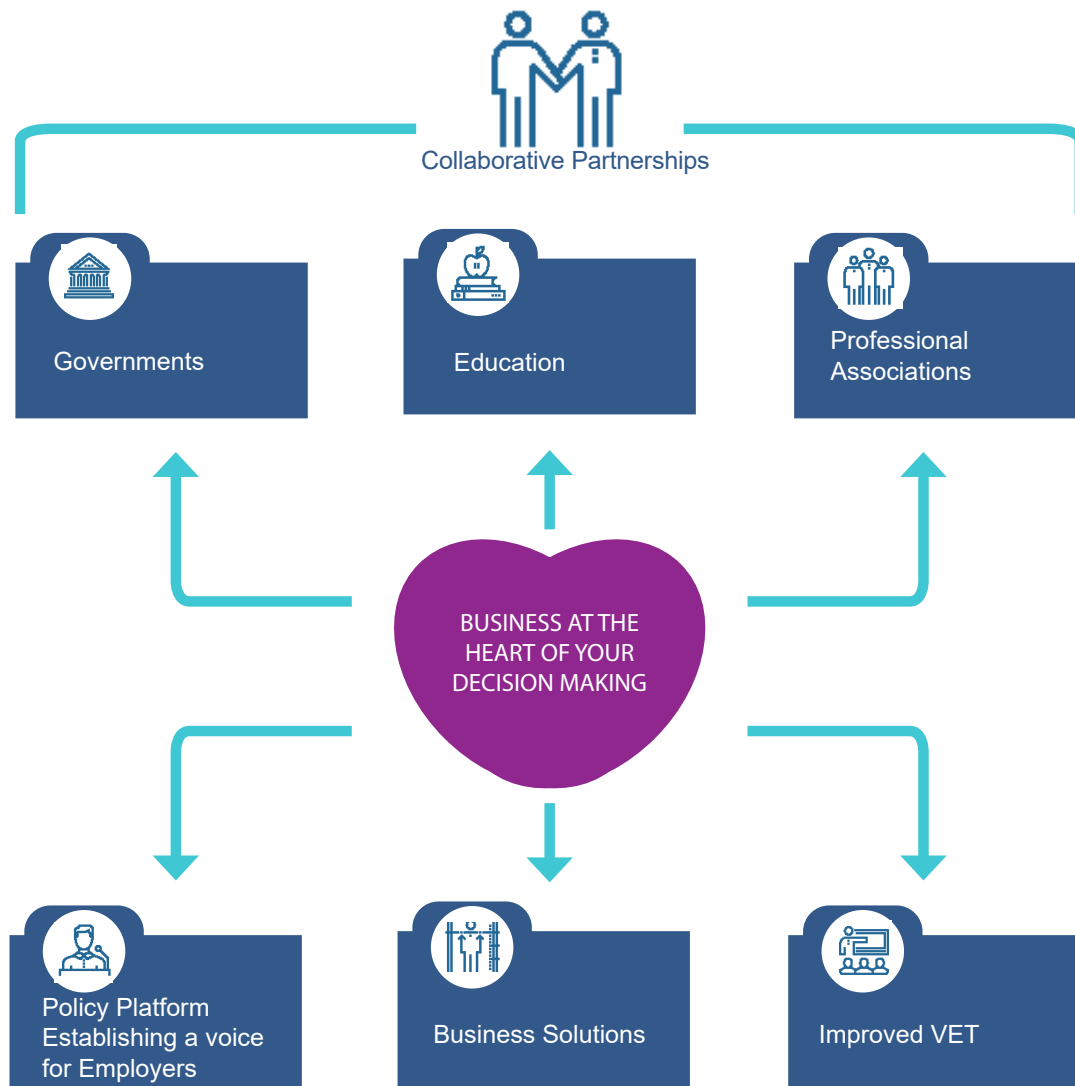
Client:
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

“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 it's 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



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About People 1st International

People 1st International is an employer-led skills and quality assurance expert. We develop and quality assure industry relevant skills solutions in the UK and internationally across apprenticeships, work-based learning and technical vocational education, as well as providing a consultancy service internationally to support countries in developing sustainable skills models.

Our employer-led approach gives us an unparalleled insight into the skills priorities now and in the future, with critical industry partnership collaborations that bridge the gap between employers and government.

People 1st
International
Vertigo
Cheese Lane
Bristol, BS2 0JJ
United Kingdom

 www.people1st.co.uk
 info@people1st.co.uk
 [@p1stgroup](https://twitter.com/p1stgroup)
 People 1st

People **1st**
International