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Career Guidance Strategy

Secondary Vocational School-Pljevlja

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Career Guidance Strategy of Secondary Vocational School - Pljevlja 2026-2030

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Country:	**Montenegro**
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Executive Summary

The Career Guidance Strategy of the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja has been developed to establish a comprehensive, inclusive and sustainable system of career guidance that supports learners in making informed educational, training and career decisions. The strategy is aligned with the priorities of vocational education and training in Montenegro, labour market developments and European lifelong guidance principles, while also building on the experience gained through participation in the CG-International Project.

The analysis conducted during the preparation of the strategy identified several institutional challenges. Although the school provides various forms of learner support, career guidance activities have largely been implemented through separate initiatives rather than through a coordinated institutional system. Additional needs were identified in the areas of systematic career planning, graduate tracking, wider use of digital guidance tools, stronger employer engagement and continuous professional development of staff involved in career guidance.

The vision of the strategy is that all learners of the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja have access to accessible, inclusive and high-quality career guidance services that support successful transitions to employment, further education and lifelong learning.

To achieve this vision, the school has defined five strategic priorities:

1. Establish a comprehensive and sustainable institutional career guidance system.
2. Integrate career learning into the curriculum and school life.
3. Strengthen cooperation with employers, higher education institutions and labour market stakeholders.
4. Improve learners' employability, entrepreneurial, digital and career management skills.
5. Strengthen staff competencies and ensure continuous quality improvement.

The main actions planned over the five-year period include the appointment of a Career Guidance Coordinator, establishment of a Career Guidance Team, development of annual action plans, implementation of individual and group guidance activities, expansion of cooperation with employers, organisation of career events, strengthening work-based learning, introduction of digital guidance tools and the establishment of a graduate tracking system.

The implementation of this strategy is expected to improve learner support, increase participation in career guidance activities, strengthen links between education and the labour market, enhance employability and support successful transitions to employment or further education. It is also

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expected to contribute to greater learner motivation, improved career management skills and stronger partnerships with employers and community stakeholders.

The Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja is committed to ensuring the long-term sustainability of career guidance services by integrating them into annual school planning, assigning clear responsibilities to staff, maintaining strategic partnerships and continuously investing in professional development and quality improvement. Through this approach, career guidance will become an integral and permanent part of the school's educational mission and institutional development

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1. Introduction

This Career Guidance Strategy has been developed for the **Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja (Srednja stručna škola Pljevlja), Montenegro**, as part of the institution's commitment to strengthening career guidance services and improving the quality of vocational education and training (VET). The strategy establishes a long-term framework for supporting learners in making informed decisions about their education, careers and lifelong professional development.

The development of this strategy is closely connected with the school's participation in the **CG-International Project**, which aims to strengthen career guidance systems through international cooperation, exchange of good practices and capacity building. Participation in the project has enabled the school to enhance staff competencies, introduce innovative guidance approaches and align its services with European principles of lifelong guidance and learner-centered education.

Career guidance is an essential component of vocational education because it helps learners understand their interests, strengths and career opportunities while developing the knowledge, skills and competencies required for successful employment or further education. As labour markets continue to evolve due to digitalisation, technological innovation and the transition towards green and sustainable economies, learners require continuous support in planning their educational and professional pathways.

For the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja, career guidance represents an important mechanism for improving learner motivation, increasing employability, supporting successful school-to-work transitions and reducing the risk of early school leaving. It also strengthens cooperation between the school, employers, higher education institutions and the local community, ensuring that vocational education remains relevant to labour market needs.

The school recognizes career guidance as an integral part of its quality assurance system and institutional development. Through this strategy, the institution confirms its commitment to continuously improving learner support services, promoting equal opportunities and ensuring that every learner has access to high-quality, inclusive and sustainable career guidance throughout their education.

This Career Guidance Strategy is an integral part of the broader Institutional Development Plan of the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja and directly contributes to its quality assurance and continuous improvement objectives. By establishing a more systematic, inclusive and learner-centred career guidance system, the strategy supports the school in improving the quality of teaching and learning, strengthening learner support, increasing employability and enhancing cooperation with employers and the wider community. The implementation of the strategy will be monitored through clearly defined indicators, learner and stakeholder feedback, self-evaluation and regular review processes. The results of monitoring and evaluation will be

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used to identify areas for further improvement and to inform future institutional planning. In this way, career guidance will not be treated as a separate or temporary activity, but as a sustainable component of the school's overall quality culture and long-term institutional development.

1.1 Institutional Profile

The Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja is a public secondary vocational education and training (VET) institution located in the Municipality of Pljevlja, Montenegro. The school provides vocational and general secondary education programmes designed to prepare learners for employment, further education and lifelong learning.
The school educates approximately **660 learners**, offering programmes that combine theoretical knowledge with practical training and work-based learning in cooperation with local employers. Its educational approach promotes the development of professional competencies, entrepreneurial skills, digital literacy and responsible citizenship.

