

STRATEGIC PROJECT EMPLOYMENT

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN - WP2018

1. Summary

SP EMPL works in the framework of ETF's 2017-2020 multiannual specific objective area Employment, skills and employability (including skills and migration) that covers three strategic areas: labour market and skills intelligence, transition to work and skills and migration.

2. Progress to date and lessons learnt

Labour market and skills intelligence is a complex issue that is affected by a number of factors, including forces driving change in business and labour market, e.g. technology, globalisation and demographic dynamics. There is no universal and single best practice for identifying and anticipating future skills. Different countries use different methods, depending on their institutional set-up, research practices and resources. Many countries have accomplished progresses in developing or refinement of skills identification methods. However, there is still a long way to go for achieving a coherent and well-coordinated mix of methods, covering national, sectoral, and territorial dimensions. Success factors include clear policy intent and strategy; effective statistical infrastructure; complementarity of the methods; a mature approach to cooperation and an effective dissemination policy.

For almost a decade, the ETF has been working in this field. The initial work was mainly focusing on the development of a range of conceptual papers and methodological thematic materials, including "ETF Position Paper on Anticipating and Matching Skills" (2012), which is being revised, and six methodological guides on skills anticipation and matching developed together with ILO and Cedefop and published in 2015-2016.

In 2016, the SP's focus shifted from the methodological work to practical development and implementation of skills intelligence measures following a holistic approach that includes a variety of different methods, both quantitative and qualitative. Country capacity building activities are tailor-made according to the country's needs identified in the ETF's Country Strategy Papers. They are aimed at improving partner countries' policies, tools and measures to better address changing skills demand. Capacity building activities include a range of different methods, such as targeted policy and expert advice, field visits, learning activities and workshops. In 2016, a learning programme on skills anticipation and matching tools was provided to all ETF partner countries.

In the field of skills intelligence, the SP also fosters consolidation of stakeholder cooperation networks both at national and regional levels. Through the Make it Match network under EaP platform II, the project supports knowledge sharing, peer learning and networking among partner countries in the EE region. This encouraged both the cooperation among national experts of different countries at the regional level and communication among different stakeholders at the national level. At the country level several selected measures and examples of the best practice were piloted (Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova).

The most of the partner countries are facing a problem of skills mismatch on the labour market that leads to detrimental outcomes and reactions such as high unemployment and inactivity, out-migration and informal employment. To support countries in making better policy choices based on reliable and comprehensive evidence on skills evolution, in 2017, the SP developed a methodological framework for skill mismatch analysis and piloted the approach in four selected countries (Egypt, Georgia, Morocco, Serbia).

In 2016, the SP started working in the new area of transition to work with an aim to support partner countries in the development of policies and measures for upgrading skills and supporting a smoother transition from school to work. In particular, the SP organised activities to disseminate EU initiatives (e.g. Youth Guarantee) and best practices to support capacity building at national level and promote networking, and knowledge sharing among partner countries. The ETF devoted particular support in the area of youth employability to Kosovo¹ and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the two SEET countries confronted with highest risks of youth joblessness. In 2017, the SP carried out the mapping of policies supporting youth transition to work in EE region as a part of the ETF support to DG EMPL in creating the EaP panel on youth employment and employability.

Within the scope of the European Agenda on Migration, covering both the internal and external aspects of EU migration policy, including the Mobility Partnerships, the ETF works with partner countries on awareness raising and exchange of knowledge and experience regarding migrant support measures from an employment and skills development perspective. In 2016 and 2017, the SP delivered MISMES reports for Jordan and Lebanon, including not only national emigrants (as in the past MISMES editions) but also labour migrants and refugees, as requested by the EC. Dissemination events of the finding were held in both countries in 2017.

The SP actively contributes to the international debate by sharing partner countries' good practices and achievements. SP EMPL particularly focuses on strengthening dialogue and cooperation with donors' community in the countries with a view to promote mutual reinforcement of various intervention in area of VET and employability. Regular support has been provided to UfM Secretariat, both through written contributions and active participation in UfM events.

