

# Evaluation of the ETF Monitoring and assessment

Final report



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# 1. Introduction and methodology

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## The context of this evaluation study

The European Training Foundation (ETF) is developing a **new framework for monitoring of policy and progress with system change towards lifelong learning**. The new framework is built on the ETF's previous experience with monitoring, among which the Torino Process is the most extensive and well-known but far from the only one.

**Monitoring and assessment** is one of the three pillars of the ETF Strategy 2027 and a distinctive area of ETF action when implementing its role as the centre of expertise for the EU external action in human capital development.

The object of this evaluation is the ETF Monitoring and assessment service. One important activity of the ETF Monitoring and assessment is the **Torino Process** – a participatory analytical review of the status and progress of VET and skills policies and contexts in the partner countries, which is summarised in the national (in some countries also sub-national) and comparative regional reports. The Torino Process has had two general **objectives**:

- Acquisition of up-to-date knowledge about the situation, policies, and their results in partner countries to inform EU policy-making (and by extension that of EU international partners); and
- Strengthening the ownership, participation and evidence base of policymaking in the partner countries to improve their VET and skills policies.

While the Torino Process is the flagship element of the ETF Monitoring and assessment service, it is complemented by **other monitoring processes** with a distinctive thematic focus and a set of custom-made analytical tools. For example, regular monitoring activities such as the “Key Indicators on Education, Skills, and Employment” (KIESE), the National Data Collection (NDC), the various inventories (e.g. on qualifications or governance), the country fiches for the European Commission, several thematic fiches (e.g. on quality assurance, work-based learning) record developments over time according to a fixed set of indicators. Furthermore, ETF is officially tasked by the European Commission with monitoring the implementation of certain policies and developments in the EU's candidate countries (mainly those which are common with EU Member States). These include e.g. the integrated monitoring of the implementation of the EU Council Recommendation on VET and of the Osnabrück Declaration (with first aspects of monitoring exercise taking place in first half of 2022, focusing on the preparation of National Implementation Plans); or the forthcoming monitoring of Youth Guarantee in Western Balkans. These two activities are also special as they are carried out by ETF jointly with other organisations, namely Cedefop and ILO.

After completing the last round of the Torino Process (in 2020), in 2021 the ETF started working on the conceptualisation and design of a **New Monitoring Framework**. The framework will aid in tracking and explaining **education and training system performance and outcomes in multiple aspects relevant to lifelong learning** in all ETF partner countries, as well as progress and system change within these aspects. The goal is to help partner countries and international partners create chances for everyone to learn throughout their lives.

The New Monitoring Framework is planned to consist of **two levels**:

- **Level 1:** Monitoring system performance and outcomes for lifelong learning. This level consists of a collection of carefully chosen indicators that serve as proxies for system performance in areas that are important for lifelong learning. System performance will be tracked on a regular (yearly) basis. As a result, evidence will be collected of how successfully vocational education and training (VET) systems deliver on important commitments and objectives for lifelong learning, for all potential learners and in all learning environments.
- **Level 2:** Explaining performance – reviews of policies for lifelong learning. Level 2 covers selected policy areas as aspects of a lifelong learning system that are relevant to the interpretation of monitoring results and system performance improvement in the areas covered on Level 1. On the second level of the framework, the outcomes of the Level 1 monitoring will be integrated and explained with the help of in-depth reviews of what countries do to achieve their policy objectives.

## Methodology

The **objective of this study**, as described in the terms of reference, **was to evaluate the monitoring and assessment service of the ETF** in the last 5 years against the plans and help ETF to outline a new monitoring framework in view of providing recommendations and proposing options for the further development of the monitoring and assessment service of the ETF.

The evaluative study used the following methods:

- **Desk research.** The desk research has guided our evaluation work during the project. It covered various documents, including previous evaluation reports, ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs, EU policy documents relevant to ETF Monitoring and assessment, ETF planning documents, and others. Annex 3 of the report provides the list of sources analysed.
- **Interview programme.** We conducted 40 semi-structured interviews with different types of stakeholders, from ETF staff to partner country representatives, the European Commission and international development cooperation organisations (the interviews were carried out using the general interview questions below as a questionnaire). The interviews in Partner Countries were concentrated in five selected countries – Jordan, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Montenegro, and Morocco.
- **Focus group.** We conducted a focus group with Torino Process coordinators from partner countries. The invitation was sent out to all coordinators identified by ETF. All who agreed to take part were involved in the focus group; these included coordinators from Egypt, Georgia, Morocco, North Macedonia, Russia, Turkey.
- **Policy Delphi survey.** We conducted a two-round Policy Delphi survey with a wider group of key stakeholders from within the EU, the partner countries and internationally. Round 1 of the survey received 110 responses and Round 2 of the survey received 57 responses. In more detail, the Policy Delphi survey campaign was conducted on two main channels: 1) email campaign, 2) on ETF Open Space. A contact list was provided by ETF, while we regularly posted on Open Space, ensuring that active users have seen the call for participation. Below, the table summarises complete answers by the different campaign channels.

**TABLE 1. COMPLETE RESPONSES BY SURVEY CAMPAIGN CHANNELS**

	<b>ROUND 1</b>	<b>ROUND 2</b>
<b>Email campaign</b>	87	56
<b>ETF Open Space</b>	12	1

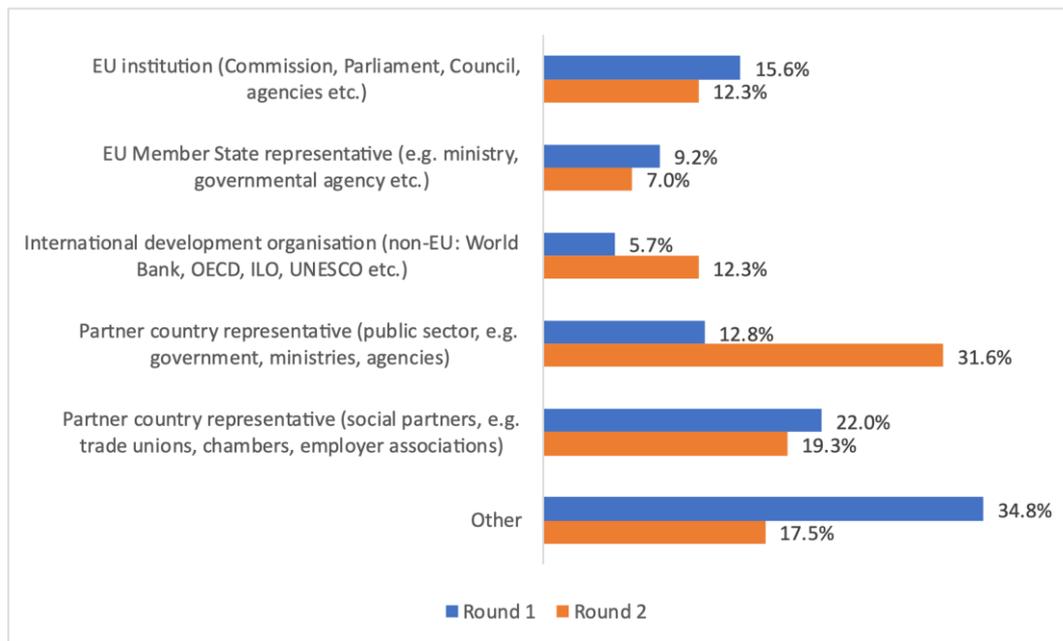
The table below summarises the respondents by regions as determined by ETF. The most substantial participation came from the Western Balkans and Turkey in Round 1 of the survey (28.8%). In Round 2, countries from the Eastern Partnership, Western Balkans and Turkey provided the largest contributions (24.6-24.6%), making up almost half of the responses.

**TABLE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF ANALYSED RESPONSES BY ETF REGIONS**

	<b>Round 1</b>	<b>Round 2</b>
<b>EU</b>	18.7%	10.5%
<b>Central Asia</b>	9.4%	12.3%
<b>Eastern Partnership</b>	17.3%	24.6%
<b>Southern and Eastern Mediterranean</b>	20.9%	21.1%
<b>Western Balkans and Turkey</b>	28.8%	24.6%
<b>Other or prefers not to say</b>	5.0%	7.0%

As the figure shows below, the Round 1 survey contained much more respondents from the 'Other' category, although not many respondents provided further description about themselves. Some indicated to be field experts in education, implementing organisation or consultants. Social partners from partner country representatives (22%) and EU institutions (15.6%) were the second and third most numerous groups in Round 1. In Round 2 of the survey, Partner Country representatives from the public sector constituted the largest group (31.6%), followed by social partners (19.3%).