The school offers vocational education programmes in several occupational fields, including:

- Mechanical Engineering and Metal Processing;
- Electrical Engineering;
- Economics, Business Administration and Trade;
- Hospitality and Tourism;
- Transport and Logistics;
- Health and Beauty
- IT

The institution primarily serves:

- Students enrolled in upper secondary vocational education;
- Learners preparing for direct entry into the labour market;
- Learners intending to continue their studies at higher education institutions;
- Learners requiring additional educational support, including those with special educational needs;
- Gifted and talented learners
- Adults who wants to change their profession

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The school provides a comprehensive range of learner support services, including

- Pedagogical and psychological support;
- Individual counselling
- Educational and vocational counselling;
- Individual support for learners with special educational needs;
- Information sessions on higher education and employment opportunities

The Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja has established strong partnerships with numerous external stakeholders that support learners' career development. These include local employers, companies providing practical training placements, Coal of Mine and Thermal station, the Employment Agency of Montenegro, Municipality of Pljevlja, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, higher education institutions and international partners participating in Erasmus+ and other European cooperation projects. These partnerships strengthen work-based learning, improve career guidance services and facilitate successful transitions from education to employment or further studies.
The school is committed to continuously improving the quality of its educational provision through innovation, international cooperation, strong stakeholder engagement and the systematic development of career guidance services that respond to the needs of learners and the changing labour market.

2. Strategic Context and Needs Analysis

Policy Context

The Career Guidance Strategy of the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja has been developed in accordance with the strategic priorities of Montenegro for vocational education and training, lifelong learning and youth employment. The strategy supports the objectives of the VET Development Strategy, the Education Reform Agenda, and national policies aimed at improving the quality, relevance and attractiveness of vocational education.
The strategy also reflects Montenegro's commitment to increasing youth employability by strengthening cooperation between education providers and the labour market. Career guidance is recognized as an important mechanism for supporting young people in making informed educational and career decisions, reducing skills mismatches and facilitating successful transitions from school to employment or further education.
Special attention is given to the principles of inclusive education, ensuring equal access to guidance services for all learners, including students with disabilities, learners from

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disadvantaged backgrounds and those requiring additional educational support. The strategy promotes equal opportunities, social inclusion and respect for diversity in accordance with national legislation and European education policies.
Furthermore, the strategy contributes to the development of lifelong learning competencies by encouraging learners to develop career management skills, adaptability, entrepreneurial thinking and continuous professional development throughout their working lives.

Labour Market Context

The Municipality of Pljevlja is undergoing significant economic transformation. While the local economy has traditionally been based on mining and energy production, increasing attention is being given to economic diversification, digitalisation, environmental sustainability and the development of new business sectors.
Local employers continue to report a demand for well-qualified vocational graduates with practical skills, work experience, digital competencies, communication skills, teamwork and problem-solving abilities. Employers increasingly value graduates who demonstrate flexibility, responsibility and a willingness to continue learning throughout their careers.

There is a growing need for skilled professionals in sectors such as:

- Mechanical Engineering;
- Electrical Engineering;
- Construction;
- Information and Communication Technologies;
- Hospitality and Tourism;
- Transport and Logistics;
- Green technologies and energy efficiency;
- Entrepreneurship and small business development.

These labour market developments highlight the importance of providing learners with accurate labour market information, practical workplace experiences and career guidance services that prepare them for emerging employment opportunities.

Implications for Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja

Labour market developments have a direct influence on the further development of the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja. Changes in the local and wider labour market, including

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technological development, the green transition, digitalisation, demographic changes and the need for new technical and transversal skills, should be reflected in the school's educational programmes and career guidance activities.

School programmes- The school should continue to strengthen and modernise existing vocational programmes, particularly in mechanical engineering, metal processing, electrical engineering, transport and other technical fields, by incorporating relevant digital, green, entrepreneurial and transferable skills. Modular curricula provide an appropriate basis for adapting learning content to changing labour market needs and for increasing the practical and competence-based orientation of VET.

Career Guidance priorities- Labour market trends should become an integral part of career guidance. Learners need timely and understandable information about employment opportunities, skills in demand, further education pathways and emerging occupations. Career guidance should therefore place greater emphasis on labour market information, career planning, employability skills, entrepreneurship, digital competences and informed decision-making, while also supporting learners in identifying opportunities beyond traditional local employment sectors.

Employer cooperation- Stronger and more systematic cooperation with employers is essential for ensuring that school provision remains relevant to labour market needs. The school should further develop partnerships with local companies and public enterprises, including those involved in technical, industrial, energy and other relevant sectors, through practical training, workplace learning, company visits, guest lectures, career events and consultations on curriculum development. Such cooperation will provide the school with regular feedback on required competences and help learners gain realistic insights into the world of work.

Overall, the labour market analysis confirms that the school's strategic priorities should focus on **responsive VET provision, systematic career guidance and stronger links with employers**. In this way, labour market evidence can be translated into concrete actions within the school's institutional development and quality assurance processes.

Labour Market Needs and the School's Vocational Programmes

Labour market developments have a direct influence on the relevance and orientation of the vocational programmes offered by the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja. The school provides education across several vocational fields, and each sector requires continuous adaptation to changes in technology, employer expectations, occupational profiles and

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employment opportunities. Career Guidance therefore needs to reflect the specific characteristics of each vocational field and provide learners with relevant information about employment, further education and skills development.

Mechanical Engineering and Metal Processing are particularly relevant to the industrial and technical profile of the local economy. Cooperation with major local employers, including Rudnik uglja Pljevlja and Termoelektrana Pljevlja, provides opportunities for practical learning and exposure to real working environments. Employer demand in these areas increasingly requires technical competence combined with digital skills, precision, problem-solving, occupational safety and the ability to work with modern machinery and technologies. Career Guidance should therefore help learners understand both traditional employment opportunities and emerging technical occupations related to industrial modernisation, maintenance, energy efficiency and technological change.

