

TORINO PROCESS 2016-17 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE





THE TORINO PROCESS 2016-17

The ETF is an EU agency that helps to reform education, training and labour market systems in countries neighbouring the European Union to drive economic growth, innovation and political stability.

The Torino Process (TRP) is a participatory process leading to an evidence-based analysis of the vocational education and training (VET) policies in a country. Introduced in 2010 and carried out every two years, the Torino Process provides a snapshot of the state of development of VET systems in the ETF's partner countries, an overview of progress made and priorities for the future.

These key findings present the general trends in the development of vocational education and training systems in the ETF partner countries. They are based on intelligence included in the national reports of the 2016 edition of the Torino Process and draw on the subsequent regional and thematic analyses undertaken by the ETF.

Find out more at: www.torinoprocess.eu.

SETTING THE SCENE

Countries have made progress in developing policies and piloting actions. This includes experimenting with coordination mechanisms to improve the relevance of VET to economic and social demand. However, the impact at system level remains limited. This is partially due to delays in the implementation of policies (including delays in legislation approval) and partially to the capacity of actors to play their new roles.

Although up-to-date VET programmes are in high demand, the overall attractiveness of VET has not improved. On the other hand, in a number of partner countries, a large percentage of young people are still unable to access skills development opportunities as demonstrated by their high levels of 'Not in Employment, Education or Training' (NEETs).

The emphasis of VET policies is still on the initial preparation of young people (initial vocational training) and much less on continuing vocational training. However, countries are becoming more and more aware of the need to expand and improve access to skills development to adult populations as well.

The systematic participation of the private sector in the planning, design and delivery of VET remains limited, but a lot of good examples of more

extensive involvement do exist. Examples include the active participation of the private sector:

- in the design and implementation of qualification systems and modern qualifications;
- in sector councils;
- in the establishment and management of training centres;
- in the delivery of training in the work place.

Larger enterprises tend to be more actively involved than SMEs.

At the delivery level, the Torino Process reports indicate that innovation is happening in the professional development of teachers and trainers, new curricula and teaching and learning methods, as well as the introduction of key competences and, in particular, entrepreneurial learning. However, innovative actions remain at piloting level and countries face difficulties in up-scaling and mainstreaming them.

There is a growing urgency in partner countries to proceed with the implementation of reforms, deliver results and scale up the contribution of VET so that it has a wider socio-economic impact.



"For me, the Torino Process means that we come together to develop together – especially for social partnership and social partner involvement. The Torino Process promotes peace!"

Vahagn Hovhannisyan, State Employment Service Agency, Armenia

LOOKING AHEAD

VET is moving up the national policy agenda in all countries.

The vast majority of partner countries have responded to this opportunity and have worked hard to develop policies to modernise the VET system. They can be standalone policies or part of broader education, skills or employment policies. They can be more or less comprehensive but they are there to guide the actions of the countries.

It is worthwhile noting that these policies are increasingly built on consultative processes involving key stakeholders.

They also bring a better balance between the “employability” imperative and the “economic development” imperative. That is to say: VET is increasingly seen not only as an instrument to fight unemployment but also as an instrument to promote economic development.

Last but not least, VET policies are moving towards being formulated in terms of priorities and actions

rather than being limited to policy objectives. This demonstrates that there is a growing clarity about what to do next and a higher focus on delivery.

However, these policies are often overambitious, particularly in relation to the funds available for their implementation. In fact, there are very few countries that report budget increases for VET over the last two years. Furthermore, policies are poorly communicated to final beneficiaries and they are often exposed to delays in implementation mainly, but not exclusively, due to political factors (changes of government or political instability).

Delays in legislation that will enable the smooth implementation of policies is a rather common phenomenon and entails the risk of losing momentum in the implementation of reforms. Moreover, the strategies are not monitored systematically with a view to readjustment and improvement, and there are few examples of policy evaluation.



“The Torino Process has helped us understand what we need to work on – to improve professional standards, implementation of reforms and continuous professional development of staff – but also to identify our strengths, for example our system of adult education.”