**FIGURE 1. COMPOSITION OF POLICY DELPHI RESPONDENTS BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP**



### Evaluation questions

The evaluation study builds on a set of seven evaluation questions (laid out in the terms of reference), each consisting of several sub-questions developed by the research team. The evaluation questions are designed to cover the **relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, coherence, complementarity** and **added value** of the ETF Monitoring and assessment service. The list of questions is presented below.

- **EQ1.** How relevant is the content and how has the ETF Monitoring in general been used by diverse stakeholder groups so far?
  - **EQ1.1.** How relevant is the content of outputs to the needs of EU external policy stakeholders, partner countries and other relevant players?
  - **EQ1.2.** How relevant is the Monitoring process to the capacity building with partner countries?
  - **EQ1.3.** What methods has ETF used to assess the needs of its main clients (ETF staff, European Commission and Delegations, Partner Countries, and international organisations and donors) in relation to ETF Monitoring? What could be the needs assessment methods in the new ETF Monitoring Framework?
  - **EQ1.4.** To what extent have the outputs been used by different groups of stakeholders? For what purposes?
- **EQ2.** What is the added value of the new ETF monitoring framework when compared to the monitoring solutions and practices of other, well-established multilateral partners active in the field, such as UNESCO, the OECD, World Bank, and others?
  - **EQ2.1.** Does the ETF Monitoring have unique elements in terms of topics and geography covered, granularity of data and analysis, methodology used, number and diversity of partner country stakeholders engaged, take up of evidence in policy making?

- **EQ3.** Is the output of ETF Monitoring effectively feeding into decision-making by the Commission delegations and headquarters services, or changes in policy and/or practice in ETF partner countries as well as into ETF decision making (e.g. programming)?
  - **EQ3.1.** To what extent are the EC services familiar with the relevant outputs? To what extent is their evidence used in the policy dialogue and documents?
  - **EQ3.2.** To what extent do ETF Monitoring outputs lead to increased demand for ETF expertise?
  - **EQ3.3.** To what extent the development and utilisation of Monitoring outputs has led to lasting changes in EU and partner country policies and practices?
- **EQ4.** In which way does the ETF Monitoring feed into the policy advice ETF provides to its stakeholders?
  - **EQ4.1.** Does the Monitoring strike the right balance between investment in data collection and the development of analytical tailor-made outputs for various groups of users?
  - **EQ4.2.** To what extent does ETF staff use the evidence from outputs for their analysis, formulating advice, and in the planning of ETF activities?
- **EQ5.** How are the ETF Monitoring results and deliverables disseminated on the ETF website and in the ETF Open Space?
  - **EQ5.1.** To what extent are the results and deliverables reaching wider groups of stakeholders (those not directly involved in the Torino process and ETF events)?
  - **EQ5.2.** To what extent are they easily accessible on the website and Open Space and presented in a user-friendly way? Does the structure of documents allow to easily find the results?
- **EQ6.** Taking into account the feedback from ETF stakeholders which approach should the ETF use for developing the most appropriate ETF Monitoring and which indicators could be used to assess their usefulness and quality?
  - **EQ6.1.** What stakeholders believe to be the main elements of added value of ETF Monitoring, which are less important?
  - **EQ6.2.** What are the emerging needs of the key stakeholders that ETF Monitoring could potentially address?
  - **EQ6.3.** What are the most realistic and desirable options for developing ETF Monitoring given its achievements and emerging needs?
  - **EQ6.4.** Which options offer the best EU added value for the resources invested?
  - **EQ6.5.** To what extent would the different options for developing ETF Monitoring create resource (human and financial) savings, compared to the current framework? In what ways could the savings be best used to improve the ETF Monitoring?
  - **EQ6.6.** What KPIs could be set for the measurement of performance of the ETF Monitoring in the future?
- **EQ7.** Concrete recommendations on which and how best the ETF could design, develop and utilise, the Monitoring deliverables that best meet the diverse needs of ETF stakeholders, including recommendations on the use of digital and online technologies.
  - **EQ7.1.** What does ETF do well in Monitoring and what can still be improved at different stages of policy cycle?
  - **EQ7.2.** What can be improved in work organisation and technical modalities, methodology and indicators used in Monitoring, external networking and collaboration to best meet the needs of ETF stakeholders?

The evaluation questions stem from the need to **take stock of the progress made** by the ETF in its Monitoring and assessment service and **offer a strong prospective analysis element** with identification and assessment of future options for the ETF, as the Agency is moving toward the New Monitoring Framework. The assignment took place in parallel with the discussions within ETF in a dedicated working group developing the New Monitoring Framework. The evaluation aimed to inform these developments and provide a solid evidence base for any decisions.

The evaluation questions that are focused on the past performance of ETF Monitoring and assessment service are covered in chapter 2 (see specific questions mentioned in the brackets of each section's headings). Some other evaluation questions, namely EQ6.3, EQ6.4, EQ6.5, EQ6.6, EQ7, EQ7.1, and EQ7.2, are more future-looking; therefore, they are covered in chapter 3.

### Overview of this report

The **purpose of this report** is to **present the key findings** gathered via the methods described above and **the key takeaways** in the form of recommendations and options. These findings (chapter 2) and takeaways (chapter 3) are presented in the following **structure of four key themes** that emerged from the research activities:

- **Use and impact:** this covers typical uses of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs and the impact of ETF's Monitoring and assessment service.
- **Products and channels:** this covers ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs and their quality, ETF's digital products and channels (website, Open Space), potential future products, networks, and dissemination channels.
- **Content:** this covers themes and types of content.
- **Processes:** this covers various areas related to the processes of ETF Monitoring and assessment, including stakeholder needs assessment, stakeholder involvement and ownership, and branding.

## 2. Looking back: retrospective evaluation results

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### 2.1. Uptake, use, and impact

The first section on evaluation results focuses on the usage of the various types of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs and the impact of ETF Monitoring and assessment service. ETF Monitoring and assessment service's written outputs and events will receive special focus, as these are the key ETF Monitoring and assessment products used by stakeholders, while other outputs are mostly assisting in channelling information or in facilitating cooperation. The current chapter is structured around the aspects of **familiarity and use** of the ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs, specific ways of **how they are used**, and **their impacts** (how they contribute to specific goals).

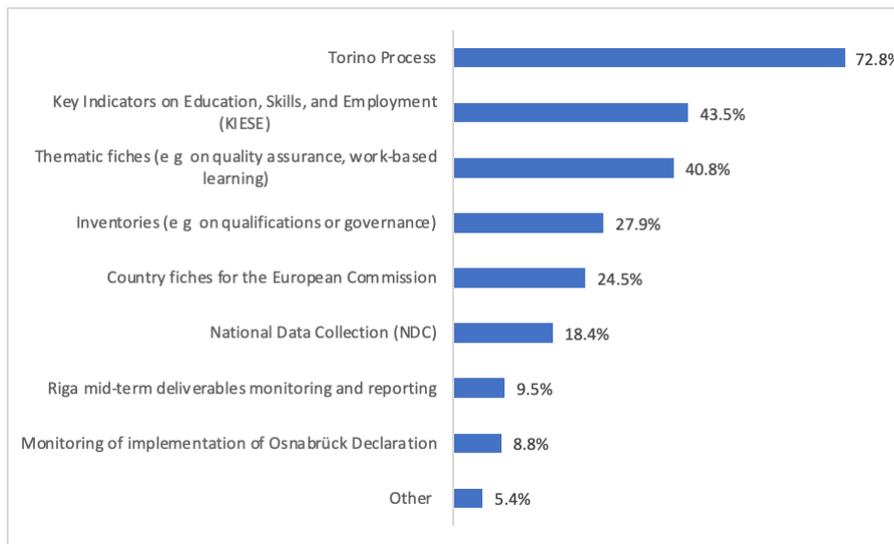
#### 2.1.1. Familiarity with (uptake) and use of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs (EQ1.4, EQ3.1, EQ3.2, EQ4.2)

##### Familiarity with the ETF Monitoring and assessment

The Policy Delphi respondents were asked whether they are familiar with certain ETF Monitoring and assessment activities. We assumed that this question well reflects the **uptake of activities** – to answer this positively, the respondent needs to not only have heard of the activity, but to have used it. Asking about familiarity reveals that ETF Monitoring and assessment activities may be organised into four main groups by how well-known they are. In total, 72.8% of the respondents to the Policy Delphi know about the Torino Process, making this the most well-known ETF Monitoring and assessment activity. KIESE and Thematic fiches are similarly well-known (43.5% and 40.8%). The third group ranges from 27.9% to 18.4% in familiarity: Inventories, Country fiches and NDC belong to this category. Lastly, the Riga mid-term deliverables monitoring and reporting and the Monitoring of implementation of Osnabrück declaration were the least known.