Electrical Engineering is influenced by the growing importance of automation, digitalisation, energy efficiency and modern electrical systems. Employers increasingly require workers who can combine fundamental electrical knowledge with digital competencies, troubleshooting, safe working practices and the ability to adapt to new technologies. Career guidance in this field should provide learners with information about changing occupational profiles, employment opportunities and possibilities for further technical specialisation.

Economics, Business Administration and Trade are closely connected with developments in the service sector, entrepreneurship, administration and digital business. Employer needs increasingly include digital literacy, communication, customer orientation, financial and administrative skills, foreign-language competence and the ability to use digital business tools. Career Guidance should consequently highlight employment opportunities in local businesses and institutions, as well as opportunities for entrepreneurship, further education and self-employment.

Hospitality and Tourism are strongly influenced by developments in tourism, hospitality services and customer-oriented businesses. Employer expectations include professional service skills, communication, foreign languages, digital competencies, flexibility and intercultural awareness. Career Guidance should help learners understand seasonal and long-term employment opportunities, opportunities for mobility and further training, as well as the importance of transferable skills for employment in the wider tourism and service sector.

Transport and Logistics responds to the needs of businesses and institutions for the movement of people, goods and services. Changes in logistics, digital transport systems and operational requirements increase the importance of organisational skills, digital competence, safety,

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responsibility and adaptability. Career Guidance should connect learners with information about relevant occupations, practical training opportunities and further qualifications within the transport and logistics sector.

Health and Beauty is influenced by continuing demand for personal, health-related and customer-oriented services. In addition to professional technical skills, employers increasingly value communication, hygiene and safety standards, responsibility, customer care and continuous professional development. Career Guidance should support learners in understanding local employment possibilities as well as opportunities for further specialisation and lifelong learning.

Information Technology is directly affected by rapid digital transformation across all sectors of the economy. Demand for digital competences extends beyond specialised IT occupations and increasingly affects almost every workplace. Learners therefore need opportunities to develop problem-solving, digital communication, information management, cybersecurity awareness and other transferable digital skills, while Career Guidance should provide information about emerging occupations, further education and employment pathways in the digital economy.

Across all vocational sectors, employers increasingly value not only occupation-specific knowledge but also transversal competences such as communication, teamwork, adaptability, problem-solving, digital literacy, entrepreneurship and career management skills. This reinforces the need for the school to integrate labour market information into Career Guidance, practical training, work-based learning and classroom activities.

The analysis therefore provides a direct link between **labour market developments, the school's vocational provision and Career Guidance priorities**. Employer feedback and information on changing skills needs should be used to inform career activities, practical training, cooperation with companies, professional development of staff and, where appropriate, the further development and modernisation of vocational programmes. This approach will help ensure that learners make informed career decisions and that the school's vocational provision remains responsive to the needs of the local and wider labour market.

Institutional Needs

The self-assessment carried out by the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja identified several areas where career guidance services can be further strengthened.
Although the school already provides individual counselling, pedagogical support and practical training opportunities, career guidance activities are often implemented through separate initiatives rather than as part of a coordinated institutional system. There is a need to establish a

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more structured and sustainable approach that integrates career guidance throughout the learner's educational pathway.

The analysis also identified several transition challenges. Many learners require additional support when selecting vocational pathways, preparing for employment, applying to higher education institutions and developing career management competencies. Access to up-to-date labour market information and systematic career planning activities should be further improved.

Staff development represents another important priority. Teachers, school counsellors and management require continuous professional development in modern career guidance methodologies, labour market intelligence, digital guidance tools, counselling techniques and cooperation with employers.

The implementation of this strategy will address these identified needs by establishing a comprehensive, learner-centred career guidance system that supports educational success, employability and lifelong learning.

3. Methodology for Strategy Development

The Career Guidance Strategy was developed through a participatory process involving school management, teachers, learners and external stakeholders. The objective was to ensure that the strategy reflects both institutional priorities and the needs of learners, employers and the wider community.

Internal Preparation

The preparation process began with a comprehensive self-assessment of the existing career guidance system, identifying current strengths, challenges and opportunities for improvement.

A series of management meetings was organised to define strategic priorities, allocate responsibilities and establish long-term development objectives. Teachers participated in workshops focused on analysing existing practices, identifying professional development needs and proposing new guidance activities.

Student feedback was collected through questionnaires, discussions and school activities, providing valuable insight into learners' expectations regarding career information, counselling services and transition support.

The strategy also draws upon the review of internal documentation, including school development plans, self-evaluation reports, learner achievement data, transition statistics and previous career guidance activities.

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External Consultation

The school consulted some of external stakeholders during the preparation of the strategy. Discussions were held with local employers, representatives of the Employment Agency of Montenegro, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation and former students (alumni).
These consultations provided valuable information about labour market developments, employers' expectations, skills shortages, opportunities for work-based learning and the competencies required for successful employment.
The involvement of external stakeholders also strengthened partnerships that will support the implementation of career guidance activities in the future.