In 2016 and 2017, the SP also provided substantial support to EU Delegations across regions, particularly contributing to programme design (Georgia), monitoring (Algeria) and evaluation (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan).

3. New opportunities, challenges and risks

Three ongoing global trends have the potential of significantly altering labour markets. They are globalisation, technological progress and demographic changes. Together, these trends are likely to affect the quantity and quality of jobs that are available. New technologies and new markets will generate new and more productive jobs. However, there are also significant challenges that might occur such as unemployment caused by automation and globalisation. It could also make it harder to generate the job growth required to provide employment opportunities for the large number of young people entering the labour market in many developing countries. Moreover, providing these large cohorts of young people with the right skills to find good jobs will also be a major challenge. In the unstable and changing economic context it is important to build resilient and adaptable labour markets that allow workers and countries to manage the transition with the least possible disruption, while maximising the potential benefits offered by the global trends.

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence – hereinafter “Kosovo”.

The 2016 New Skills Agenda for Europe seeks to improve the quality of skills training and to make the skills acquired more visible and comparable from one country to another. It puts a new emphasis on VET as a pathway to excellence by increasing its attractiveness, revising quality standards and streamlining governance for cooperation in VET. In 2018, the ETF will start analysing how ongoing global trends will affect future of work in its partner countries to foster required changes and developments in their VET and skills development systems.

4. Key priorities for 2018

In 2018, the SP will be working in all three strategic areas. In the area of skills intelligence, priorities will be to (i) support selected countries to upstream existing tools and mechanisms or to set up new ones, where needed, (ii) further facilitate peer learning on the implementation and use of intelligence tools, and (iii) hold a debate with partner countries on the nature, extent and policy implications of skills mismatch in the broader frame of economic and technological change.

In the area of transition to work, based on the EU 'Youth Guarantee' initiative, the SP will continue supporting partner countries in developing and implementing policies to support young people's transition to work. This will entail an in depth discussions with countries on different methods to improve policies for easing youth transition.

In the area of skills and migration, the SP will raise awareness and facilitate exchange of knowledge on existing migrant support measures from an employment and skills development perspective, in view of supporting Mobility Partnership agreements implementation and negotiations, when requested.

5. Expected Outcomes 2018

Outcome 1: Further development and implementation of labour market and skills intelligence tools and mechanisms in the partner countries

CPI: *Labour market and skills intelligence is used to inform skills development policies* assesses the following three aspects: data collection system (data availability); mechanisms to analyse and disseminate data; and instruments to ensure the relevance of skills development policies.

Outcome 2: Increased information and awareness of the partner countries about Mobility Partnerships with the EU to develop and implement migrant support measures.

CPI: *Skills-related measures are developed to support migrant integration into labour market* assesses the following three aspects: availability of data on migration (i.e. migrants, refugees, asylum seekers); elements of qualification systems supporting migrants integration in labour market; and skills and employment policies supporting migrants and returnees in development and use of their skills.

Outcome 3: Further development and implementation of comprehensive policies and mechanisms to facilitate transitions to work in the partner countries

CPI: *Mechanisms are established to support transitions to work* assesses the following three aspects: availability of tools and instruments to match labour supply and demand; provision of career guidance in the life-long learning perspective; and institutional capacity to provide job matching services.

6. Actions and outputs for 2018²

SP EMPL contributes to the implementation of ETF's four operational objectives:

² See full list of activities in the Logframe.

Provision of support to the EC service: SP EMPL provides expertise inputs to EC services and EU DELs for EU-PC policy dialogue and EU programming. This includes:

- *Expertise inputs to EC services* – inputs to progress reporting and ERPs in the SEET region, inputs to ETF employability country fiches for the EE and SEMED countries.
- *Support to regional dialogues* - in the SEET region - the South East Europe 2020 Strategy and Employment and Social Affairs Platform; in the SEMED region - UfM dialogues and initiatives steered by the DG EMPL as well as by the UfM Secretariat (e.g. Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs; female employability, skills and mobility, etc);
- *Support to EU programming* – under the coordination of SP SUP, expertise inputs to the design or evaluation of EU support programmes in the field of employment, employability and skills development (upon request).
- *Migration and mobility* – expertise inputs to EC services in the EU Mobility Partnership dialogue and/or other migration dialogues/programmes in the neighbourhood countries and responding to new/emerging information needs of EU institutions and ad hoc requests, especially on migrant support measures from employment and skills perspective.

