



INTRODUCTION

The ETF is the EU agency tasked with supporting human capital development in the countries neighbouring the EU in the context of the EU's external relations policies. In doing this, the ETF draws on relevant EU internal policies and policy instruments. The ETF supports its partner countries to harness the potential of their human capital through the reform of education, training and labour market systems. This mission is increasingly complex as the EU faces considerable challenges. Many of the EU's neighbouring regions are poor, economically fragile, and affected by social and political unrest. To the south and the east of the EU, armed conflicts have unsettled countries and, among other things, prompted a spike in migration towards the EU.

The ETF's Single Programming Document 2017-20 frames the organisation's strategy and the annual work programmes for the period. In preparing this document, the ETF took into account the findings from the 2016 external evaluation covering work carried out from 2011 to 2014 and which provided inspiration for the ETF intervention logic connecting objectives with the cascade of outcomes, intermediate and long-term impact, as well as in terms of the sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency. The ETF's seven strategic projects form the basis of the ETF's operational work and are designed to enhance access, attractiveness and improve quality standards in the overall provision of vocational education and training (VET), as well as to improve the system's capacity for policy making and its good governance.

Impact can be measured through the contribution of the VET system to producing graduates with employability skills and who will go on to get jobs and contribute to competitiveness, stability and social cohesion in partner countries as measured by dedicated long-term impact indicators.

Embedded in all the strategic projects is the function of communication, including events, publications, online and social media activity, to strengthen stakeholder relations, develop a compelling narrative for all partners, and build trust to enhance the ETF's effectiveness.

There are two strands of horizontal activity that serve to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of ETF institutional objectives. The first covers actions that enhance partnership and stakeholder cooperation. The second comprises specific actions within support functions (human resources, finance and procurement management, resource management, information and communication technologies, accounting and facilities management) to improve organisational performance.

"The ETF's programming support aims at ensuring EU assistance in human capital is accurately focused and differentiated in order to deliver sustainable transformation of human capital development in the partner countries.

Although much has been achieved in recent years, there are still challenges facing the partner countries and their relations with the EU, where more efficient and effective human capital development will improve stability and prosperity. This new strategic framework will enhance the ETF's capacity to deliver added value to the EU and impact in its partner countries."

Madlen Serban
ETF Director

STRATEGIC PROJECTS



SUPPORT TO EU ASSISTANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF EU EXTERNAL POLICIES

The ETF provides, on request, expertise and technical advice to the EU institutions, including EU Delegations for the different phases of the EU external assistance programming cycle (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) as well as to country level policy dialogue, in particular through regional platforms.

In 2017, the ETF will contribute to 16 EU projects with a total value of approximately €400 million in 13 countries.



POLICY ANALYSIS AND SYSTEM WIDE PROGRESS MONITORING (TORINO PROCESS)

The final stage of the fourth round of the Torino Process will take place in 2017. Results validated at national and regional level, as well as an international level by the international community and EU. In June 2017, national and international stakeholders, as well as from the EU, will draw conclusions from this round.

The outcomes of the Torino Process inform evidence-based policy making in partner countries and underpin the rationale for ETF interventions. Outcomes also influence EU policy and actions from other donors.



VET GOVERNANCE

The ETF's VET governance project seeks to support the reform of VET governance systems in order to ensure more effective, efficient and relevant policy outcomes.



VET PROVISION AND QUALITY

The strategic project on VET provision and quality aims to support the improvement of the quality and availability of VET so as to provide people with skills that meet employers' and society's needs.



QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATION SYSTEMS

Supporting the development of qualifications and qualification systems is a way of helping partner countries to improve so that people have clear and trusted way to demonstrate their competences.



EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND MOBILITY (INCLUDING SKILLS AND MIGRATION)

The strategic project on employment, skills and mobility supports countries to develop effective employment and labour mobility policies, with a particular focus on skills, to lead to better functioning



ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING AND ENTERPRISE SKILLS

Developing entrepreneurial learning and enterprise skills and supporting entrepreneurs to start and grow businesses can have a positive impact on a country's economy and society.

PARTNER COUNTRIES

The analysis of the partner country context is based on the outcomes from the 2016 Torino Process, which can be read at www.etf.europa.eu. Although the ETF's overall mission and policy context remain constant, there are continuous changes in the partner countries, so analysis may be updated throughout the year.