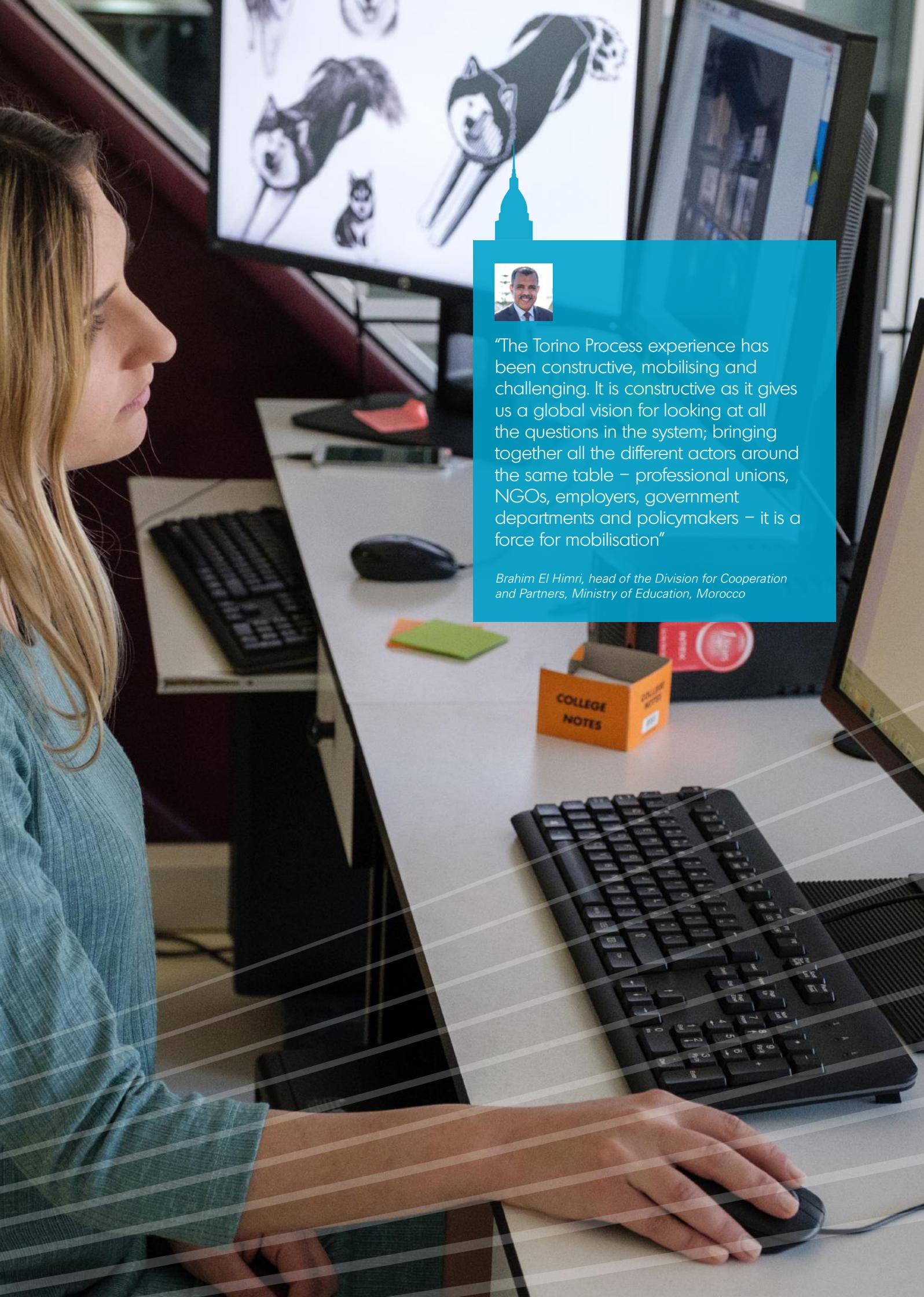
Subhon Ashurov, Dean, Sectoral Information Technologies Faculty, Technological University of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, Tajikistan





"The Torino Process is an important force driving VET forward for the entire region. It is important for its collection of data, comparison and monitoring functions. It drives the process of VET modernisation forward in the whole region."

Tina Saric, Director, Education and Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe, Belgrade



“The Torino Process experience has been constructive, mobilising and challenging. It is constructive as it gives us a global vision for looking at all the questions in the system; bringing together all the different actors around the same table – professional unions, NGOs, employers, government departments and policymakers – it is a force for mobilisation”

Brahim El Himri, head of the Division for Cooperation and Partners, Ministry of Education, Morocco

GETTING ORGANISED

All countries have recognised the need to shift towards more participatory and multilevel governance in VET, and their efforts are directed towards the development of horizontal and vertical coordination mechanisms.