These uptake results should however be interpreted taking into account the context of the monitoring and assessment activities. There are clear reasons for these differences. Torino Process is over a decade old, and as a flagship activity of ETF has received significant resources both in direct stakeholder engagement and in promotion. It also has the widest thematic scope. In comparison, other monitoring activities are younger, more specialised, and some of them are only focused on a few countries, e.g. the EU candidate countries for the Riga mid-term deliverables or the Osnabrück declaration monitoring processes. Others are also targeting specific users, such as the Country fiches, which are prepared upon request of EC services.

**FIGURE 2. WHICH OF THE ETF MONITORING ACTIVITIES ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH?**



As expected, the Torino Process had the best uptake among all stakeholder groups. EU institutions were the most familiar with the Torino Process (86.4%), **Country fiches (68.2%), KIESE and Thematic fiches (63.6%)**. EU member state representatives (87.5%) are much more familiar with Thematic fiches than other stakeholders. Partner country representatives from the public sector were less familiar with KIESE than their counterparts. Furthermore, both the public sector representatives and the social partners from partner countries were much less familiar with Country fiches than other groups.

**FIGURE 3. UPTAKE OF ETF MONITORING ACTIVITIES BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

	Torino Process	Key Indicators on Education, Skills, and Employment (KIESE)	National Data Collection (NDC)	Inventories (e.g. on qualifications or governance)	Country fiches for the European Commission	Thematic fiches (e.g. on quality assurance, work-based learning)	Riga mid-term deliverables monitoring and reporting	Monitoring of implementation of Osnabrück Declaration	Other
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	86.4%	63.6%	18.2%	36.4%	68.2%	63.6%	31.8%	31.8%	4.5%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	61.5%	53.8%	15.4%	30.8%	38.5%	46.2%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	75.0%	50.0%	12.5%	25.0%	37.5%	87.5%	25.0%	12.5%	0.0%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	79.6%	36.7%	18.4%	24.5%	12.2%	32.7%	6.1%	6.1%	8.2%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	72.2%	44.4%	22.2%	27.8%	5.6%	16.7%	5.6%	11.1%	0.0%
Other	61.3%	38.7%	22.6%	29.0%	19.4%	41.9%	3.2%	0.0%	6.5%

**Use of the ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs in general**

First, we provide a general overview of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs, which will be followed by a more focused discussion on the different use cases, relying mostly on qualitative data.

The figure below shows where **ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs** are used most often. According to the data, more than half of stakeholders **share written outputs with other interested parties** (55.4%). Written outputs are used for research and as an input for policy-making in equal measure (45.6%), followed by using materials for events, discussions and workshops.

**FIGURE 4. WHERE ARE ETF MONITORING WRITTEN OUTPUTS USED?**



In terms of outputs from different monitoring activities, 50.9% of all the respondents familiar with the **Torino Process** share information with stakeholders, 42.1% employ it during policy-making and 40.4% utilise it for research or for preparing for events and discussions. In case of **thematic fiches**, 33.3% of the respondents share it further, 31.6% use it for research and for preparing for events and discussions, while 24.6% use it as a policy-making input. **Country fiches** are slightly more often used for policy-making (12.3%), than information sharing (10.5%), **Key Indicators** are somewhat more used for preparation for events and discussions (14%) than for other types of use, that remain at around 10%. In case of the other outputs, variation between the different types of use remains similarly low.

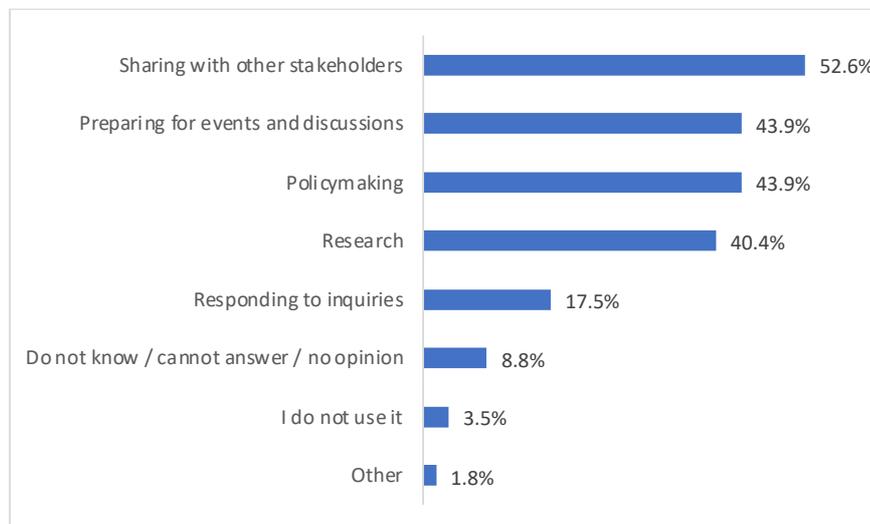
**Usage of written outputs differs quite a lot among the different stakeholder groups.** EU institutions, EU member state representatives and the public sector partner country representatives use written outputs most frequently for policy-making. International development organisations and social partners from partner countries tend to use it for sharing information, while other stakeholders use written outputs for research (see figure below).

**FIGURE 5. WHERE ARE ETF MONITORING WRITTEN OUTPUTS USED? (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP)**

	Polycymaking	Sharing with other stakeholders	Responding to inquiries	Preparing for events and discussions	Research	I do not use them	Do not know / cannot answer / no opinion
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	42,9%	28,6%	14,3%	28,6%	0,0%	28,6%	14,3%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	75,0%	50,0%	50,0%	25,0%	25,0%	0,0%	25,0%
International development organisation (non EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	42,9%	57,1%	28,6%	42,9%	42,9%	14,3%	0,0%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	50,0%	44,4%	16,7%	33,3%	50,0%	11,1%	0,0%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	54,5%	90,9%	18,2%	63,6%	45,5%	0,0%	0,0%
Other	20,0%	50,0%	20,0%	60,0%	80,0%	0,0%	0,0%

Information gathered during **events related to ETF Monitoring and assessment** has been used similarly as written outputs, although there are some slight differences, as the figure below summarises. While the four most selected uses have remained the same, ETF Monitoring and assessment events have marginally lower utility in research (selected by 40.4% of the respondents, compared to 45.6% in case of written outputs).

**FIGURE 6. WHERE DO YOU USE THE INFORMATION GAINED DURING ETF MONITORING EVENTS?**



The interviewed stakeholders confirmed that **ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs are used in their organisations and partner countries**. However, several interviewees from different countries mentioned that the **take-up of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs by more varied groups of stakeholders** (aside from government representatives) was limited in some cases. Different reasons were mentioned as a cause, including language barrier, low capacity of stakeholders to properly use the outputs, lack of national level dissemination, and lack of recognition of relevance of the outputs by wider groups of stakeholders.

Another issue limiting the use was the **timing of the data**. Due to the very long period of preparation, the ETF Monitoring and assessment data was not always timely and in many cases was outdated. This was more noticed by international organisations and the Commission rather than partner countries. COVID-19 was noted as a particular illustration of the necessity to react more quickly with monitoring – the global event of this proportion significantly changed the monitoring needs, bringing both new topics and necessity for a new look at old ones. For example, a topic of digital/online learning was only marginally touched in ETF Monitoring and assessment, whereas it has become the most pressing issue in most countries in the context of the pandemic.

In sum, written outputs are used most often for sharing information to other stakeholders, while policy-making and research are equally important purposes. In case of ETF Monitoring and assessment events, preparation for events and discussions gained more weight.

### **Use of the ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs by the ETF staff**

The evidence from Monitoring and assessment can also be considered as not always sufficiently used by the ETF staff. Multiple individual opinions of ETF staff point out that ETF Monitoring and assessment data is the primary source when drafting papers, preparing for events/conferences, consulting with countries and comparing policy areas across countries, the evidence from outputs is less often used when formulating advice and developing new interventions. The opinions of country level stakeholders diverged on the matter. While some said that ETF is able to capitalise on their analytical capacity in interpreting monitoring data with the purpose of providing advice, others said that the monitoring reports are largely “an information product only”.