Learning from the CG-International Project

The Career Guidance Strategy has been significantly strengthened through the school's participation in the **CG-International Project**, particularly through study visits to **Finland** and **the Netherlands**.
During these visits, participants explored examples of high-quality career guidance systems integrated into vocational education institutions. Particular attention was given to:

- comprehensive school career guidance systems;
- learner-centered counselling methods;
- employer engagement and work-based learning models;
- inclusive guidance approaches for diverse learner groups;
- coordinated learner support services;
- strategic planning, quality assurance and continuous improvement mechanisms.

The knowledge and experience gained during the study visits have been carefully adapted to the context of the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja. While taking into account the Montenegrin education system and local labour market conditions, the school has incorporated international good practices into this strategy by strengthening cooperation with employers, promoting early career planning, improving guidance coordination, expanding learner support services and introducing a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating career guidance outcomes.
This combination of international experience and local adaptation provides a solid foundation for the sustainable development of career guidance services that meet both the needs of learners and the priorities of vocational education in Montenegro.

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4. Institutional Analysis

4.1 Current Career Guidance Situation

Area	Current Situation
Individual counselling	Individual career guidance is provided by the school pedagogue, psychologist and class teachers. Learners receive support in choosing educational pathways, preparing for employment and addressing personal or academic challenges that may affect career decisions.
Group guidance sessions	Career guidance topics are delivered through class community lessons, workshops, career presentations, project activities and information sessions organised throughout the school year. However, these activities are not yet implemented according to a unified annual career guidance programme.
Career information services	Learners receive information on upper education opportunities, occupations, labour market trends and employment possibilities through school activities, guest lectures, promotional events, career fairs and online resources. Further development of digital career information services is planned.
Internship / placement support	The school has established practical training programmes in cooperation with local employers. Teachers coordinate workplace learning and monitor learners during internships. Continuous expansion of employer networks remains a priority.
Employer cooperation	The school maintains good cooperation with companies, public institutions and local businesses that support practical training, workplace visits, guest lectures and employment opportunities. Employer involvement in career guidance activities will be further strengthened.
Graduate transition support	Learners receive guidance regarding further education and employment opportunities. Career counselling is primarily provided during the final year of study. A more systematic graduate tracking system will be developed to monitor learner transitions after graduation.
Inclusion support	Learners with special educational needs receive individualised educational support in cooperation with teachers, parents, professional associates and external support services. Career guidance principles are applied in accordance with inclusive education practices.
Digital guidance tools	The school uses digital platforms for communication and learning, while career guidance increasingly incorporates online resources, presentations and digital information materials. There is a need to introduce specialised digital career guidance tools and online career planning resources.

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The Institutional Analysis shows that Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja already has a number of important elements of career guidance in place, including individual and group counselling, support from teachers, the pedagogue and psychologist, practical training and cooperation with employers, career-related activities, and support for learners' transition to further education and employment. At the same time, the analysis identifies several areas that require further development, particularly the need for a more coordinated and systematic career guidance system, stronger integration of career learning across school activities, more systematic use of labour market information, improved digital career guidance tools, regular tracking of graduates, and continued professional development of staff. These findings provide the direct basis for the strategic priorities defined in this Strategy. Consequently, the Strategy focuses on establishing a sustainable institutional career guidance system, integrating career guidance into teaching and learner support, strengthening cooperation with employers and other labour market stakeholders, improving learners' employability and career management skills, and strengthening staff competencies and quality assurance mechanisms. In this way, the strategic priorities are directly derived from the school's current situation, identified needs and existing strengths, ensuring that the Strategy is realistic, needs-based and aligned with the school's wider institutional development objectives.

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4.2 SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Experienced and committed teaching staff. • Strong cooperation with local employers providing practical training. • Good relationships with learners and parents. • Participation in Erasmus+ and international projects. • Inclusive educational environment and learner support services. • Management committed to continuous quality improvement.	• Career guidance activities are not yet fully coordinated within a single institutional framework. • Limited use of specialised digital career guidance platforms and assessment tools. • Graduate destination tracking is not systematically implemented. • Career guidance activities are concentrated mainly in the final years of schooling. • Staff require additional training in modern career guidance methodologies and labour market intelligence. • Limited financial resources for expanding career guidance services.

Opportunities	Threats
• Strengthening cooperation with employers and higher education institutions • Using Erasmus+, CG-International and other international projects for further development • Expanding digital career guidance services and online counselling. • Developing graduate tracking and alumni networks • Increasing participation of employers in curriculum development and career education	• Labour market changes and uncertainty in traditional economic sectors • Outmigration of young people from northern Montenegro • Rapid technological changes requiring continuous curriculum adaptation • Limited employment opportunities in the local community for certain occupations • Financial constraints affecting investment in guidance services and equipment • Demographic decline and decreasing student enrolment

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The SWOT Analysis provides a clear basis for defining the strategic direction of Career Guidance at Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja. The identified weaknesses, particularly the lack of a fully coordinated institutional career guidance system, limited use of specialised digital guidance tools, the absence of systematic graduate tracking, and the need for further staff development, highlight the areas where institutional capacity needs to be strengthened. At the same time, the identified opportunities, including stronger cooperation with employers and higher education institutions, the use of digital technologies, participation in international projects, engagement of alumni, and closer links with labour market needs, provide important possibilities for further development. These findings have directly informed the selection of the strategic objectives. The objectives therefore focus on establishing a comprehensive and sustainable career guidance system, integrating career learning into teaching and school life, strengthening cooperation with employers and other stakeholders, improving learners' employability, entrepreneurship, digital and career management skills, and strengthening staff competencies and quality assurance. In this way, the strategic objectives build on the school's existing strengths while addressing identified weaknesses and making systematic use of available opportunities.