In 2017-18, the ETF gives high priority to Enlargement countries, Eastern Partnership countries with Association Agreements (Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) and EU priorities in the Neighbourhood South (Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia). Other neighbourhood countries will have medium priority, while the countries of Central Asia will be given low priority and engaged in regional rather than bilateral ETF activities. Low priority is also given to Russia and Israel according to the bilateral EU cooperation agreements with these countries, while no actions are foreseen in Syria and Libya at present.

The ETF's logic of action and identification of specific actions and outputs in each partner country are the result of a structured evidence-based policy analysis and needs assessment owned and driven by the partner countries, themselves largely through the Torino Process, which is a biennial stocktaking of progress in skills policies and vocational education and training. The following priorities stem from the results of this process, now in its fourth round.

Priorities

South Eastern Europe and Turkey

- National Qualifications Framework (NQF) implementation
- Teaching and learning processes and the quality of provision
- Policy monitoring
- Skills gaps and mismatches

Eastern Partnership

- Modernisation of qualifications and qualification systems
- Private sector involvement in VET
- Skills anticipation and matching
- VET attractiveness

Southern and Eastern Mediterranean

- Holistic evidence-based and integrated policies
- Multi-level governance in VET
- Employment and youth employability
- Modernisation of qualifications and qualification systems
- Promotion of entrepreneurial learning and skills for SMEs

Central Asia

- Labour market relevant VET
- Quality VET provision



STRATEGIC PROJECT

SUPPORT TO EU ASSISTANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF EU EXTERNAL POLICIES

Objective: support the EU external assistance project cycle and policy dialogue with high quality expertise.

- **Support for EU external assistance in different phases of the programming cycle.** This includes both VET/skills programmes (or components within broader programmes) and sector programmes in the Human Resources Development (HRD) field. Human capital and skills development issues have a high priority in all ETF partner regions. Requests will focus on support to operationalisation and/or monitoring of ongoing programmes or sector programmes.
- **Inputs to bilateral external assistance-related policy dialogue.** This will focus on South Eastern Europe and Turkey for enlargement-related policy dialogue and on Neighbourhood countries, in particular those with reinforced cooperation mechanisms with the EU (Association Agreements and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements etc.).
- **Inputs to EU reporting process linked to external relations policies.** This pertains to South Eastern Europe and Turkey as well as Neighbourhood countries. In 2017, an assessment of the relevant parts of the Economic Reform Programmes and the revised Neighbourhood policy reporting requirements (in terms of content, and timing) will have been agreed and stabilised, and the ETF's role in this cycle also agreed.
- **Inputs to regional policy dialogue.** The specific inputs will depend on the EU external assistance priority agenda, e.g. issues selected under the Eastern Partnership platforms, cooperation with the Regional Cooperation Council in the Enlargement region and the Union for the Mediterranean ministerial agenda.
- **Provision of expertise.** Contribute to training organised by the Directorate General for Development Cooperation for the EU Delegations and the VET facility.

Success indicators:

80% of the EU services supported for policy dialogue, programming/project design, monitoring and evaluation and implementation assess the ETF's contribution positively.

The ETF is requested to support the implementation, monitoring or evaluation in 50% of its partner countries.



**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ETF'S WORK
WITH THE EU DELEGATION IN UKRAINE.**

<https://youtu.be/kTU4CeqqU-w>

STRATEGIC PROJECT POLICY ANALYSIS AND SYSTEM WIDE PROGRESS MONITORING



ETF
INTERNATIO

Objective: to improve policy making in VET by strengthening institutional capacity for the generation and use of evidence throughout the policy making cycle, and to develop a culture of policy monitoring, feedback and improvement.