The key reasons for this limited use in policy advice and planning of activities include (based on feedback from ETF staff when asked about the reasons):

- Sometimes ETF staff face **difficulties interpreting the data**, making sure that it is correct, and that the conclusions are objective. Where the data is collected by countries, it might also be not as accurate and objective as expected.
- **Data availability** – e.g. in Central Asia.
- The activities identified as necessary are **not possible to implement with ETF budget**.
- **Lack of consensus within ETF on how to interpret data**. There is a lack of agreement on how specifically the collected data and knowledge could be translated into policy advice, whether this should be done on country’s request or consistently for all countries. Interviewees acknowledged that sometimes there is no real consistency in using monitoring outputs, e.g. in terms of what actually ETF is analysing, what ETF wants to achieve, and how it is related to policy priorities.

Another major reason for lower usage that we identified based on impressions gained during interviews with ETF staff has been the disconnect between ETF staff working on ETF Monitoring and assessment (especially Torino Process) and policy units designing the interventions based on their expertise and knowledge. Torino Process is a country product and not a thematic product; meanwhile, the activities are planned from a thematic perspective. The disconnect is deepened by the fact that the Monitoring and the activity planning are both heavy and long processes with many stakeholders. Arguably, simply basing interventions on in-depth experience in the country is an easier and quicker approach to design activities – however, this is not a properly evidence-based approach.

### 2.1.2. Typical use cases of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs (EQ1, EQ1.4, EQ3, EQ3.1)

As it was discussed, **policy-making, information sharing, research and preparation for meetings, briefings and discussions were the four most frequent use cases of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs**. In the following sections, these types of activities are explored more in-depth, with the use of qualitative data from interviews. Furthermore, the list of typical activities was extended according to qualitative findings.

#### Policy- and decision-making

Interviewees frequently highlighted how recommendations from the outputs contribute to policy making in partner countries, which took several forms. ETF contributed to policy- and decision-making by:

- Providing a general overview and basis for comparison,
- Providing recommendations that were used to inform decisions,
- Adopting methodologies for monitoring and assessment,
- Complementing internally absent capacities.

It was frequently noted that ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs provide a **good overall snapshot**. Interviewees appreciated how outputs provide a “global vision”, showcasing general information and best practices in several countries. Thus, **robust, comparable data** is an essential part of making use of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs in the policy-making process, which was confirmed by other interviewees as well: “ETF does not concretely act, but sometimes we only need ideas, good practices in similar countries, especially when the project is implemented for the first time”. Other stakeholders appreciated that ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs provide an **external view of the domestic situation** which they deemed very helpful. They particularly highlighted how the outputs can identify previously unseen weaknesses and often provide solutions or recommendations to alleviate these. This aspect was mentioned to be used both by domestic governments and international development partners.

Another use-case was when **stakeholders incorporated recommendations or other technical help** (e.g. indicators, assessment or benchmarking frameworks) into decision-making. One interviewee highlighted that benchmarking of best practices strengthened their analytical capacities, together with assistance by ETF staff. Furthermore, stakeholders appreciated the **customised recommendations** they were able to extract from ETF outputs, such as the ones found in country assessments. Thus, qualitative data suggest that recommendations are a particularly useful form of providing actionable inputs to stakeholders.

ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs were also mentioned to be used for developing **national culture of monitoring and assessment**. Stakeholders reported that the **Torino Process methodology was utilised “to shape the monitoring solutions” internally**. **International organisations** sometimes use outputs “for planning and deciding on new partnerships” or for as a point of reference and justification of strategic decisions. Furthermore, some respondents mentioned that they use **ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs when preparing for events like seminars and workshops**, or simply meetings and discussions and that they use the outputs to justify a point.

It should however be mentioned that in some cases stakeholders were only able to utilise the monitoring outputs with assistance from ETF. ETF in such cases **provided capacities that were internally absent** during policy- and decision-making: “<...>to be honest, I couldn't do this without the ETF help. They have experts, they have statisticians, they have all of the resources available to help us implementing this.” This personal and continuous support from ETF was highly appreciated by partner countries. One stakeholder described a successful example of establishing a labour market observatory with the help of ETF, which has identified the need and recommended such an action in its monitoring outputs. The stakeholder highlighted how **ongoing support** and training that was provided by ETF was a key to success. There were multiple other accounts of how ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs has helped during the policy-making process and made considerable impact.

Overall, the **interviewees were positive about ETF written outputs and their impact on policy-making**, noting that they are well-structured and credible sources of information. However, some interviewees thought that the impact on policy-making is limited by the domestic actors' commitment and the implementation depends entirely “on the attitude of the government” while others thought that application of ETF outputs is limited mostly to researchers. Combined with the evidence on cases where assistance of ETF was needed to successfully use the outputs, this points to both the need to produce more user-friendly and directly relevant outputs, and the need for stakeholder training or capacity building to utilise monitoring data and reports for professional purposes.

### Research and data sources

**ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs, especially those of the Torino Process, were mentioned to be used heavily in the research process and as a data source** in different phases: as an initial inspiration for research and planning, as a data source during implementation of projects and interventions, and as a primary source of information.

Some interviewees mentioned to be using ETF Monitoring and assessment data “as a starting point, but then we dig deeper”. As another participant formulated it: “the Torino process is very useful because the report presents a comprehensive picture of the interaction between the VET and the labour market”. In development cooperation projects, ETF data and results are used for **technical assistance**. Interviewees also noted that the **regional vision** of ETF is an important aspect for them, as it provides them with comparisons and benchmarks which leads them to better understanding of country's situation in relation to its neighbours. For some, it is the “only tool for VET assessment”. Others also think that it provides indispensable information, especially country reports, that provide a “lot of information that we would never find out otherwise ourselves”.

Other stakeholders use **ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs as an information source for briefings or for research**. It was mentioned by some researchers that often, drafting any papers starts with looking at ETF data, which was seen as rapid and comprehensive. The continuous evolution of the data in terms of the number of indicators was also appreciated by research-oriented users.

### Networking and events

Interviews confirm that **ETF Monitoring and assessment-related events provide partners a space for coming together and fostering discussion and coordination**. Cooperation, building up networks of contacts, strengthening relations with international partners were the recurring elements when talking about ETF Monitoring and assessment-related events and meetings.

Stakeholders saw high value in improving national level **cooperation**, noting that ETF Monitoring and assessment-related events have brought significant added value in development of VET: “it was an opportunity to gather the operators, partners, actors, private companies and the NGOs around canvas to assess the development of the training”. In other cases, interviewees highlighted how workshops and gaps identified via monitoring have led to concrete policy actions, such as the recovery of a mentorship system or a common database of professionals, connecting potential employees and employers.

The networking and events also brought added value across the borders. Stakeholders noted how they were able to develop relationships in the Torino process group, which helped them obtain additional information on further activities. Another use-case was when the group was used as a **network of contacts** for organising third party activities. Some reported how networking has led them to work with actors and organisations that they did not previously have a working experience with. Several of the interviewed stakeholders mentioned that ETF has helped them in **strengthening relations with international organisations**. The stakeholders also reported making connections which “provided possibilities that could otherwise not be afforded by <their organisation>” and helped to “decrease a professional gap”.

### Disseminating information

The **ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs are often disseminated further from one stakeholder to another, including international organisations, donors, employers** and others. According to some stakeholder accounts, short analytical materials are prepared by participants after each workshop, which are then disseminated in their respective workplaces and the wider professional community. Thus, a possible area of improvement would be to have such easily shareable and understandable materials at hand for stakeholders, prepared by ETF in a uniform format in local languages, helping to ensure quality and decrease misinterpretation.

Finally, ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs are used to **provide or share specific information** when it is requested. For example, a respondent said that they use the outputs in cases “when there are inquiries from the ministry or other organisations”, and that it is convenient because it is possible to “just pick the report and take a fragment from there”.

### Summary

Several elements were highlighted that motivated different use cases of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs. Here, we provide a short summary.

In case **policy- and decision-making**, stakeholder interviews suggest that **comparable and robust data**, that provides a good external view of the situation and integrates **actionable recommendations**, is the most appreciated output for direct use. Assistance, such as **monitoring models** or the **support of ETF staff** were also mentioned to have an impact and to foster a national monitoring culture.

**Research** was another important use case for ETF Monitoring and assessment data. Often, stakeholders noted that it is their **starting point**, both for analysis and for brainstorming. By virtue of its comparable data, stakeholders often used it as a tool of **benchmarking** and **contextualisation**. Others noted how the ETF Monitoring and assessment data acted as an **information source for briefing and meetings**.

When talking about **ETF Monitoring and assessment events and networking**, stakeholders saw inherent value in **cooperation** itself, explaining that it allowed them to better access professional expertise and exchange practices. Gaining **professional contacts** through participation in ETF Monitoring events also added to this use case. **Strengthening relations with international partners** was another appreciated feature of networking.

ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs are also frequently used for **information dissemination** or for **providing specific information** upon request by taking out relevant segments from reports.