The SWOT Analysis indicates that Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja has a strong foundation for further development of its Career Guidance system. Key institutional strengths include experienced and committed staff, established cooperation with local employers and public

enterprises, positive relationships with learners and parents, experience in international cooperation, and management commitment to improving the quality of learner support. These strengths should be further developed and used as a basis for a more coordinated and sustainable career guidance approach. At the same time, several weaknesses require priority attention, particularly the fact that career guidance is not yet fully coordinated at institutional level, the limited use of specialised digital guidance tools, the lack of systematic graduate tracking, the concentration of some activities in the final years of schooling, and the need for continued professional development of staff. Important opportunities include expanding cooperation with employers and higher education institutions, using digital technologies and labour market information more effectively, involving alumni, and using international projects to introduce and exchange good practices. Implementation should also take into account threats such as changing labour market demands, youth outmigration, rapid technological change, limited employment opportunities in some occupational areas, demographic trends and resource constraints.

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4.3. Key challenges

Based on the labour market analysis, institutional analysis and SWOT findings, the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja faces several key challenges that need to be addressed in order to further strengthen the quality and effectiveness of Career Guidance.

1. Establishing a more coordinated institutional Career Guidance system.
Although career guidance activities are already provided through counselling, workshops, practical training and learner support, they are not yet fully integrated into a single, coordinated institutional framework. Clear roles, responsibilities, annual planning and monitoring mechanisms need to be further strengthened.

2. Strengthening the connection between Career Guidance and labour market needs.
Learners need more systematic access to up-to-date information about employment opportunities, skills in demand, emerging occupations and further education pathways. Labour market information should become a more consistent component of career learning and individual career planning**.**

3. Developing digital and career management competences.
The increasing importance of digitalisation and changing working environments requires learners to develop stronger digital, transferable and career management skills. The school also needs to expand the use of appropriate digital tools and resources for career guidance.

4. Strengthening employer and stakeholder engagement.
Existing cooperation with local employers and public enterprises provides a strong foundation, but there is scope to make partnerships more systematic and to involve employers more actively in practical training, career events, workplace learning, curriculum development and feedback on required competences.

5. Improving monitoring of learner transitions and outcomes.
The school needs to further develop mechanisms for tracking graduates' transitions into employment, further education or other pathways. Reliable information on graduate destinations would support evidence-based planning, evaluation of career guidance services and continuous quality improvement.

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5. Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives

5.1 Vision Statement

To be a school where every learner is empowered to make informed career choices, develop their potential and successfully build their future.

5.2 Mission Statement

The Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja provides accessible, inclusive and learner-centred Career Guidance through professional counselling, career learning, labour market information, cooperation with employers and other stakeholders, work-based learning, digital tools and continuous staff development. The school is committed to supporting learners in developing the knowledge, skills and confidence needed for further education, employment and lifelong learning.

5.3 Strategic Objectives

Objective 1
Establish a comprehensive and sustainable institutional career guidance system that integrates career guidance into all stages of vocational education and ensures equal access for every learner.
Objective 2
Strengthen cooperation with employers, higher education institutions and labour market stakeholders in order to improve work-based learning, career exploration and successful school-to-work transitions.
Objective 3
Develop learners' career management, employability, entrepreneurial and digital competencies through career education, counselling activities, practical experiences and lifelong learning opportunities.
Objective 4
Strengthen the professional capacities of teachers, school counsellors and management by providing continuous professional development in career guidance, counselling methodologies, labour market intelligence and digital guidance tools.
Objective 5
Introduce a quality assurance and monitoring system for career guidance services through regular evaluation, learner feedback, graduate tracking and continuous improvement based on evidence and stakeholder involvement.

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6. Career Guidance Service Model

The Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja will provide a comprehensive, learner-centered career guidance service that supports students throughout their educational journey—from enrolment to successful transition into employment or higher education. Career guidance will be integrated into the school's educational process and delivered through cooperation among school management, teachers, professional support staff, employers, higher education institutions and external partners.

The service model is based on the principles of accessibility, inclusion, equal opportunities and lifelong learning. Career guidance services will be available to all learners, while additional individual support will be provided to students who require specialized guidance due to educational, social or personal circumstances.

Career guidance activities will combine individual counselling, group learning, workplace experiences, employer engagement, digital resources and continuous monitoring of learners' progress. Responsibilities for service delivery will be shared among the Career Guidance Coordinator, school management, teachers, the pedagogue, psychologist, internship coordinator and external stakeholders.