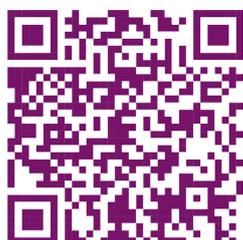
- **Support partner countries engaged in strengthening their technical and institutional capabilities in the area of evidence-based policy making.** In 2017, the project will provide input to the development/consolidation of monitoring and evaluation processes at national level, with a focus on the involvement of non-government and sub-national level stakeholders, and on technical capabilities for policy analysis and policy decision making, including ex-ante impact assessment.
- **Provide expertise input for the monitoring of the South East Europe 2020 Strategy.** This will be closely coordinated with the ETF's support for the Copenhagen Process and the input to the Economic Reform Programmes.
- **Provide an interim report on progress.** This will be in cooperation with Cedefop and based on the Torino Process findings and in line with the Copenhagen process monitoring framework. The report will focus on progress achieved by candidate countries (Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey) in implementing the medium term deliverables as well as the country monitoring annual inputs.
- **Ensure the follow up of all related Riga activities within the EU presidencies.** The ETF will work jointly with Cedefop on reporting progress through the Riga 2017 interim report and country fiches. Both institutions will continue close collaboration within the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training and the Directors General for Vocational Training platforms to ensure the follow up of all related Riga activities within the EU presidencies agenda.
- **Capacity building.** The ETF will also continue to support the institutionalisation of national networks for collecting, processing and analysing information to monitor medium term deliverables and provide capacity building for evidence collection and analysis, set up of indicators, benchmarking, policy analysis and evidence-based policy making.

Sharing findings of the 2016 round of the Torino Process will be the focus of the ETF's corporate conference in June 2017.

Success indicators:

An increasing number of partner countries progress within, or to the next, policy development stage with regard to the use of policy analysis in the policy cycle.

Increased quality of partner country reports to the Copenhagen-Bruges-Riga process, measured using Cedefop feedback on the usability of evidence for the report.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ETF'S TORINO PROCESS.

[https://youtu.be/](https://youtu.be/P1XlaxHY0VE?list=PLYK8JpvJRLjgvOpxtUIqQIRmGyVjiQv)

[P1XlaxHY0VE?list=PLYK8JpvJRLjgvOpxtUIqQIRmGyVjiQv](https://youtu.be/P1XlaxHY0VE?list=PLYK8JpvJRLjgvOpxtUIqQIRmGyVjiQv)



STRATEGIC PROJECT VET GOVERNANCE

Objective: improve VET system governance by empowering stakeholders to design, formalise and implement coordination mechanisms at national, regional, sector and local levels.

- **Strengthen the VET system governance.** This includes issues linked to legislation, institutional settings, and coordination and cooperation mechanisms. The analysis of existing arrangements is the first step in the ETF intervention; this is followed by expertise to improve legal frameworks, governance functions, platforms for dialogue and effective partnerships, as well as other coordination mechanisms depending on needs.
- **The territorial (vertical) dimension of skills and VET governance.** This includes support to VET regionalisation processes and, where relevant, also to integrated territorial development, in alliance with the EU smart specialisation policy. The actions are centred on sharing good practice, the definition of national-regional-local mandates and their links and the active involvement of actors in innovation for local development.
- **Institutionalisation and strengthening of role of social partners, at national, territorial or sector level.** This includes capacity building of selected social partner organisations, in order to sustain their roles and functions in VET councils and other tripartite governance structures. The positive role of civil society organisations in VET will be taken into account in ETF advocacy.

Success indicators:

Coordination mechanisms, legislation and multilevel governance methodologies introduced in targeted countries (85%).

The ETF VET governance inventory is updated.

Targeted countries introduce mechanisms for national and sub-national coordination in VET (85%).

Social partners and other civil society organisations are actively involved in VET governance actions.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ETF'S WORK ON VET GOVERNANCE AND ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES.

[http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/8723E00BBB44FFBAC125802D0045C62B/\\$file/Local%20skills%20matter_EN.pdf](http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/8723E00BBB44FFBAC125802D0045C62B/$file/Local%20skills%20matter_EN.pdf)



STRATEGIC PROJECT

VET PROVISION AND QUALITY

Objective: support partner countries to enhance work-based learning, improve their quality assurance mechanisms and make continuing professional development of teachers and trainers in VET more effective.