### 2.1.3. Impact of ETF Monitoring and assessment (EQ1.2, EQ3, EQ3.1, EQ3.2, EQ3.3, EQ4)

Examples of the impact of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs can be categorised into two major groups: direct and indirect ones. **Direct impact** usually takes the form of policy uptake, for example through adopting ETF recommendations or a decision or policy-making process that is based on observations found in the outputs. In these cases, the intention of ETF aligns well with the specific intervention applied by the partner country.

Cases of **indirect impact** are accounts where ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs and results are used as a basis of research, analysis and planning by international organisations or partner countries. In these cases, results of outputs are often used to justify certain decisions. Capacity building in partner countries was also identified as an indirect impact.

**Most of the respondents agree (59.6%) or strongly agree (22.9%) that ETF Monitoring and assessment has contributed to policy development and reform in partner countries.** Out of the four items that were asked during this question, this type of contribution received the highest share of positive answers. To a lesser extent, but still a majority of respondents agree that ETF Monitoring and assessment has been used by the European Commission delegations in their work. Respondents were slightly more negative when asked if international development organisation use ETF Monitoring and assessment reports to inform their activities.

**FIGURE 7. DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Do not know / cannot answer / no opinion
ETF Monitoring has contributed to policy developments and reforms in the Partner Countries	0.9%	1.8%	59.6%	22.9%	14.7%
ETF Monitoring has been used by European Commission delegations and headquarters services in their work	0.0%	0.9%	41.5%	21.7%	35.8%
ETF Monitoring has been used by international development organisations and donors to inform their activities	1.0%	2.9%	44.2%	18.3%	33.7%
ETF plans its activities in Partner Countries based on the collected Monitoring data	0.9%	0.9%	56.5%	20.4%	21.3%

Results on contribution show that some activities have had an effect on the work of all types of stakeholders in equal measure (e.g. the Torino Process and KIESE) while others have more characteristic contribution for certain groups of stakeholders. The Country fiches, the Riga mid-term deliverables and

the Monitoring of the Osnabrück declaration contribute more to the work of the European Commission delegations (see figure below). Meanwhile, the particularly strong impact on policy developments and reforms was difficult to achieve in partner countries for any type of activity.

**FIGURE 8.ETF MONITORING HAS CONTRIBUTED TO... (PERCENTAGE OF STRONGLY AGREE)**

	Torino Process	Key Indicators on Education, Skills, and Employment (KIESE)	National Data Collection (NDC)	Inventories (e.g. on qualifications or governance)	Country fiches for the European Commission	Thematic fiches (e.g. on quality assurance, work-based learning)	Riga mid-term deliverables monitoring and reporting	Monitoring of implementation of Osnabrück Declaration	Other
ETF Monitoring has contributed to policy developments and reforms in the Partner Countries	22.6%	22.0%	25.0%	23.5%	18.5%	19.2%	23.1%	33.3%	33.3%
ETF Monitoring has been used by European Commission delegations and headquarters services in their work	23.8%	22.4%	33.3%	35.5%	46.2%	38.8%	30.8%	44.4%	16.7%
ETF Monitoring has been used by international development organisations and donors to inform their activities	20.3%	20.8%	35.0%	32.4%	26.9%	30.6%	15.4%	11.1%	16.7%
ETF plans its activities in Partner Countries based on the collected Monitoring data	22.9%	26.5%	35.0%	32.4%	26.9%	30.6%	15.4%	11.1%	16.7%

The **overwhelming share of respondents are positive about the contributions of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs**. They all agree that ETF Monitoring and assessment has contributed to fostering discussion on VET and human capital development (90.7% either agrees or strongly agrees), to wider involvement of partner country stakeholders in monitoring (89.4%), to partner countries’ capacity to monitor VET and human capital development (88.5%), to helping partner country governments in realising the value of monitoring (78.2%), to evidence-based and knowledge-based policy-making (78.7%). When asked whether partner countries would continue monitoring activities, only the slim minority (49.5%) supported the statement and it was the question item that received the largest percentage of disagreeing answers (16.5%).

**FIGURE 9. ETF MONITORING HAS CONTRIBUTED TO...**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Do not know / cannot answer / no opinion
ETF Monitoring has contributed to the capacity of Partner Countries to monitor their VET and human capital development	0.0%	6.3%	63.2%	25.3%	5.3%
ETF Monitoring has contributed to wider involvement Partner Country stakeholders in monitoring	0.0%	4.3%	61.7%	27.7%	6.4%
ETF Monitoring has helped Partner Countries to discuss VET and human capital development from a variety of perspectives	0.0%	4.3%	61.7%	28.7%	5.3%
ETF Monitoring has helped Partner Country governments and stakeholders realise the value of monitoring	0.0%	9.7%	58.1%	20.4%	11.8%
ETF Monitoring has contributed to evidence-based and knowledge-based policy making in Partner Countries	0.0%	6.4%	59.6%	19.1%	14.9%
Some Partner Countries would continue their monitoring activities even if ETF support would be discontinued	0.0%	16.5%	41.8%	7.7%	34.1%

The figure below analyses the question by the different stakeholder groups according to the percentage of strongly agree answers. Respondents from EU institutions feel that ETF has helped most for Partner Countries to discuss VET and human capital development (33.3%). Partner country representatives from the public sector have selected the same answer option in the largest percentages (36.7%) followed by ETF monitoring contribution to wider stakeholder involvement (33.3%). Other partner country representatives also indicated these two items to be the most important contribution. International development organisations and EU Member States did not select one item, instead, they were divided between ETF Monitoring contribution to Partner Countries’ monitoring capacity of VET and human capital development (33.3%, 37.5%), to stakeholder involvement (22.2% and 37.5%) as well as fostering discussion on VET and human capital development (33.3% and 25%).

**FIGURE 10. ETF MONITORING HAS CONTRIBUTED TO... (PERCENTAGE OF STRONGLY AGREE BY DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc )	International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc )	EU Member State representative (e g ministry, governmental agency etc )	Partner country representative (public sector, e g government, ministries, agencies)	Partner country representative (social partners, e g trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	Other
ETF Monitoring has contributed to the capacity of Partner Countries to monitor their VET and human capital development	25.0%	33.3%	37.5%	29.0%	7.1%	23.5%
ETF Monitoring has contributed to wider involvement Partner Country stakeholders in monitoring	16.7%	22.2%	37.5%	33.3%	21.4%	23.5%
ETF Monitoring has helped Partner Countries to discuss VET and human capital development from a variety of perspectives	33.3%	33.3%	25.0%	36.7%	21.4%	17.6%
ETF Monitoring has helped Partner Country governments and stakeholders realise the value of monitoring	25.0%	22.2%	25.0%	22.6%	7.7%	12.5%
ETF Monitoring has contributed to evidence-based and knowledge-based policy making in Partner Countries	23.1%	22.2%	12.5%	19.4%	15.4%	18.8%
Some Partner Countries would continue their monitoring activities even if ETF support would be discontinued	18.2%	12.5%	0.0%	9.7%	0.0%	6.3%

Analysis of contributions by the different activities shows that the percentages of strongly agree answers are quite evenly distributed. Country fiches, Thematic fiches, the Riga mid-term deliverables monitoring and reporting as well as the Monitoring of the Osnabrück declaration were more useful in making a contribution to wider stakeholder involvement in Partner Countries.

**FIGURE 11. ETF HAS CONTRIBUTED TO... (PERCENT OF STRONGLY AGREE BY ACTIVITIES)**

	Torino Process	Key Indicators on Education, Skills, and Employment (KIESE)	National Data Collection (NDC)	Inventories (e.g. on qualifications or governance)	Country fiches for the European Commission	Thematic fiches (e.g. on quality assurance, work-based learning)	Riga mid-term deliverables monitoring and reporting	Monitoring of implementation of Osnabrück Declaration
ETF Monitoring has contributed to the capacity of Partner Countries to monitor their VET and human capital development	22.6%	22.0%	25.0%	23.5%	18.5%	19.2%	23.1%	33.3%
ETF Monitoring has contributed to wider involvement Partner Country stakeholders in monitoring	23.8%	22.4%	33.3%	35.5%	46.2%	38.8%	30.8%	44.4%
ETF Monitoring has helped Partner Countries to discuss VET and human capital development from a variety of perspectives	20.3%	20.8%	22.2%	23.3%	23.1%	22.9%	0.0%	11.1%
ETF Monitoring has helped Partner Country governments and stakeholders realise the value of monitoring	22.9%	26.5%	35.0%	32.4%	26.9%	30.6%	15.4%	11.1%
ETF Monitoring has contributed to evidence-based and knowledge-based policy making in Partner Countries	18.9%	24.4%	26.3%	22.6%	19.2%	21.7%	25.0%	44.4%
Some Partner Countries would continue their monitoring activities even if ETF support would be discontinued	8.2%	13.2%	16.7%	13.3%	12.0%	8.9%	9.1%	12.5%

Stakeholder interviews contain **several examples of direct impact of ETF Monitoring and assessment**. According to one stakeholder: “ETF contributed a lot to the establishment of sector skills committees. They truly provided a lot of work from discussions, based on country needs and provided trainings for people.” Successful cases of establishing new bodies such as regional centres or procedures such as quality assurance were also highlighted. Others reported that ETF outputs have helped in developing policy frameworks and strategies, either by relying on recommendations or by using data collected and evaluated by ETF. Often, it was cited how a certain result was achieved as a consequence of direct influence from ETF, for example, when a program of training of instructors was developed and a system of dual education was established. Stakeholders usually highlighted a willingness to maintain and improve these achievements, thus, **ETF’s impact proved to be sustainable over time** as well.