Capacity building of partner countries

In the area of skills anticipation the focus will be on practical development and implementation of skills intelligence following a holistic approach that includes a variety of different methods, both quantitative and qualitative. This work will be based on a high level of continuity from previous years and methodological tools developed by ETF, including ETF's Position Paper on anticipating and matching demand and supply of skills (2012) and six methodological guides on skills anticipation and matching developed together with ILO and Cedefop and published in 2016, as well as the learning programme on skill intelligence for shaping education, training and labour market policies. SP EMPL will provide capacity building support to the selected countries: in SEET region – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; in EE region – Azerbaijan, Moldova and Ukraine, in SEMED region – Algeria and Lebanon. This support will be tailor-made according to the country's specific needs. The project will involve a range of different methods, such as targeted policy and expert advice, field visits, peer learning activities and workshops.

Provision of evidence-based policy analysis

SP EMPL will devote more resources to the expertise development. This will include: continuation of skills mismatch analysis in the selected partner countries; thematic work in the field of future of work that will focus on transition countries; and development of an e-learning tool that will consolidate the above mentioned guides and the learning programme. The project will also conduct in-depth labour market analysis in two SEMED countries.

Knowledge dissemination and networking

SP EMPL actively disseminates ETF expertise at country level and at regional level through knowledge sharing, peer learning and networking activities, in particular 'Make it Match' network in EE. SP EMPL networking is built upon existing contacts and communication channels in the partner countries and beyond, linking, where possible, to existing working groups, committees and other collaborative formats. SP EMPL ensures interaction with stakeholders through face-to-face meetings and events, as well as fosters use of online tools such as webinars and e-seminars, where possible. SP EMPL also disseminates ETF expertise when it contributes to the training courses coordinated by the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation (ITC-ILO)

At the regional level dissemination is done through the different platforms established by the EU (EaP Platforms and panels, UfM meetings, SEET Employment and Social Affairs Platform etc). The project also will contribute to the international debate by sharing partner countries' good practices and achievements in order to keep a high awareness among key stakeholders (European Commission, EU Member States, policy makers in the partner countries, social partners, regional and international organisations). In particular, SP will organise ETF's 2018 corporate conference 'Skills development - from mismatch to matching'.

Cooperation with SPs and CDs

In its work SP EMPL actively cooperates with other SPs, in particular - with SP QUAL in the field of migration (recognition and validation) and development of occupational standards; with SP GOV in the field of sector councils and skills anticipation and matching capacity; with SP EL in the field of SMEs skills needs identification and development; with SP VET provision in the field of career guidance and work based learning, with SP Torino process's STAT team in the field of labour market monitoring, with SP EUSUP on provision of support to EU services. The SP will also work closely with Country Desks (CDs) and organise its work according to the priorities and needs identified in the Country strategy papers. The CDs will be involved both in the operational planning of the activities and their implementation in the respective countries.

7. Knowledge Management

Knowledge management is a horizontal function which requires involvement of all team members. The team will implement activities that foster interaction and reflection, in particular, by using IT tools that support networking, knowledge sharing and remote cooperation.

In the field of knowledge management SP EMPL will:

- organise of knowledge sharing sessions ("cappuccinos" and "ristrettos") on themes that will be identified along the year and active participation in the events organised by other SPs;
- develop an e-learning tool – programme on skills needs identification for shaping education, training and labour market policies.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

The main tools for monitoring implementation of the SP EMPL's activities are Dashboard, Q-reporting and regular communication about progress and problems in the implementation within the team.

SP EMPL will continue monitoring partner countries' main policy developments in employment and education and training fields and will provide yearly 'country fiches' for the European Neighbourhood countries (both Eastern and Southern partners) and 'progress reports' for SEET. The SP will use EMPL's CPIs to assess the progress in policy implementation in partner countries.