- **Enhance work-based learning (WBL).** In South Eastern Europe and Turkey, the focus is on the candidate countries that have selected WBL as a priority area for identifying policy options under the relevant medium-term deliverables. In the Eastern Partnership, support will be provided through the implementation of the three-year regional initiative launched in 2015. In the Southern Mediterranean, following the collaboration with UNESCO in 2016 on the review of work-based learning policies, the ETF will support some countries to develop action plans to implement recommendations on how to enhance work-based learning.
- **Quality assurance (QA).** The transnational policy learning platform will be operational in 2017, focusing on systemic and systematic quality assurance in VET. It will be the vehicle to support participating partner countries to develop a systemic QA approach and focus on systematic monitoring of QA improvement to allow partner countries to progress in planning and/or implementation of policies and practices. In addition, targeted support will be provided to two or three selected priority countries to proceed with actions that improve their QA systems.
- **Continuing professional development of vocational teachers and trainers.** The focus will be on South Eastern Europe and Turkey. In 2017, the ETF will complete the initiative with another round of demonstration projects and recommendations to further develop, implement and monitor policies and practices to bring continuing professional development closer to the needs of schools, teachers and trainers to improve VET delivery. Policy dialogue and networking will be extended and its focus moved towards implementation and the achievement of respective medium term deliverables.

Success indicators:

- Candidate countries progress in the implementation of work-based learning medium term deliverables.
- Candidate country stakeholders participate in the European Alliance for Apprenticeships.
- At least four Eastern Partnership countries + Kazakhstan implement pilot work-based learning schemes/ initiate demonstration projects for work-based learning.
- Selected Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries develop action plans for work-based learning.
- 50% of partner countries participate in the quality assurance policy learning forum and 15% are committed to developing a systemic quality assurance approach and focus on monitoring improvement.
- Seven demonstration projects contribute to the implementation of continuing professional development policies in all countries in South Eastern Europe and Turkey.
- At least two candidate countries make progress in the implementation of medium term deliverables.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ETF'S ACTIVITIES IN WORK-BASED LEARNING.

http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/Working_together_on_work-based_learning__EN



STRATEGIC PROJECT QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS SYSTEMS

Objective: support countries to improve their qualifications and qualifications systems to make National Qualifications Frameworks a tool to modernise both initial and continuing training for lifelong learning, employability and competitiveness.

- **Policy advice and capacity building.** With a focus on 14 countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Kosovo, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Morocco, Israel, Egypt and Tunisia), with a differentiated approach to the interventions according to an assessment of progress in the policy stage carried out in 2016 and the seven countries where EU projects are supporting the modernisation of qualifications and qualification systems.
- **Help partner countries to develop skills and knowledge in reforming their qualification systems.** With a focus on enabling them to progress towards achieving recognition i.e. via measures for transparency, quality, labour market relevance and portability of qualifications. A specific measure will be the support to referencing/aligning their National Qualifications Frameworks to the European Qualifications Framework.
- **Collaborate with the employment and migration project.** In particular to produce a toolkit offering guidance on the better identification of migrants' skills and recognition of their qualifications, and on facilitating mobility. To support the Eastern Partnership, the ETF will bring stakeholders together, in the fourth quarter, and support them to identify and agree actions, instruments and cooperation processes with the six countries on effective recognition of skills and qualifications, as part of the implementation of the Association Agreements and the Mobility Partnerships.
- **Co-produce the third edition of the Global NQF inventory.** In conjunction with Cedefop and UNESCO, co-produce the Global NQF inventory with a new thematic chapter and updated ETF partner country chapters. The ETF will continue sharing knowledge on qualification systems via the Qualifications Platform.

Success indicators:

Candidate countries progress within, or to the next, policy development stage.

100% of partner countries developing National Qualifications Frameworks and working with the ETF analysed and reported in the inventory.

Measures for transparency, quality, labour market relevance and portability of qualifications.



**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ETF'S CORPORATE
CONFERENCE ON QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATION
SYSTEMS.**

<https://storify.com/etfeuropa/getting-organised-for-better-qualifications>



STRATEGIC PROJECT

EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY – INCLUDING SKILLS AND MIGRATION

Objective: to support partner countries to improve both initial and continuing training in terms of labour market intelligence and skills for employability.