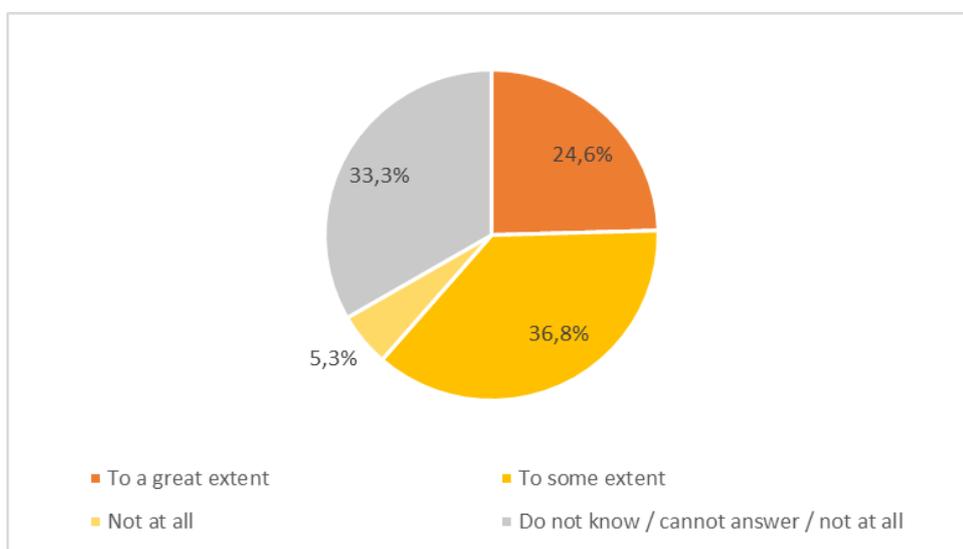
A recurrent form of **indirect impact was exerted through workshops, events and training organised by ETF**. Interviewees reported that they successfully learned new approaches and tools that created “a cohort of experts” in one case. ETF complements the weaknesses of domestic departments and actors, by **providing resources and data** that would otherwise be missing. Lastly, some interviewees have identified a more long-term impact, notably that ETF promotes a **new culture of self-assessment in countries** and educated the readers and users of reports in partner countries that are often not accustomed to having the data and analysis offered.

However, some voiced that ETF Monitoring and assessment’s impact is difficult to determine, as the environment they work in is “very dynamic” which makes it difficult to attribute impact of a singular factor. There are more negative opinions too. According to them, ETF Monitoring and assessment’s impact is limited, as often interventions in countries are not actually aligned with ETF recommendations. One major challenge behind ETF Monitoring and assessment’s **impact seems to be that it is dependent upon the domestic actors’ willingness to adopt and follow recommendations** or use other results. Another observation was that sometimes there are **multiple international actors**

**trying to simultaneously influence policy-making** in partner countries, among which ETF is only one of many, and has to compete for attention and influence.

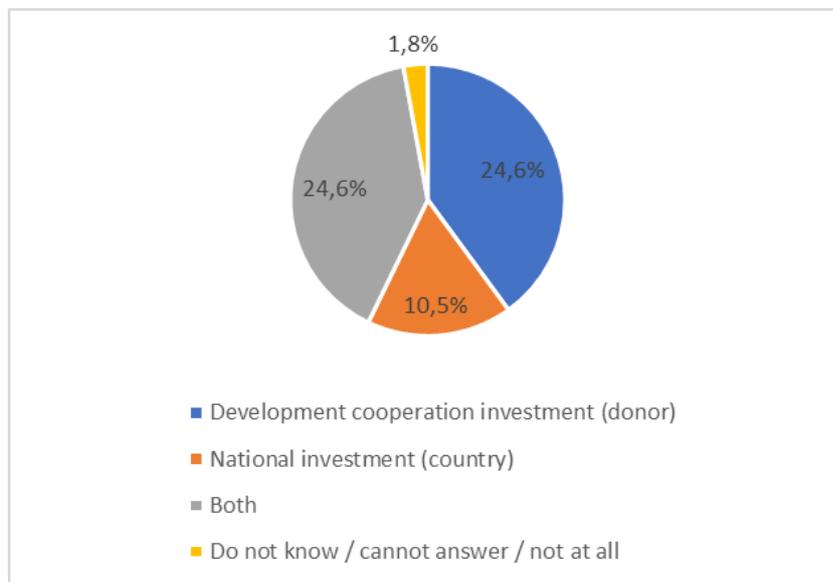
Another more direct impact of ETF Monitoring and assessment was **investment promoted by the ETF Monitoring and assessment and delivered by partner countries or donors**. The latter involved investment in vocational education and training, human capital development or project development. The results revealed that the majority of the respondents (61.4%) noted that the ETF Monitoring and assessment influences investment at least ‘to some extent’.

**FIGURE 12. TO WHAT EXTENT DOES ETF MONITORING INFLUENCE INVESTMENT (BY OWN COUNTRY OR DONORS) IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT, AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT?**



Furthermore, when asked about the **sources of investment influenced by the ETF**, the results varied. While some respondents claimed that it influences ‘Development cooperation investment (donor)’ (24.6%), the same percentage of respondents (24.6%) selected ‘Both’ (‘Development cooperation investment (donor)’ and ‘National investment (country)’). However, only 10.5% of respondents noted that it is primarily ‘National investment (country)’ that is influenced by the ETF Monitoring and assessment.

FIGURE 13. WHAT TYPE OF INVESTMENT DOES ETF MONITORING INFLUENCE?



To summarise, data suggests that ETF Monitoring and assessment exerts impact through various channels and use-cases. Policy uptake has been achieved through **providing comparable, global data** and because of ETF's ability to offer an 'external eye', with which ETF was capable to pinpoint recommendations and solutions. These recommendations, although not all of them implemented, were often referred to by interviewees as actionable, customised pieces of information. Furthermore, there were examples of **ETF models** being adapted and implemented in other areas. Partner country stakeholders were also appreciative of **ETF personnel's** help in complementing their domestic capacities in planning and analysis. In more indirect ways of impact, **ETF databases and data** was often cited to be an essential part of the policy process and was used by researchers as well. Workshops and other events provided participants not only with professional experience but also formed a basis of future cooperation and actions. Furthermore, ETF Monitoring and assessment-related groups were used as a kind of contact list for organising third-party events as well. Although overall ETF Monitoring and assessment can be considered to have had an influence on policy and investment decisions by national stakeholders and especially international donors, this was dependent upon the domestic actors' willingness to adopt and follow recommendations or use other results. Also, sometimes there were multiple international actors trying to simultaneously influence policy-making in partner countries, among which ETF is only one of many, and has to compete for attention and influence.

## 2.2. Products and channels

In this section, we focus on various currently used ETF Monitoring and assessment products and dissemination channels as well as future products or approaches taken into consideration. Furthermore, we discuss the potential of new products and the quality of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs in general. We provide an overview of the ETF Monitoring and assessment products and dissemination channels based on the data collected during Policy Delphi, interviews with stakeholders, and focus group discussions. In particular, we analyse the relevance, usefulness, quality of different outputs, and stakeholders' suggestions for the improvements of the latter.

We assume that the ETF Monitoring and assessment products include the following:

- **ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs** (e.g. written outputs, events),
- **Digital products and channels** (e.g. ETF website, ETF Open Space, ETF social media presence), and
- **Future products** (e.g. new database).

