



European Training Foundation

EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION

The ETF experience with regional cooperation in VET,
skills development and labour mobility

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Bishkek, 27 March, 2019



ETF : AN AGENCY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Aiming to make **vocational education** and training in the partner countries a driver for **lifelong learning** and **sustainable development**, with a special focus on competitiveness and social cohesion.

SOUTHERN AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine*, Syria, and Tunisia

EASTERN EUROPE

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine

WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Kosovo**, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey

CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan



*This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual position of the Member States on this issue.

**This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

CENTRAL ASIA – A LONG EXPERIENCE OF JOINT WORK

EU POLICY CONTEXT

- In 2007 the “European Union and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership” was adopted. To enable and facilitate regional policy dialogue, the EU established three platforms, one of which was on education
 - The Central Asian Education Platform (CAEP) become operational in 2012 and will run until March 2019
- A new EU-Central Asia Strategy is due to be adopted by end 2019
 - A successor regional programme to CAEP is expected to start in 2020 (ETF tasked with developing the concept)

ETF REGIONAL WORK

- Numerous multi-country projects since 1997: “Standards 2000” (1998-2000), Training for Enterprise Development (2001-2004), National Qualification Frameworks (2007-2010), VET school development for lifelong learning (2008-2013)
- In 2010 the Torino Process was introduced as a participatory process leading to an analysis of human capital development issues and Vocational Education and Training policies responses in ETF partner countries. It has a national, regional and cross-country dimension.
- ETF has taken an active part in CAEP since it started. Since 2017 it has facilitated the work on evidence-based policy making

CAEP – WORKING APPROACH

Focuses on Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher Education (HE)

Key Components:

- Dialogue fora (workshops, conferences, webinars) at national and regional level
- Mapping and Communication
- Studies

Participants:

Ministries of Education, Labour, Employers, (Providers, Students)

Themes were identified and endorsed via two ministerial meetings (Riga – 2015, Astana – 2017)

- Qualification frameworks
- Quality assurance
- Evidence-based policy making with focus on employment/employability related aspects
- Financing of VET and HE systems
- Education-business cooperation
- Innovative teaching methods
- Gender and inclusion

CAEP 2 – WORKING APPROACH

SUCCESS FACTORS OF CAEP 2 (2015-2019)

Strong role played by 2 EU Member states:

- Latvia
- Poland

These two countries committed in Riga to act as leading Member States for CAEP 2

Access to policy practitioners and persons with actual implementation experience at national level

Strong focus on peer and policy learning

Highly appreciated by all participating Central Asian countries

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

Long list of themes, so that some could only be superficially explored

Difficulty to establish stable working groups

- This made it difficult to address complex themes

Not always possible to involve the labour and employer side in a systematic manner

EXPECTATIONS FROM THE SUCCESSOR PROGRAMME

Since CAEP was first launched, the situation in Central Asia has changed considerably

CAEP 1 and 2 have prepared the ground for a next phase

Several aspects initiated under CAEP 2 should be maintained:

- Building blocks
- Themes

But the successor programme should be:

- more results oriented, work towards deliverables
- addressing themes more in depth and systematically

EXPECTATIONS FROM THE SUCCESSOR PROGRAMME

- Strengthen EU Member State involvement
- More systematic familiarization with and use of EU level developments/tools/instruments for VET and HE
- Focus on VET and HE (avoiding parallel tracks and fragmentation)
- Stronger link to national reform
- Explore the possibility of joint developments for the region
- Enlarge the participant base, especially business and employer representatives, but also students
- Make better use of the capacity of the national academic community and of capacity built via Erasmus+
- Improved inter-action with other actors/donors working on the themes
- Opening relevant activities to stakeholders from Afghanistan
- Better use of good practice and experience already existing in Eastern Neighbourhood countries

RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR MOBILITY – THE ETF EXPERIENCE

Terminology

- Recognition = different forms of valuing skills and qualifications
- For: access to (further) education and training; access to the labour market
- Mutual recognition among countries: may be bilateral or multilateral
- Can be voluntary, can be obligatory.

A WORLD ON THE MOVE

- Unprecedented levels - not seen since 1945
- ETF advises EU on managing legal migration in the Neighbourhood
- Neighbourhood countries are both sending and receiving countries e.g. Ukraine, Turkey
- Qualifications recognition one element in the policy response; alongside careers guidance, social integration, training; validation of people's informally-acquired skills; social services etc.
- Work the best route to social integration – yet, typically, a migrant's qualifications are misunderstood – meaning undervalued – by receiving country

EU RESPONSES: ENP, EU INSTRUMENTS AND POLICIES

- European Neighbourhood Policy frames EU and ETF responses to migration flows
- Association Agreements and Mobility Partnerships are two elements within ENP
- The Agreements aim at approximation of e.g. UKraine, Georgia, Moldova to EU laws, standards etc.; contain references to migration and NQFs (National Qualification Frameworks)/EQF (European Qualification Framework);
- Mobility Partnerships: implement EU's response to Global Approach to Migration and Mobility; they regulate legal migration with Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Tunisia, Morocco; etc.

QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS (QFS)

- Two types – national (NQFs) and regional (RQFs)
- QFs perform variety of functions but, for mobility purposes, act as (a) recognisable entry points to a country's qualification system; (b) link frameworks between countries
- European Qualifications Framework is a multilateral framework: links 36 countries, including 7 ETF partner countries in Western Balkans and Turkey; voluntary but aids transparency and so recognition
- 24 of the countries ETF works with use NQFs
- Most countries present are in the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process), which includes QFs. ETF facilitates integration between VET and HE

But : NQFs need deep implementation e.g. quality assurance, strong governance; countries need to speed up; ETF monitors, including via its online NQF Inventory

OTHER MEASURES

- ENIC/NARIC (recognition) offices; make recognition decisions about foreign qualifications; but not sufficiently linked across different partner countries
- ETF facilitates closer relations between recognition offices, ministries, quality assurance agencies, NQF authorities etc.
- Validation of non-formal learning systems can identify, document, assess and certify migrants' skills; but systems in both EU and neighbouring countries not yet adapted enough to recognise migrants' skills;
- ETF works with countries on validation systems

EU and Neighbourhood countries need to scale up services and tools

Thank you for your attention !

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