- **Skills intelligence.** With a focus on the development of more comprehensive approaches, in particular in the short to medium term horizon, and in the key economic sectors. This will be done through building stakeholder capacity – also using methodological instruments jointly developed by ETF/ILO/Cedefop and promoting their cooperation.
- **Targeted actions.** In South Eastern Europe and Turkey, targeted actions will be defined to support countries in the implementation of Economic Reform Programmes (ERP) recommendations and measures. In the Eastern Partnership, the ETF will continue to implement the regional initiative “Make it Match” which started in 2014. This combines regional mutual learning on developing skills intelligence approaches (through Eastern Partnership platform 2) and capacity building actions for implementation in selected priority countries (through the ETF subsidy). In the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries, by building on the experience developed through the implementation of the GEMM project, the ETF will support the development of skills needs identification tools in selected countries.
- **Ensure a comprehensive and transversal approach.** Coordinated interventions in the skills and migration area to include expert inputs from across the different strategic projects. In particular, the ETF will provide expertise to support the implementation of skills-related actions included in the Mobility Partnerships with partner countries. Given the changing context in the field of migration, the ETF will follow the developments and may provide services in coordination with the Commission’s Directorate General for Employment, and upon request, information and expert support on short-term measures to address the immediate challenges of newly arrived migrants.
- **Establish a youth panel.** In the framework of the review of ENP, the ETF will support the establishment of a panel on youth employment and employability within the Eastern Partnership and encourage exchanges between Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries on youth policies.

Success indicators:

At least half of the countries receiving ETF support in the labour market field have developed mechanisms to increase the relevance of VET provision in respect of the labour market.

In at least four partner countries with Mobility Partnership agreements; national systems provide opportunities for labour market integration through the validation/recognition of migrants’ skills.

Five partner countries have started to develop and implement mechanisms to facilitate young people’s transition to work.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ETF’S APPROACH TO ANTICIPATING SKILLS NEEDS.

http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/Anticipating_skills_needs_A_%E2%80%99how_to%E2%80%99_guide_for ETF_partner_countries_EN



STRATEGIC PROJECT ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING AND ENTERPRISE SKILLS

Objective: to support partner countries to improve both initial and continuing training in terms of entrepreneurial learning and enterprise skills.

- **Build capacity and develop tools.** Pursue partner country progress in the SBA human capital development indicators (entrepreneurial learning, women's entrepreneurship and SME skills) through the SBA assessments. Follow-up recommendations from the assessments, with a particular emphasis on policy implementation and capacity building, will also feature in the work following specific country or regional requests.
- **Identify good practice.** Encourage partner country policymakers and training providers to improve policy and its implementation by identifying and disseminating quality-assured good practice in SME skills specifically in the pre-accession region focusing on those SMEs trading, or with a potential to trade, with the EU single market. Good practice will be shared through a number of multi-country cooperation mechanisms, including a) the South East Europe Working Group on Industrial Policy; b) Eastern Partnership Platform on Economic Integration and Convergence with EU Policies; and c) the Euro-Mediterranean Working Group on Industrial Cooperation.
- **Improve policy implementation.** Reinforcing the interface between the ETF's SBA policy assessment and follow-up support at country level and its good practice developments will be the key focus. In particular, the purpose is to improve policy implementation by closing the gap between practitioners and policymakers by way of dialogue and knowledge sharing. Particular attention will be given to promoting entrepreneurship in vocational education and training.

Success indicators:

Countries in Southern and Eastern Europe, Turkey and the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean record progress in HCD indicators.

Up to 10 examples of good practice in SME skills that are peer reviewed and available on the ETF platform.

