

ETF HIGHLIGHTS 2013 OUTLOOK 2014

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Cooperation with neighbouring countries is an EU priority. It strengthens democracy, facilitates development and growth, and contributes to shared prosperity. The EU's enlargement, neighbourhood and development policies put this priority into action.

The European Training Foundation (ETF) works in the context of the EU's external relations policies in 30 neighbouring countries. As a specialised EU agency it helps the partner countries to harness the potential of their human capital through more relevant policies in vocational education and training and their efficient implementation.



IN BRIEF:

- The Torino Process brings an in-depth evidence-based analysis of vocational education and training systems, and new culture of policy making in the partner countries.
- ETF Policy Leaders' Forums renew commitments to reforms in education, training and labour market at the highest policy level in the EU's southern neighbourhood, and South Eastern Europe and Turkey.
- The Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean project maps governance structures in education and training, and targets them as the main vector of change for better youth employment.
- The FRAME initiative – with two pilot projects on skills foresight completed, continues to assist EU enlargement countries in elaborating their 2020 skills vision.
- The project on continuing vocational training in eastern Europe helps to set up sector skills committees and skills validation systems to broaden the access to lifelong learning.
- The school development initiative in Central Asia reaches managers from 200 schools through five focused capacity building modules and policy dialogue opportunities.
- Coming up in 2014:
 - Multilevel governance and entrepreneurial learning
 - Small Business Act assessments
 - Migrant support policy measures survey
 - More relevant qualifications



MOVING SKILLS FORWARD – THE TORINO PROCESS

The Torino Process, implemented in almost all ETF partner countries, is a participatory, evidence-based analysis of vocational education and training (VET) policies and systems. It has been carried out twice since 2010. Inspired by the EU's Copenhagen/Bruges process, this initiative provides an in-depth analysis on human capital development in the regions neighbouring the EU. The Torino Process also helps reach broad consensus on the vision for VET in the partner countries. It proposes state-of-the-art policy solutions, tailored to the needs and capacities of the countries, and fosters progress in policy implementation.

In 2011, under the Danish Presidency of the EU, the stakeholders from partner countries met for the first time at the Torino Process conference. The conference 'Moving Skills Forward' under the Irish Presidency concluded the second round of the Torino Process on 8 and 9 May 2013. The conference gathered participants from 31 ETF partner countries. The goal was not only to present the results - it was also a policy-learning event. The event helped delegates to identify paths to ownership, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the VET systems, and to make commitments for future actions.

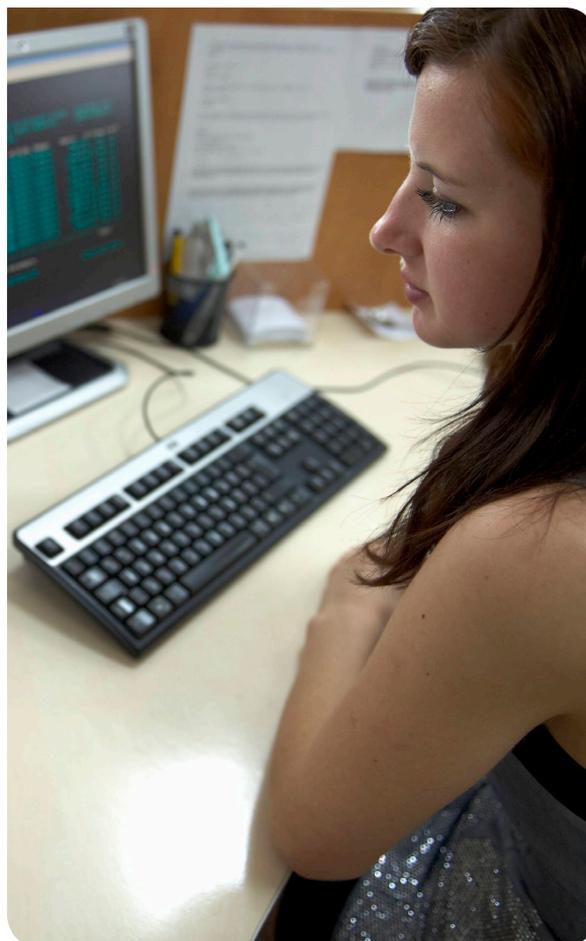
The next rounds of the process in 2014 and 2016 will focus on tracking and monitoring progress.