### 2.2.1. ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs (EQ1, EQ1.1, EQ1.4)

#### Written outputs

In this subsection we analyse the relevance of ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs. The different types of written outputs offered by the ETF include Torino Process sub-national reports/national reports/regional reports/cross-country digest/assessment reports, KIESE reports, Country fiches produced for the European Commission and many more (for more details see figure below). This question is relevant so that the ETF could understand the importance of the written outputs and the factors that increase this importance for the stakeholders. Getting to know the positive and negative evaluations of the written outputs could help the ETF provide more sophisticated and useful written outputs for its targeted audiences, increase the circle of stakeholders using them, and attract new stakeholders interested in the provided written outputs. Having a broader network of stakeholders could increase not only the quality of the ETF written outputs (since stakeholders provide more suggestions on the required improvements if inquired) but also could improve the visibility and usage of different outputs.

The overview of the ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs focused on their importance and reasons for positive or negative evaluations. While the answer that written outputs are **'very important'** was the most popular among the respondents (see figure below), there were some interesting differences among the products when looking into 'absolutely essential' and 'of average importance' categories. Respondents suggested that written outputs, including Torino Process regional reports (27.2%), Torino Process cross-country digest (21.2%), Torino Process sub-national reports (20.0%) and Riga mid-term deliverables monitoring report (19.6%) are **more often 'of average importance'** than 'absolutely essential'. On the other hand, respondents noted that the remaining types of written outputs, such as VET governance inventory (20.4%), Country fiches produced for the European Commission (20.2%), Thematic fiches on work-based learning (19.2%). Thematic fiches on employment and employability (18.0%), Qualifications inventory (17.5%), Torino Process national reports (16.8%), KIESE reports (16.7%) and Thematic fiches on quality assurance (16.7%) are **more often 'absolutely essential'** than 'of average importance'.

Furthermore, the reasons for positive and negative evaluations were revealed.

**FIGURE 14. HOW IMPORTANT OR NOT IMPORTANT FOR YOU PERSONALLY ARE THE ETF MONITORING WRITTEN OUTPUTS?**

	Not important at all	Of little importance	Of average importance	Very important	Absolutely essential	Do not know / cannot answer	I am not aware of this output
Torino Process sub-national reports	4.0%	3.0%	20.0%	45.0%	10.0%	8.0%	10.0%
Torino Process national reports	0.0%	1.9%	15.9%	54.2%	16.8%	4.7%	6.5%
Torino Process regional reports	1.0%	2.9%	27.2%	49.5%	6.8%	4.9%	7.8%
Torino Process cross-country digest	0.0%	3.8%	21.2%	43.3%	16.3%	5.8%	9.6%
Torino Process assessment reports	0.0%	2.0%	16.7%	47.1%	16.7%	6.9%	10.8%
Key Indicators on Education, Skills, and Employment (KIESE) reports	0.0%	2.0%	13.7%	43.1%	16.7%	12.7%	11.8%
Country fiches produced for the European Commission	1.0%	4.0%	16.2%	28.3%	20.2%	15.2%	15.2%
Thematic fiches on quality assurance	0.0%	6.9%	12.7%	45.1%	16.7%	7.8%	10.8%
Thematic fiches on work-based learning	1.0%	4.8%	15.4%	44.2%	19.2%	6.7%	8.7%
Thematic fiches on employment and employability	0.0%	6.0%	15.0%	43.0%	18.0%	8.0%	10.0%
VET governance inventory	0.0%	7.8%	16.5%	39.8%	20.4%	7.8%	7.8%
Qualifications inventory	1.0%	3.9%	14.6%	42.7%	17.5%	8.7%	11.7%
Riga mid-term deliverables monitoring report	0.0%	7.2%	19.6%	21.6%	7.2%	22.7%	21.6%

The most popular **positive** evaluations of different ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs include the following:

- **Content suitability for one’s needs.** Respondents mentioned that the ETF provides a good combination of various topics (e.g. qualifications, work-based learning, social inclusion, etc.) that are relevant for stakeholders from different contexts (e.g. EU Member States, European Commission, international organisations).
- **Up-to-date and high-quality data.** Respondents suggested that the ETF offers regular and updated information. According to one respondent, “it really puts all key information at one point. And it really gives you opportunity to go through the system, to go through data. You always get [...] updated data and you can always reference yourself to a very credible source of information.”

The **negative** evaluations of ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs that were identified include the following:

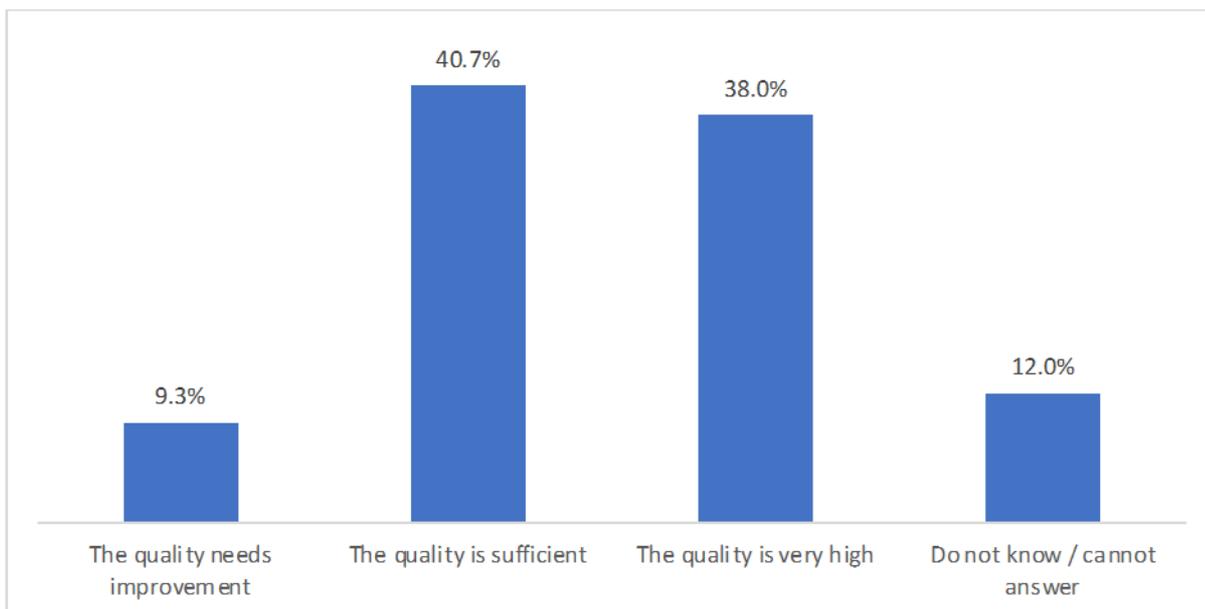
- **Lengthy reports.** The ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs tend to be “too bulky” and sometimes this results in the repetition of certain issues/topics or stakeholders’ reluctance to read the specific reports from the beginning till the end. While some of the respondents suggested that there are too many redundant sections, others noted that the report is “too lengthy”, “too voluminous”, “too dense” or “heavy”. Overall, the respondents suggested that the shorter the written outputs are, the better it is. Furthermore, having shorter written outputs increases the probability that the stakeholders will dedicate time to read the whole report or other written output. While this is not necessarily what ETF is trying to achieve, reading the whole output may improve stakeholders’ understanding of the issues being discussed and lead to improved capacity.

- **Lack of visualisations.** The ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs were reported to lack visualisations, figures, graphs, tables and other similar materials. Some respondents suggested that written outputs should have more infographics or other forms of communicating the results. According to respondents, having more visualisations could make the written outputs more compact and lighter.
- **Limited language availability.** The ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs do not necessarily “provide translation of necessary documents in several languages for the local stakeholders”. Respondents suggested that the spectrum of languages could increase the uptake of written reports by different stakeholders. Furthermore, respondents noted that the translations should be high-quality.
- **Too generalised approach.** The ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs offer a very broad snapshot on different issues. Some respondents suggested that focusing on maximum two or three main topics per deliverable could be more attractive for stakeholders rather than trying to approach everything in the report. As one respondent indicated, “focus on some points only, not the overall situation”.

When asked about the **quality** of the ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs, the majority of respondents (78.0%) suggested that the quality is **at least ‘sufficient’**. However, the results also revealed that respondents more often noted that quality is ‘sufficient’ (40.7%) rather than ‘very high’ (38.0%). This indicates that some improvements on the quality of written outputs should be considered.

In terms of various stakeholders’ groups, representatives of **EU Member states** (87.5%) and **partner countries (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)** (85.7%) were the **most satisfied** with the quality of the ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs and claimed that it is at least ‘sufficient’. However, the **partner country representatives** (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations) were the **least satisfied** and 25% claimed that the quality ‘needs improvement’. For more details, see the figures below.