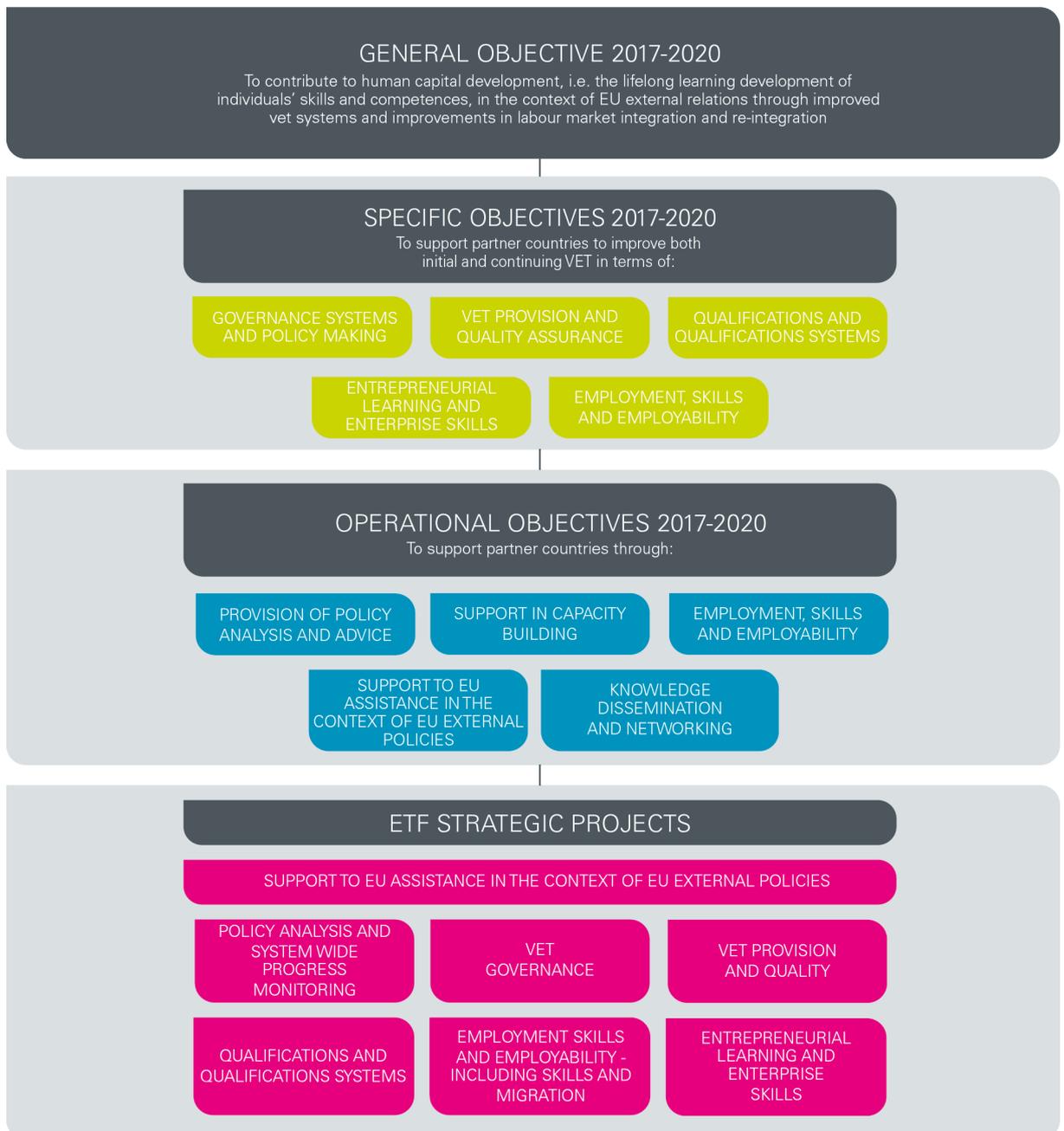


**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ETF GOOD PRACTICE ON
WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN ARMENIA.**

[https://youtu.be/
yjtoHmi8CCI?list=PLYK8JpvJRLjh1Ra0HQw7oRTWdVRzQJR6q](https://youtu.be/yjtoHmi8CCI?list=PLYK8JpvJRLjh1Ra0HQw7oRTWdVRzQJR6q)

OBJECTIVES

The diagram below shows how the general objectives for the period 2017/18 filter down into specific objectives, operational objectives and the seven strategic projects. According to the intervention logic, the ETF's work in the period 2017-20 combines these specific and operational objectives, drawing on the general objective, and building on the core themes from 2014-17.



FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

BUDGET	2017
STAFF COSTS	13,747,600
INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATING COSTS	1,808,600
OPERATIONAL COSTS	4,587,800
TOTAL	20,144,000

STAFF TYPE		TOTAL
TEMPORARY AGENTS	AD	57
	AST	31
TOTAL		88
CONTRACT AGENTS	IV	9
	III	24.5
	II	7
TOTAL CONTRACT AGENTS IN FULL TIME EQUIVALENT		40.5
DETACHED NATIONAL EXPERTS		1
LOCAL AGENTS		1
GRAND TOTAL		130.5

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