Horizontal coordination mechanisms focus mainly on policy development and coordination at national and occasionally regional level. They take the form of national VET or skills councils. They also frequently focus on the development of key sectors of economic activity; or on specific functions of the system, for example the design and implementation of qualification systems. How well these horizontal coordination mechanisms function varies, depending very much on the capacity and commitment of the actors, as well as on the extent to which such mechanisms are formalised in the country's institutional setting. Needless to say, the more these mechanisms are institutionalised, the more effective and better functioning they are.

Vertical coordination mechanisms, which ensure responsibilities are shared among national and subnational/local actors, are more difficult to establish. A number of countries (Morocco, Tunisia and Ukraine) are working on the decentralisation of decision making processes towards lower levels of government or providers in order to bring VET closer to the skills and development needs of the final beneficiaries. But there is still some way to go before these mechanisms are effectively put in place and roles and responsibilities are shared in a transparent way among actors.

While the predominant VET governance model seems to remain fairly centralised, multilevel and collaborative forms of VET governance are nevertheless emerging. The institutionalisation of these forms, however, is progressing slowly, and the role of providers, either in contributing to policy development or acquiring more autonomy to get closer to the needs of beneficiaries, is still quite limited.

When reporting about the autonomy of providers, most countries focus on state schools only, while reporting on private provision is extremely limited.

1. Some countries recognise the need to increase autonomy in particular as regards the financial management of schools; in countries where financial autonomy is granted, it is highly regulated;
2. The need for and benefits of more autonomy is recognised, but only in a few cases does it include a reflection on the capabilities of providers for this;
3. Few countries mention the role of school/provider board/council as a tool for autonomy and development;
4. In countries where the report covers non-formal/adult training, it is noted that these providers have higher autonomy compared to formal/schools.



“The Torino Process has helped us increase dialogue, cooperation and change our vision for VET. I am proud of our pilot tracer project – which follows the routes VET school graduates takes – and we are now working on taking this to the national level throughout the education system.”

Taalaibek Cholponkulov, Director, Agency for Initial and Secondary VET, Ministry of Education and Science, Kyrgyzstan

SUPPORTING JOBS AND GROWTH

In addressing economic and labour market demand, countries face two key issues:

1. Reducing skills mismatches

Countries continue to report that firms face skills shortages and skills gaps, while young graduates (also more and more higher education graduates) remain unemployed or are employed in jobs beneath their level of qualification. Robust evidence on the exact nature and extent of skills mismatches is not available and this results in some attempts to improve.

2. Anticipating the future demand for skills

Countries look at skills anticipation from a quantitative as well as a qualitative perspective - namely what kind of technical and job-specific skills and key competences will be needed in the near and further future so as to adapt training provision.

To address these issues countries are taking different approaches.

One is to launch **skills intelligence tools**. There is intense action in this area, including tracer studies, employers' surveys, sector studies, quantitative forecasts and analysis of existing administrative data. The generation of skills intelligence is certainly welcome and delivers unique and helpful results, but it is not clear whether these results have a real impact on the decision-making process for planning and adapting VET provision. As the skills intelligence tools are often ad-hoc, one off, donor supported actions, the intelligence they produce does not readily become embedded in regular planning routines. Moreover, they deliver high amounts of complex data, which are often difficult to process and use owing to capacity limitations.

Others are more structured, institutional, and often "home grown".

Better **qualification systems and modern qualifications** are something that all ETF partner countries participating in the Torino Process bar two are working towards. These modern VET qualifications are developed and implemented with a much more

prominent involvement of representatives from the world of work and in that sense can be assumed to meet the requirements of the labour market better. Of course, this new method takes time and can only have an impact if the qualifications are used for the design of new curricula, teaching and learning and assessment and certification.

A number of countries have established sectoral bodies, such as **sector skills councils**, to identify the skills needs of the sectors concerned and participate in the design of modern qualifications. In highly dynamic sectors these councils function well.

National or regional observatories are in the process of being established or piloted to follow trends, gaps and future developments more closely and systematically.

Public-private partnerships stand for a range of objectives and modalities but always aspire to establish closer communication between learners and employers for more relevant VET. These can take the form of training centres established by employers to address the needs of specific sectors, incentives for employers to invest in training, involvement of employers in the design and delivery of training.