6.1 Career Guidance Service Model

Service	***Target Group***	***Delivery Method***	***Frequency***	***Responsible***
Individual career counselling	All learners (priority for final-year students)	Face-to-face individual sessions	Continuous, according to learners' needs	Career Guidance Coordinator, Pedagogue, Psychologist
Group career guidance workshops	First- and second-year learners	Classroom workshops, interactive activities	At least once each semester	Teachers, Career Guidance Team
Career planning and decision-making sessions	Third- and fourth-year learners	Workshops, group discussions, career planning activities	Quarterly	Career Guidance Team

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Career information sessions	All learners	Presentations, career fairs, guest speakers	Several times during the school year	Career Guidance Team, Teachers
CV writing and job interview preparation	Final-year learners	Workshops, simulations, online resources	Twice a year	Teachers, Employers, Career Guidance Coordinator
Internship and work-based learning support	Learners participating in practical training	Workplace mentoring, school visits, employer supervision	Continuous throughout the school year	Internship Coordinator, Employers
Higher education guidance	Final-year learners	Presentations, university visits, counselling sessions	Annually and according to application periods	Career Guidance Coordinator, Universities
Entrepreneurship guidance	Learners interested in entrepreneurship and self-employment	Workshops, project work, business presentations	Once each semester	Entrepreneurship Teachers, External Experts
Employer presentations and career talks	All learners	Company visits, guest lectures, career days	Throughout the school year	Career Guidance Team, Employers
Alumni mentoring programme	Final-year learners	Alumni presentations, mentoring sessions	Twice yearly	Career Guidance Coordinator
Inclusion and transition support	Learners with special educational needs and other vulnerable groups	Individual counselling, cooperation with parents and external services	Continuous	Pedagogue, Psychologist, Support Team

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Digital career guidance services	All learners	School website, online platforms, digital resources, career information portals	Continuous	Career Guidance Team, ICT Coordinator
Labour market information sessions	Third- and fourth-year learners	Presentations, workshops, cooperation with the Employment Agency	Once each semester	Employment Agency, Career Guidance Coordinator
Parent information sessions	Parents/guardians	Parent meetings, presentations, consultations	At least once each school year	School Management, Career Guidance Team

The implementation of this service model will ensure that every learner has access to timely, high-quality and inclusive career guidance throughout their education. The model will strengthen learners' career management skills, improve their readiness for employment or further education, enhance cooperation with employers and community partners, and contribute to the continuous improvement of career guidance services at the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja.

7. Governance, Partnerships and Resources

The successful implementation of the Career Guidance Strategy depends on clear governance structures, strong partnerships and adequate human, financial and material resources. At the Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja, career guidance will be coordinated through a whole-school approach, ensuring that responsibility is shared among school leadership, teachers, professional support staff and external stakeholders.

The school principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of the strategy, while the Management Team oversees planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation. A Career Guidance Coordinator will manage the day-to-day implementation of activities and maintain

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cooperation with employers, higher education institutions, the Employment Agency of Montenegro and other partners.
Career guidance will be integrated into the work of teachers, class teachers, the pedagogue, psychologist and internship coordinator. External stakeholders will actively contribute through workplace learning, career presentations, mentoring, labour market information and career development opportunities.

The Career Guidance Team will coordinate the implementation of the Strategy and ensure that activities are planned, communicated and monitored in a systematic manner. The Team will meet **at least once every two months during the school year**, with additional meetings organised when required. Meetings will be used to review ongoing activities, identify learner and staff needs, coordinate upcoming activities and address implementation challenges. Communication with external partners, including employers, the Employment Agency, higher education institutions and other relevant stakeholders, will be maintained throughout the year through meetings, email communication, consultations, career events and workplace learning activities. **An annual planning meeting** will be organised before the beginning of each school year to define priorities, activities, responsibilities, timelines and required resources in the annual Career Guidance Plan. The Career Guidance Coordinator will maintain records of activities and meetings and will provide **regular updates to school management**, while an annual implementation report will summarise activities, participation, achievements, stakeholder feedback, challenges and recommendations for improvement. The findings of the annual report will be considered during the school's self-evaluation and quality assurance processes and used to inform the following year's Career Guidance Plan.

7.1 Governance, Partnerships and Resources Framework

Stakeholder / Role	Main Responsibilities	Partnership Contribution	Resources Needed
Director / Principal	Strategic leadership, approval and quality assurance	Institutional support	Staff time, operational budget
Management Team	Coordination, monitoring and evaluation	Internal coordination	Meeting time, planning tools
Career Guidance Coordinator	Planning and implementation of CG activities	Coordination with external partners	Professional training, digital guidance tools

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Teachers / Class Teachers	Deliver career learning activities and mentoring	Curriculum integration	Teaching materials, ICT resources
Pedagogue / Psychologist	Individual counselling and learner support	Inclusion and transition support	Guidance materials, assessment tools
Internship Coordinator	Organize workplace learning and internships	Cooperation with employers	Employer network, transport arrangements
Employers	Practical training, mentoring, company visits	Workplace learning and career education	Coordination time
Employment Agency of Montenegro	Labour market information and career guidance	Career presentations and labour market data	Information materials
Universities and Higher Education Institutions	Promotion of further education opportunities	Career orientation	Promotional materials
Alumni	Career talks and mentoring	Sharing professional experience	Event organisation
NGOs and Local Community Organisations	Inclusion projects and youth support	Awareness campaigns and projects	Project funding and expertise

8. Monitoring, Quality Assurance and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation will ensure that career guidance services remain effective, relevant and responsive to the needs of learners and labour market developments. Progress will be reviewed regularly using measurable indicators, stakeholder feedback and institutional self-evaluation procedures.

The Career Guidance Strategy will be implemented through a continuous cycle of **planning, implementation, monitoring, feedback, evaluation and improvement**. Monitoring results will be reviewed regularly by the Career Guidance Team and school management to assess participation, the delivery of planned activities, learner engagement, stakeholder involvement and progress towards the strategic objectives. Student feedback will be collected through surveys, feedback forms and discussions and will be used to identify learners' needs, satisfaction

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levels and areas where Career Guidance services can be improved. Feedback from employers and other external partners will provide information on the relevance of learners' skills, the quality of work-based learning and emerging labour market needs. Where available, graduate tracking data will be analysed to identify patterns in transitions to employment, further education or other pathways and to assess the longer-term contribution of Career Guidance.