GOVERNANCE FOR EMPLOYABILITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN (GEMM)

In 2013 the ETF started implementing Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean (GEMM), a regional project, carried out on at the request of the European Commission. The project will benefit the ETF partner countries in the EU's southern neighbourhood.

GEMM offers solutions to a common problem in the region: the gap between skills demand and supply. It invests in good, anticipatory governance of VET at local, sub-national and country levels to reduce the mismatch between the needs of the labour market and the skills supplied by the education and training system. Ultimately, it aims to make young people more employable.

To achieve this goal the ETF mapped VET governance in the participating countries. Country projects will put in place local skills-needs analyses, and introduce career guidance and apprenticeships in the renewable energy sector.



POLICY LEADERS' FORUMS...

...FOR THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

The Policy Leaders' Forum for the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean took place in Marseille on 6 October 2013. The conference was co-chaired by Pervenche Berès, Chair of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, and Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sports. The Forum saw the participation of the members of national parliaments of the region and paid particular attention to their role in public policy.

The forum provided an opportunity to assess the progress in youth employment policies since the previous high-level meeting in Amman in 2012. It considered whether current policy frameworks and processes are effective, and reviewed how regional cooperation can give an additional impetus.

The meeting was attended by high-ranking representatives of the key stakeholders in policy making. They included ministers of education and labour, members of the countries' legislatures, civil society represented by the Young Mediterranean Leaders and the Anna Lindh Foundation, experts from EGPA as well as delegates from EU Member States and key regional organisations. The outcomes of the meeting will shape the ETF's forthcoming activities in the region, including the Torino Process, regional actions that help in policy making, as well as national support programmes in each partner country.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN EASTERN EUROPE

As the economies of eastern Europe transform and societies age, access to continuing vocational training (CVT) becomes crucial. However, only 1 to 6% of adults in these countries participate.

An ETF project launched in 2010 proposed practical ways to address this problem. Based on evidence gained through the Torino Process, each of the seven participating countries chose their priority. In Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine, the ETF helped to build systems to validate non-formal and informal learning and ensure access to lifelong learning. Azerbaijan, Belarus, the Republic of Moldova and Russia chose to work with the ETF to involve social partners in CVT. The ETF provided expertise to establish sector skills councils that bring together education and training authorities, employers and trade unions. The Moldovan sector committee on agrifood implemented an analysis of training demand in some 500 enterprises proving the usefulness of the approach. During the course of the project, the employers' associations in Ukraine and Armenia used methods provided by the ETF to begin systematizing their qualifications. In 2014 the ETF will support the newly established sector skills councils in consolidating their role in VET. Together with its partners the ETF will also define policies that open access to CVT and improve its quality.

...AND SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE AND TURKEY

The Policy Leaders' Forum for South Eastern Europe and Turkey was held at Salzburg Global Seminar on 9 and 10 October. The event focused on comprehensive long-term policy making for human resources development (HRD) in the context of the Europe 2020 and SEE 2020 strategies.

Twelve ministers and deputy ministers with a stake in HRD and finance represented partner countries at the forum. There were representatives of the Commission's Directorates-General for education and culture, employment and enlargement. The Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council also attended the meeting.

The event addressed the efficiency and effectiveness of public policies in education, training and employment for better results in terms of competitiveness and employment. The forum linked regional and national strategies with national and external financial instruments.

One of the key results was the endorsement of the goals and modalities of FRAME, an initiative to help the EU enlargement countries to elaborate their own skills visions.

CENTRAL ASIA SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

The regional project on school development in Central Asia helps improve the vocational school systems of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. It integrates capacity building, communities of good practice and policy dialogue to transform schools into centres for flexible community learning. The initiative builds on ETF activities since 2009 that supported the capacity building of policy makers and practitioners and created a strong methodological framework grounded in evidence from a wide-ranging survey of school quality.

The project implemented five professional development programmes for school staff and created a network of 12 communities of practice across Central Asia in 2013. These communities have the potential to disseminate good practice on strategic planning, partnership, quality monitoring, school management and leadership, and teaching and learning in up to 200 schools. In 2013 the project extended to Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to create additional links across the region.

An ETF-facilitated regional policy dialogue of policy officials and school directors, involving all Central Asian countries, reviewed the key characteristics of well-performing vocational schools. These characteristics will act as a reference point for further capacity building, networking of good practice and policy dialogue in the next years. The plan for 2014 also includes the creation of a certified training programme for school managers and offers training through a summer school.