Work-based learning (WBL) is a rising star on the agenda of a number of partner countries. Although many countries demonstrate some form of WBL and many of them are experimenting with the introduction of apprenticeships, significant effort will be needed to develop and implement robust frameworks that allow for more systematic and structured engagement of employers and their organisations.

In conclusion, partner countries are gathering intelligence and putting in place a series of mechanisms to bring training provision closer to current and future demand for skills. Many of these mechanisms are still at an initial or experimental stage and do not have a big impact at system level. On the other hand, enterprises are becoming more and more active in supporting skills development processes.



“The Torino Process gives us the concrete data that enables us to see the progress we are making towards our objectives. It has helped us develop the standards we need to work on the introduction of a national qualifications framework.”

Alena Bychko, Republican Institute for Professional Education (RIPO), Belarus





"The Torino Process provides a picture of the real situation in cooperation between education, labour market needs and qualifications. Real data that can be used in our national VET system. Every country that has a good database either knows where it is or where it needs to go."

Natasha Janevska, State Advisor, Ministry of Education and Science, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

PROMOTING INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

The key issue here is how to ensure that all population groups have access to skills development and skills enhancement opportunities.

Young people and VET within the formal education system

The relative size of VET at the upper secondary level of the formal education system differs from country to country and this is linked to historical factors and the structure of the education system. It ranges from almost 80% in Serbia to around 3% in Palestine (EU average 48%). Although there is no optimal size for VET relative to general secondary education, it is important that it is distributed relatively evenly across the territory of a country. In most countries where systems are small, it is not always distributed in a way that ensures equitable access and opportunities.

Partner countries face very high NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) rates among young people (14-25 years old). A total of 19 partner countries exceed the EU average. In 10 countries, 25% of 14-25 years old are NEETs. Young women are typically over-represented. This is a rather alarming phenomenon for the future prosperity and social cohesion of the countries.

Adult population and continuing training

In the last 10 years at least, the working age population (25-64 years old) has been increasing substantially in all partner countries. Using UN population projections, the working age population will either continue to increase more slowly or will shrink by 2030. From a demographic point of view, this implies that there will be less pressure for job creation in the future; but it also means that if countries want to increase their prosperity, they will have to shift towards higher productivity activities making the best use of new technologies, new economic opportunities and innovation more generally. This will require the permanent upgrading and enhancement of the skills of the adult population.

At the moment, the participation of the adult population in training is very low (at least in the partner countries for which data are available) and

generally adult training has not received much attention. However, there are signs of change. Some countries are launching large scale adult training programmes, others set targets for increased participation. Furthermore, new types of qualifications are appearing for upgrading, retraining and career development of adults, which are becoming part of qualification systems. In Eastern Europe in particular there are discussions on developing continuing professional qualifications alongside traditional initial VET qualifications. Another action concerns the gradual implementation of systems for validating informal and non-formal learning in a number of countries. Although these do not develop new skills, they make skills visible and transparent.

Vulnerable groups

All countries report on actions that target the specific skills needs of vulnerable groups. These groups are very diverse, but generally include people in rural areas, Roma, long-term unemployed, drop-outs, people with disabilities, orphans, refugees in the Middle East and Turkey and internally displaced people.

Countries have put in place different solutions to target the needs of these specific population groups

- Extending the access of youth from vulnerable groups to formal VET (quotas, scholarships);
- Providing training opportunities through Active Labour Market Programmes;
- Setting up initiatives or programmes for specific population groups e.g. refugees or women in rural areas;
- Creating partnerships between education, community services organisations, employers and relevant government agencies.

In general these programmes are often donor driven or are at a pilot stage. They come as ad hoc solutions to cover the lack of more structured approaches to skills development opportunities. Overall, the effectiveness and outreach of those programmes is documented in a way that demonstrates impact.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

In order to improve the internal efficiency of their VET systems, partner countries are working on four key areas.

The importance of **teachers and trainers** for the quality and modernisation of the VET system is undoubtedly recognised. The professional development of teachers and trainers features within educational strategies in most countries and countries are making efforts to improve the training supply with a focus on modern teaching methods or new curricula. In a very small number of countries, emphasis is also given to technical innovation. Some countries have established or are seeking to establish regional training centres or build learning networks among teachers, while pilot initiatives are undertaken in cooperation with companies.