The findings from these sources will be discussed during the annual review of the Career Guidance Strategy and will inform the preparation or revision of the **annual Career Guidance Action Plan**. Activities, priorities, responsibilities and resources will be adjusted where evidence indicates a need for improvement. This process will ensure that Career Guidance remains responsive to learner needs, employer expectations and labour market developments, while strengthening the school's overall quality assurance and institutional development processes.

The implementation of the Career Guidance Strategy will be monitored through a structured system of regular data collection, evaluation and review. The Career Guidance Coordinator, in cooperation with the Career Guidance Team and school management, will monitor progress towards the strategic objectives through clearly defined indicators, including the number and type of counselling sessions, learner participation in career guidance activities, career workshops and events, employer partnerships, work-based learning opportunities, staff professional development activities, use of digital guidance resources, and learner participation in further education or employment-related activities.

Monitoring will combine **quantitative and qualitative evidence**. Quantitative data will provide information on participation, coverage and implementation of planned activities, while qualitative evidence will be collected through student feedback, staff reflections, employer consultations, stakeholder meetings and evaluations of individual activities. Where available, graduate tracking data will be used to assess learners' transitions to employment, further education or other pathways and to determine the longer-term relevance and effectiveness of Career Guidance services.

The quality of Career Guidance services will be assessed through regular feedback from learners and other stakeholders, review of counselling and guidance activities, monitoring of accessibility and inclusion, and assessment of the relevance of career information and labour market information provided to learners. The Career Guidance Team will review monitoring data at regular meetings, identify areas of progress and concern, and agree on corrective or improvement measures where necessary.

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An **annual evaluation report** will summarise the implementation of the Strategy, progress against indicators, feedback received, achievements, challenges and recommendations. The findings will be presented to school management and incorporated into the school's self-evaluation and quality assurance processes. They will also inform the preparation and revision of the annual Career Guidance Action Plan, including priorities, activities, responsibilities and resource allocation for the following school year.

This approach will ensure that decisions about Career Guidance are based on evidence rather than isolated activities or assumptions.

8.1 Key Indicators

Indicator	Frequency	Responsible
Individual counselling sessions delivered	Quarterly	Career Guidance Coordinator
Learners participating in career guidance activities	Quarterly	Career Guidance Team
Employer partnerships established	Annual	School Management
Internships and workplace learning placements	Annual	Internship Coordinator
Career workshops organised	Annual	Career Guidance Team
Student satisfaction with career guidance services	Annual	School
Graduate employment and progression to higher education	Annual	School Management
Teacher participation in career guidance training	Annual	Director

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8.2 Quality Assurance Methods

Quality Assurance Method	Current	Planned	Short Explanation
Feedback forms	☑	☑	Feedback will be collected after workshops, counselling sessions and employer events.
Student surveys	☑	☑	Annual surveys will measure learner satisfaction and identify improvement needs.
Internal review meetings	☑	☑	The Career Guidance Team will review progress at least twice each school year.
Annual reporting	☑	☑	Career guidance outcomes will be included in the school's annual report.
Stakeholder consultation	☑	☑	Employers, parents, universities and community partners will provide regular feedback.
Benchmarking with good practice schools	☐	☑	The school will continue exchanging good practice through Erasmus+ and international cooperation.
Graduate tracking	☐	☑	A graduate follow-up system will be introduced to monitor learner destinations after graduation.

8.3 Evaluation Cycle

Evaluation Stage	Planned	Lead Responsibility	Short Explanation
Mid-term review (Year 3)	☑	Director and Career Guidance Coordinator	Review progress towards objectives, identify challenges and revise the Action Plan where necessary.
Final review (Year 5)	☑	School Management Team	Evaluate the overall impact of the strategy and prepare the next five-year Career Guidance Strategy.
Annual review	☑	Career Guidance Team	Review indicators, stakeholder feedback and implementation progress to support continuous improvement.

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9. Sustainability and Risk Management

The Secondary Vocational School Pljevlja is committed to ensuring that career guidance becomes a permanent part of the school's educational and quality assurance system rather than a project-based activity. Career guidance responsibilities will be integrated into the regular duties of school staff and included in annual school development planning.
Long-term sustainability will be supported through continuous professional development, regular cooperation with employers and public institutions, integration of career learning into school activities and the use of digital resources. Participation in Erasmus+, international projects and national initiatives will further strengthen institutional capacity.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of Career Guidance, its activities will be integrated into the school's **annual operational planning and budgeting process** rather than being implemented as separate or project-based activities. At the beginning of each school year, the Career Guidance Team will prepare an annual Career Guidance Action Plan based on the priorities of this Strategy, monitoring and evaluation results from the previous year, learner and stakeholder feedback, labour market information and identified institutional needs. The plan will define activities, expected outcomes, responsible staff, timelines and required resources and will be incorporated into the school's annual operational plan.

The financial requirements of Career Guidance will be identified during the annual budgeting process and, where possible, included within the school's regular budget allocations. These may cover staff professional development, career guidance materials and digital resources, career events, communication and information activities, employer engagement, learner visits and other activities necessary for effective service delivery. Additional resources may be sought through national programmes, international projects and partnerships with relevant stakeholders, where appropriate.