FRAME – SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

The FRAME initiative, started in 2013, helps countries of the EU enlargement area to elaborate their own skills visions with 2020 horizon in line with their national human resource development (HRD) strategies. The initiative consists of four building blocks: skills foresight, review of institutional arrangements, monitoring and regional cooperation. The foresight component has been implemented in two pilot countries in Serbia and Montenegro. The results of the pilots were shared with key stakeholders in Montenegro in September 2013 before the roll-out to the other countries.

The ETF has also started the review of institutional arrangements and the monitoring components. Through the regional activities, the project facilitates cooperation to develop regional response to the SEE 2020 Strategy. The ETF Policy Leaders Forum in Salzburg in October confirmed the goals and modalities of FRAME.



OUTLOOK 2014

The 2014 is the first year of the new ETF Mid-term Perspective 2014-17. This multiannual work programme sets out the ETF's goals and the expected impact by 2020 in terms of more effective VET policy making with better governance, increased employability and enhanced social and territorial cohesion. The interventions for this period have been selected following the principles of focus, differentiation, complementarity between the EU policies and instruments and ETF interventions and impact-orientation. The logic of intervention in each country differs according to policy needs and internal criteria for prioritising both financial and human resources.

The main objectives over this four-year period are to reinforce evidence-based VET policy analysis, modernise VET systems and increase the relevance of VET provision in terms of labour markets and economic and social cohesion.

FOSTERING PROGRESS IN YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

In 2014, the ETF will foster progress in youth employment by supporting entrepreneurial communities through a new dedicated initiative, and entrepreneurial individuals through Small Business Act assessments in the partner countries. Both activities promote proactive, innovative approaches for youth employment.

The ETF has launched an open call to identify local partnerships of businesses, vocational education and training providers, local administrations or civil society groups that foster skills, entrepreneurship and job creation in the partner countries. The initiative aims to identify and acknowledge entrepreneurial communities in the partner countries, facilitate peer learning and inform policy making.

Training for youth entrepreneurship, training and mentoring for women entrepreneurs and skills for internationalising small businesses are the three areas of the Small Business Act for Europe where the ETF will continue its policy support in the pre-accession and neighbourhood regions.

These entrepreneurship initiatives - which involve multiple stakeholders operating on different territorial levels - are closely linked to the ETF's support for multilevel governance. The ETF will continue investing in good multilevel governance of VET systems to align VET policies with the current and anticipated needs of citizens.

Another new project will review the migrant support policy measures implemented globally from the perspective of skills and employment, and assess their cost-effectiveness and impact. ETF experts along with researchers from the European University Institute in Florence will take a closer look at some of the partner

countries that have concluded mobility partnerships with the EU. As a result of the project, an inventory of support measures as well as country case studies (Armenia, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Morocco and Tunisia) will be prepared.

MORE RELEVANT QUALIFICATIONS

Governments and stakeholders in the partner countries are increasingly seeking to make qualifications more relevant to the workplace to promote lifelong learning and gain international recognition at a time of globalisation and population mobility.

During the 2012 Torino Process, the requests for intervention and the observations of ETF experts all indicate that partner countries also look to the ETF for continued support in this area.

The ETF helps to reform qualifications systems as part of the wider modernisation of education and training systems. In 2014, the ETF will work with education, employment and labour ministries, experts, professionals, social partners and other labour market actors, providing policy and technical advice. The ETF will explore the relevance of national qualifications frameworks (NQF) as reform tools, facilitate their design and assist in capacity building for national authorities and social partners to enable them to lead and control their own reforms.

In the EU enlargement countries, the ETF will actively contribute to the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The ETF's regional project in the countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean will focus on sectoral qualifications in construction and tourism. In eastern Europe, ETF activities will engage employers and other stakeholders in developing occupational standards and establishing sectoral bodies, as well as in validating non-formal and informal learning.

COMMUNICATING RESULTS AND FACILITATING POLICY LEARNING

To share the results of the work on multilevel governance, entrepreneurship and qualifications, as well as to provide policy learning opportunities for the partner countries, the ETF will hold two international conferences.

The first event in April 2014 will examine how countries in transition are using national qualifications frameworks to reform their qualifications systems. Central to discussions will be the EQF, which has a major influence on the partner countries. The second conference in November will share policy lessons and explore the interconnected themes of multi-level governance, entrepreneurial learning, and entrepreneurial communities.