

COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER 2019 UPDATE

JORDAN



1. A brief summary of key developments in VET and skills and EU and donor cooperation during 2017–18

Adoption of the National Strategy for Human Resource Development (2016–25) in 2016 led to a draft framework for technical and vocational education and training (TVET) reform. However, the Royal Cabinet rejected the framework because it did not reflect Jordan's human resource development strategy. The new Ministry of Labour, appointed in early 2018, withdrew laws that had been submitted to implement the framework. Some recommendations may remain, such as the establishment of a social partnership committee and sector skills teams led by employers' organisations.

Last spring, the government adopted a five-year employment programme (2017–21) focused on training to replace foreign workers, skilled job creation and kindergartens. With a budget allocation of EUR 110 million, the programme would generate 35,000 jobs but has been halted due to lack of funding.

The EU supported employment and TVET with a technical assistance project launched in mid-October 2017, implemented by GIZ. Many other donors are active in TVET. According to a GIZ mapping exercise, 38 employment and skills development projects are underway in Jordan, with EUR 335 million funding contributed by a dozen agencies. Other vocational training and skills development activities are part of broader programmes, such as relief agencies' projects for Syrian refugees in Jordan.

National TVET institutions are strained by the high number of donor-funded projects. Consequently, a donor coordination strategy is being discussed, with support from the EU Skills for Employment and Social Cohesion programme. The strategy calls for the design, monitoring and regular updating of an operational master plan, establishment of a master plan steering committee and facilitation of operational agreements between projects to support cost-effective delivery of results.

Four donors have approached the ETF to cooperate in designing and implementing their interventions. The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation is formulating a kindergarten and TVET programme (EUR 84 million). The German Adult Education Association is supporting government design of an adult education strategy. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is helping establish a sector skills council in tourism and hospitality. Finally, GIZ is implementing a project on Labour market-oriented vocational education, higher education and training that has four outputs: public-private dialogue, permeability of the education system, applied higher education and dual TVET.

Cooperation with these organisations would provide opportunities to work in adult education, public-private dialogue and permeability, among other strategic areas. The ETF could apply knowledge from previous projects, such as the study Public private partnerships for skills development. Cooperation would increase ETF visibility, as it has no projects running in Jordan.

2. An assessment of mid-term progress towards the ETF's 2020 objectives

Specific objective 1: support the EU Delegation in monitoring and policy dialogue on the EU Sector Reform Contract to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Skills for Employment and Social Inclusion programme

In March 2018, the ETF carried out a mid-term evaluation of the EU programme Skills for Employment and Social Inclusion. The resulting report contains recommendations of use to the EU Delegation and the Government of Jordan in the design of a new EU intervention for the TVET sector. Results were presented during a steering committee meeting for the EU programme and the report was shared with the EU Delegation and the Ministry of Labour.

Pre-assessment of disbursement indicators in the last two years and this mid-term evaluation reinforced the ETF's capacity to monitor and evaluate EU interventions and deepened its knowledge of the TVET system and stakeholders. The ETF is in a good position to provide the EU Delegation with the right support for designing new interventions.

The ETF helped design a complementary measure for the EU programme: a EUR 4 million grant scheme targeting civil society and employers' organisations. The focus is poverty reduction and integration into the formal economy of people in the informal economy and disadvantaged, marginalised groups.

Specific objective 2: help Jordan develop and use labour market intelligence, methodologies and tools to aid employment and TVET policymaking

The ETF is no longer working on this objective. The technical assistance component of the EU programme is currently covering this topic.

3. Actions planned for 2019

Specific objective 1: support the EU Delegation in monitoring and policy dialogue on the EU Sector Reform Contract to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Skills for Employment and Social Inclusion programme

On request, the ETF will advise the EU Delegation on implementation of complementary measures of the sector reform contract. It will support the technical assistance project in aspects related to social partnership and the labour market and potentially in the areas of continuous professional development, qualifications and grant schemes. It may assist in the design of a new EU intervention in the sector.

The ETF has been asked by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations to assess sector strategy progress, relevance and credibility in relation to budget support.

If requested by the European Commission or the EU Delegation, the ETF will support EU-Jordan policy dialogue with inputs to European Neighbourhood Policy action plan monitoring and bilateral subcommittee meetings, delivery of annual country fiches to DG Employment and follow-up of the Mobility Partnership.

In 2019, the fifth edition of the Torino Process will be launched. Jordan is interested in leading the process, which is considered a learning opportunity. The Secretary General of the Ministry of Labour would like to establish a permanent working group for the Torino Process and other activities. This group's policy analysis capacity could be strengthened at workshops to review the progress of the Torino Process. Torino Process results should reveal the achievements of the human research development strategy and provide input for a new EU intervention in the VET sector.