Implementation and expenditure will be reviewed annually by the Career Guidance Team and school management. The results will inform the following year's planning and budget priorities. This approach will ensure that Career Guidance remains a **regular institutional responsibility**, supported by predictable planning, resource allocation and quality assurance mechanisms, and is therefore sustainable beyond individual projects or funding cycles.

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9.1 Sustainability Measures

Sustainability Measure	Current	Planned	Short Explanation
Career guidance integrated into annual school plans	☑	☑	Career guidance activities will be included in annual operational plans.
Permanent staff responsibilities assigned	☑	☑	Responsibilities will be formally assigned to relevant staff members.
Regular budget planning for CG activities	☐	☑	Annual financial planning will include career guidance activities.
Long-term partnerships with employers and stakeholders	☑	☑	Existing cooperation agreements will be expanded and regularly reviewed.
Continued staff development and training	☑	☑	Staff will participate in national and international professional development activities.
Updated strategy after Year 5	☐	☑	The strategy will be reviewed and updated based on evaluation findings.
Participation in Erasmus+ and international projects	☑	☑	International cooperation will continue to support innovation and quality improvement.

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9.2 Risk Assessment and Mitigation Measures

Risk	Potential Impact	Mitigation Measures	Lead Responsibility
Limited staff capacity	Delays in implementation	Share responsibilities and integrate career guidance into existing school activities	Management Team
Low employer engagement	Fewer workplace learning opportunities	Strengthen communication and expand employer networks	Career Guidance Coordinator
Budget limitations	Reduced activities	Prioritise essential activities and seek external funding through projects	Director
Low student participation	Reduced effectiveness of services	Promote activities through class teachers, Student Parliament and digital communication	Career Guidance Team
Staff turnover	Loss of continuity	Document procedures and provide induction for new staff	Director
Weak coordination between stakeholders	Inefficient implementation	Hold regular coordination meetings and annual planning sessions	Career Guidance Coordinator
Inadequate monitoring data	Difficulties evaluating impact	Develop simple monitoring tools and maintain annual records	Career Guidance Coordinator

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10. Five-Year Action Plan

Strategic Objective	Action	Responsible	Timeline	Indicator / Target
1. Establish a comprehensive and sustainable Career Guidance system	Maintain the Career Guidance Coordinator and Career Guidance Team and define their roles and responsibilities	Director, Career Guidance Coordinator	Year 1 and ongoing	Coordinator and team formally appointed; roles and responsibilities defined
	Develop and implement annual Career Guidance Action Plans based on learner needs, labour market information and previous evaluation results	Career Guidance Coordinator, CG Team	Years 1–5	One annual Career Guidance Action Plan implemented and reviewed each year
	Provide individual career counselling and transition support according to learners' needs	Career Guidance Coordinator, Pedagogue, Psychologist	Years 1–5	Individual counselling available continuously; records of counselling activities maintained
	Organise group career guidance workshops for first- and second-year learners	Teachers, CG Team	Years 1–5	At least one workshop per semester for first- and second-year learners
	Organise career planning and decision-making sessions for third- and fourth-year learners	Career Guidance Team	Years 1–5	Career planning activities delivered at least quarterly

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	Organise career information sessions, career fairs and presentations on education and employment pathways	CG Team, Teachers, External Partners	Years 1–5	Several career information activities organised annually; participation recorded
2. Strengthen cooperation between with employers and labour market	Organise employer presentations, company visits, guest lectures and career talks linked to the school's vocational sectors	Career Guidance Team, Employers	Years 1–5	At least one employer engagement activity organised for each relevant vocational area annually
	Organise Labour Market Information sessions in cooperation with the Employment Agency and other relevant stakeholders	Employment Agency, CG Coordinator	Years 1–5	At least one LMI session per semester for third- and fourth-year learners
	Strengthen employer partnerships for practical training and work-based learning	Internship Coordinator, Employers	Years 1–5	At least 10 active employer partnerships supporting practical training/WBL
3. Develop learners' career management,employability and lifelong learning opportunities	Deliver CV writing, job-search and interview preparation workshops, including practical simulations	Teachers, Employers, CG Coordinator	Years 1–5	At least two employability workshops per semester

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	Provide individual and group support for learners preparing to enter the labour market	CG Team, Teachers, Employers	Years 1–5	Final-year learners have access to employment preparation and counselling
	Establish graduate destination tracking to monitor transitions to employment, further education and other pathways	School Management, CG Team	Years 2–5	Annual graduate destination report produced
4. Strengthen staff competences and quality assurance in Career Guidance	Collect feedback from learners, staff, employers and other stakeholders and use findings to improve Career Guidance services	CG Team, School Management	Years 1–5	Annual feedback/evaluation conducted and findings incorporated into the following Action Plan
	Integrate Career Guidance into the school's annual operational planning, self-evaluation, quality assurance and budgeting processes	Director, Management Team, CG Team	Years 1–5	Career Guidance included in annual school plans, evaluation processes and budget planning

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5. Ensure sustainability of Career Guidance within institutional development	Prepare an annual Career Guidance implementation and evaluation report with recommendations for improvement	Career Guidance Coordinator, CG Team	Years 1–5	One annual implementation/evaluation report produced and reviewed

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