However, the access of teachers and trainers to **continuing professional development** remains limited, is rather ad hoc and based on piloting or experimentation. Moving towards large-scale demand-driven training provision for teachers and trainers would mean increasing the competence of professional associations and professional bodies (e.g. pedagogical institutes), more funds and stronger interaction with companies to ensure appropriately trained in-company trainers.

For years now countries have been experimenting with the introduction of **new curricula and new teaching and learning techniques** also including components of practical training either in the workplace or simulated environments. Many of these are donor driven initiatives, but more and more home-grown actions can be observed. New

qualifications facilitate modular curricula often based on learning outcomes, which are successfully introduced in pilot schools, where teachers are prepared for this new way of teaching. But the introduction of modular curricula across systems is not advancing fast. There are cases where curricula have been redesigned but not implemented at all or only partially.

A number of countries are taking action towards introducing **entrepreneurship as a key competence** in their VET systems. This includes developing policies, implementing pilot initiatives and even moving from pilot initiatives to full-scale programmes, developing extra curricula activities and providing entrepreneurial experience to students.

Last but not least, the **learning infrastructure** is a major challenge for partner countries to move forward towards a more effective and more attractive VET system. Many countries report on the poor material condition of vocational schools and under-investment in infrastructure. Almost all countries however, also report modern or modernised training centres and schools.

To conclude, the area of internal efficiency is a lively area of innovation in the partner countries. In fact one third of the examples that countries self-reported as innovative in their Torino Process reports are in this area. This demonstrates a degree of dynamism that needs to be exploited. The big challenge now is to move from innovation and innovative practices to upscaling and eventually mainstreaming, which can drive VET towards the future.



“For me, the Torino Process is a seed of sustainability – it continues from year to year. It enables us to share experience and monitor the process of development.”

Elene Jibladze, Millenium Challenge Agency, Georgia





Top priorities for the future in the ETF partner countries

The most frequent priorities that countries report in the Torino Process are:

- Qualifications and qualifications systems continue to be recognised as a tool for quality assurance and relevance of the system and countries will keep on working on that in future;
- Upgrading the skills of teachers and trainers in VET is a priority mentioned by all partner countries;
- Stronger involvement of social partners in the VET policy cycle, with a focus on moving from involvement in dialogue to partnerships for delivery;
- Strengthening the implementation capacity for system change and impact.

MOVING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Delivery

Countries have the policies and instruments to move ahead with the modernisation of their VET systems. But the results of those policies are not yet visible to citizens. It will be necessary in the future to intensify efforts to put policies into action, to shift from pilots to mainstreaming and change at system level.

Cooperation

This is a demanding and difficult task and it will require enhancing implementation capacities by activating actors and ensuring stronger cooperation among them. The existing cooperation on problem analysis and policy formulation needs to expand across the policy cycle. It also needs to expand and be systematically promoted from a national, regional and sectoral perspective towards community engagement and local partnership for social cohesion, growth and jobs. But expansion and intensification of cooperation also needs transparency and accountability mechanisms to allow for more efficient policy cycle management.

Diversification

There is growing recognition in the partner countries that VET is at a turning point, needing to become more strategic and available to everyone everywhere. Diversification of programmes and delivery mechanisms is happening in all partner

countries, but this can be further intensified for VET to become responsive to ever more complex needs and reach a wide range of beneficiaries. More flexible forms of VET to bring it closer to final beneficiaries and the use of new technologies need to be further exploited.

Innovation

And for this, innovation is essential. VET needs to innovate in its delivery and in its interaction with the world that surrounds it. Tapping into the innovation capacity of actors, but also promoting and supporting innovation through public policies, is essential for the success of VET in the future.

Future

Monitoring VET reforms is about continuously responding to changing needs and preparing for the future. The world is changing. Technology is having an enormous impact on people's lives, on the economy, on employment patterns and on the skills that people need to have. If VET is to become the attractive pathway it aspires to be, if it is to play an active role in mitigating risks and building on opportunities, it needs to adapt proactively to change on an ongoing basis. At the beginning of the 2020s, existing VET strategies in the majority of ETF partner countries will expire. It is time to start thinking about what future VET strategies should look like.



“We need to look into the future and make sure that the change we talked about at the Torino Process actually happens and delivers for the young people of our partner countries”

Cesare Onestini, Director, European Training Foundation



The ETF is an EU agency that helps transition and developing countries to harness the potential of their human capital through the reform of education, training and labour market systems in the context of the EU's external relations policy.

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