

Event name

EU-Armenia Strategic Policy Dialogue Workshop Armenia Education Reform Strategy and Torino Process 2018-20 in Armenia: Preparing for Tomorrow's Skills
Yerevan, 18 March 2019

Main objective/s of the event

The launch of the 5th round of the Torino Process in Armenia took place in Yerevan the 18 March 2019 with the participation of a wide range of stakeholders.

The event marked two key steps towards progress of the EU and Armenia cooperation in the field of education and training systems reforms:

- The Director from Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations and the European Union Delegation to Armenia launched the EU-Armenia policy dialogue on education in the framework of CEPA¹ and the Five Year Government Programme and the Education development strategy for Armenia.
- The European Training Foundation launched the new cycle of the 'Torino Process' (2018-20).

The objectives were:

- To launch initial discussion on the main objectives of the education sector reform in Armenia and the possible EU support for this process.
- To introduce the Torino Process 2018-20 objectives and strategic orientations, in particular in the context of Armenia.
- To discuss added value of Torino Process in the framework of the EU-Armenia policy dialogue on education.
- To present and familiarise with the Torino Process National Reporting Framework - NRF (framework of analysis) and clarify any questions on the NRF, including ETF assessment.

Background

In the framework of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA), the Five Year Government Programme and the Education development strategy for Armenia, the EU-Armenia policy dialogue on education is launched, aiming to outline the main directions and objectives, and draw up a roadmap for the implementation of the Reform Agenda of Armenia in the Education sector, identifying future EU-Armenia cooperation in this field.

The Torino Process is an evidence-informed analysis of Human Capital Development issues and VET policies responses in the ETF partner countries. The process, launched by the ETF for the first time in 2010, enters in its fifth round of implementation that will be completed in the period 2019-2020.

An important challenge in the country is the on-going need to create better links and connections between related policy areas. There have been many useful policy initiatives in the country over the years, but their potential to accelerate reform has been constrained by the lack of synergies between the stakeholders. The Torino process is an opportunity to create a platform for dialogue that connects different policy areas and issues. TPR supports country's effort to bridge the gap between education and business world, notably, by encouraging private sector representatives to discuss their involvement in VET.

A core principle of the Torino Process is ownership and participation of all key stakeholders in the participating countries, including social partners and civil society. The process is led by the VET department of the Ministry of Education and Science. The focus is on wider Human Capital Development, covering Education, Training, skills and Life-Long Learning. The role of VET is very fundamental, as it has an impact on the implementation of high-level objectives for growth and sustainable development. Important strategies have been developed in the last two years, focusing on VET and skills issues.

The Torino Process enables partner countries to monitor the implementation of VET reforms, assess progress and impact on citizens and agree about future priorities. Armenia has been involved in the Torino Process since 2010-2011 showing, despite relatively low expenditure on education, an overall high educational attainment. However, public spending is still low (7.3%) in vocational education the pathway towards better employability.

¹ Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement

Short introduction/description of the event

The event was linked to the launching of the EU-Armenia policy dialogue on Education. Mr Arayik Harutyunyan Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, HE Mr. Piotr Antoni Świtalski, Ambassador, Head of the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Armenia, Mr Laurence Meredith EC DGNEAR Director Neighbourhood East, Ms Arevik Anapiosyan Deputy Minister of Education, Ms Anastasia Fetsi ETF Head of Operations Department presented the political and strategic framework.

HE Mr Switalski and Mr. Meredith formally launched the EU-Armenia dialogue on education reform together with the European Training Foundation (ETF). Mr Araik Harutyunyan, outlined the main objectives to tackle in the education sector. He also confirmed his willingness to set up a constructive Policy Dialogue on education.

In order to launch discussion with the audience, Ms Arevik Anapiosyan, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education and Science, delivered a presentation of the Armenian Education System and Development Path: overview of plans for preschool development and education, general school education, VET and Higher education/researches.

The second session was dedicated to launch the fifth round of the TRP that was an opportunity to present the new developments, new orientations and improvements of the on-going round of the process and, in particular, its broader scope and the ETF assessment. The audience highlighted the relevance of the novelties.

Mr Artak Aghbalyan, Torino Process National coordinator, Head of VET Department, Ministry of Education and Science of Armenia and Mr Didier Gelibert ETF Country coordinator for Armenia presented the implementation of the TRP in Armenia, the timeline and the expected deliverable.

Work groups were organised in order to technically review the different thematic areas and get familiar with the recent development. The working group feedback was facilitated by the TRP national expert Mr Aram Avagya.

The outcomes of the discussion were focused on i) the understanding and clarification of the topics tackled, ii) on how institutions could be efficiently involved in the process.

KEY OUTCOMES / CONCLUSIONS (related to TRP)

- Relevant stakeholders have welcomed the Torino Process positively. The calendar of activities for implementation has been confirmed.
- Main issues raised in the discussion were:
 1. The importance of having clear understanding of the indicators and how they will be shared among the institutions,
 2. A detailed analyses/diagnosis is needed, and in line with the questions and suggestions of the NRF.
 3. The need to make sure that all important evidence is collected and analysed.
 4. Some data are missing; a specific work should be done to overcome this obstacle.
 5. Some information looks like redundant.
- The National Expert will collect the first information by addressing request to the relevant persons. Then he will draft in cooperation with the national coordinator and the ETF country coordinator a draft of NRF. These first outcomes will be shared with stakeholders through focus group organised in June.

For more information on the Torino Process in Armenia, please contact Didier Gelibert, the ETF Country coordinator for Armenia: Didier.gelibert@etf.europa.eu