**FIGURE 15. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE QUALITY OF ETF MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT WRITTEN OUTPUTS?**



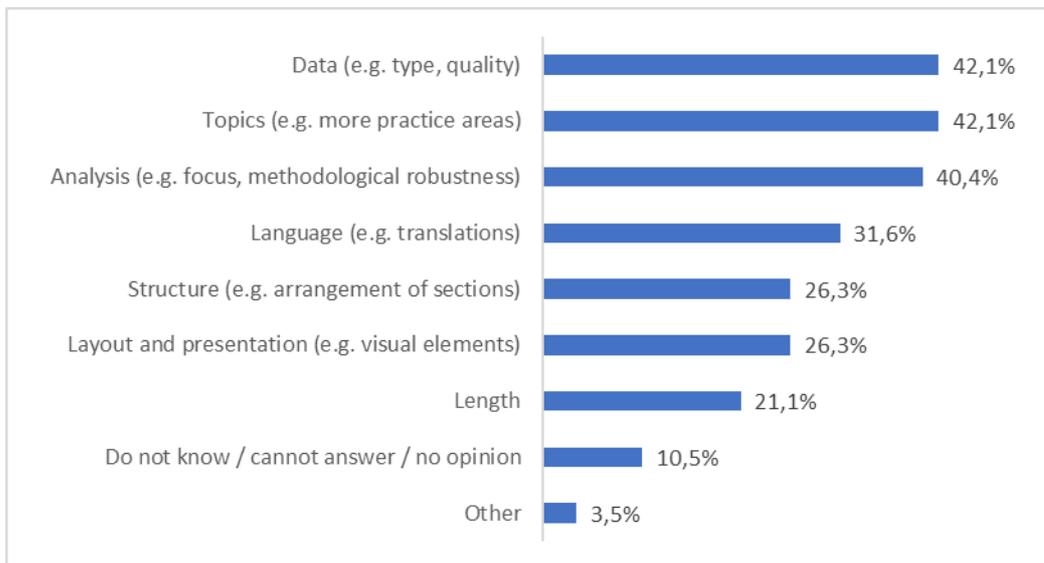
**FIGURE 16. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE QUALITY OF ETF MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT WRITTEN OUTPUTS? (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	The quality needs improvement	The quality is sufficient	The quality is very high	Do not know / cannot answer
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	20.0%	0.0%	73.3%	6.7%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	0.0%	20.0%	50.0%	30.0%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	12.5%	62.5%	25.0%	0.0%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	2.9%	48.6%	37.1%	11.4%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	25.0%	50.0%	18.8%	6.3%
Other	5.0%	50.0%	25.0%	20.0%

The **most popular areas for improvement** of ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs that were identified include the following (for more details, see figure below):

- **Data** (e.g. type, quality) (42.1% of respondents),
- **Topics** (e.g. more practice areas) (42.1% of respondents), and
- **Analysis** (e.g. focus, methodological robustness) (40.4% of respondents).

**FIGURE 17. WHAT AREAS SHOULD BE IMPROVED TO MAKE THE QUALITY OF ETF MONITORING WRITTEN OUTPUTS VERY HIGH?**



All things considered, the ETF written outputs are **very important** to the stakeholders, however, the quality of the latter is evaluated slightly more often as sufficient rather than very high. This result indicated that there are some areas that need improvements. While during the interviews and focus group discussions respondents suggested that the ETF should focus more on such aspects as length, visualisations, language availability and content of the written outputs, the survey results revealed that it is mainly data, topics and analysis that need to be revised to improve the quality of the written outputs. Therefore, this suggests that the ETF should focus on quite a few areas for improvement in order to increase the quality of the written outputs.

### Events

In this subsection we analyse the relevance of ETF events. The different types of events offered by the ETF include national events, regional events, international conferences, national policy dialogue triggered by Torino Process, regional policy dialogue triggered by Torino Process and platform/network of Torino Process coordinators (see figure below). This question is relevant so that the ETF could understand the importance of its events and the factors that increase the attractiveness of the latter for the stakeholders. Getting to know the positive and negative evaluations of the events could help the ETF to organise higher standard and more useful events for its targeted audiences. Increasing the quality of the events could enlarge the network of stakeholders interested in ETF outputs, promote the usage of different ETF outputs and further improve the visibility of ETF activity in the field. Furthermore, events in the future could be utilised for stakeholder needs assessment and for development of systems and policies review under Level 2 of the new Monitoring framework.

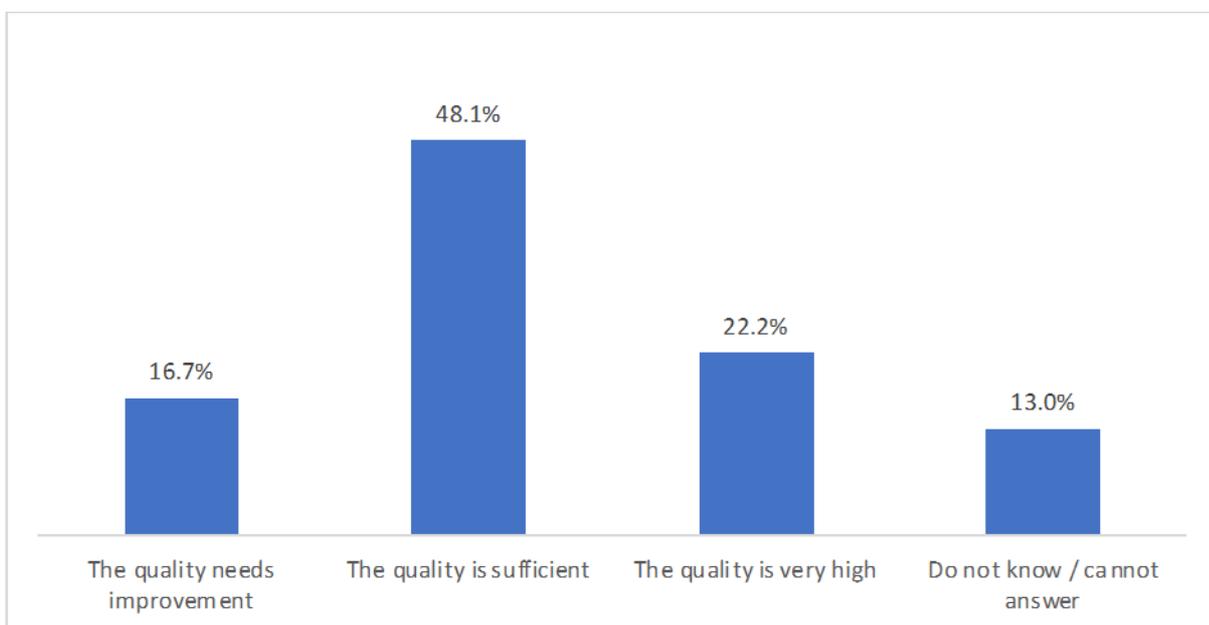
The overview of the ETF events focused on the importance of the latter and reasons for positive or negative evaluations of them. The answer that events are **‘very important’** was the most popular among the respondents (see figure below).

**FIGURE 18. HOW IMPORTANT OR NOT IMPORTANT FOR YOU PERSONALLY ARE THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES OF ETF MONITORING?**

	Not important at all	Of little importance	Of average importance	Very important	Absolutely essential	Do not know / cannot answer	I did not take part in these activities
National events	0.9%	0.9%	10.4%	50.0%	25.5%	4.7%	7.5%
Regional events	0.0%	2.9%	16.3%	46.2%	20.2%	5.8%	8.7%
International conferences	0.0%	2.8%	15.1%	46.2%	27.4%	3.8%	4.7%
National policy dialogue triggered by Torino Process	0.0%	2.9%	6.8%	50.5%	24.3%	5.8%	9.7%
Regional policy dialogue triggered by Torino Process	0.0%	5.9%	12.9%	44.6%	17.8%	6.9%	11.9%
Platform/Network of Torino Process national coordinators	0.0%	2.9%	12.6%	37.9%	20.4%	10.7%	15.5%

When asked about the **quality** of the events, the majority of the respondents (70.3%) suggested that the quality of **at least 'sufficient'**. When compared among different stakeholder groups, representatives who identified themselves as **other** (85.0%) and those coming from the **EU Member States** (75.0%) were the **most satisfied** with the quality of the events and claimed that it is at least 'sufficient'. However, the **partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)** (43.8%) were the **least satisfied** claiming that the quality 'needs improvement'. For more details, see the figures below.

**FIGURE 19. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE QUALITY OF ETF MONITORING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES?**



**FIGURE 20. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE QUALITY OF ETF MONITORING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES? (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

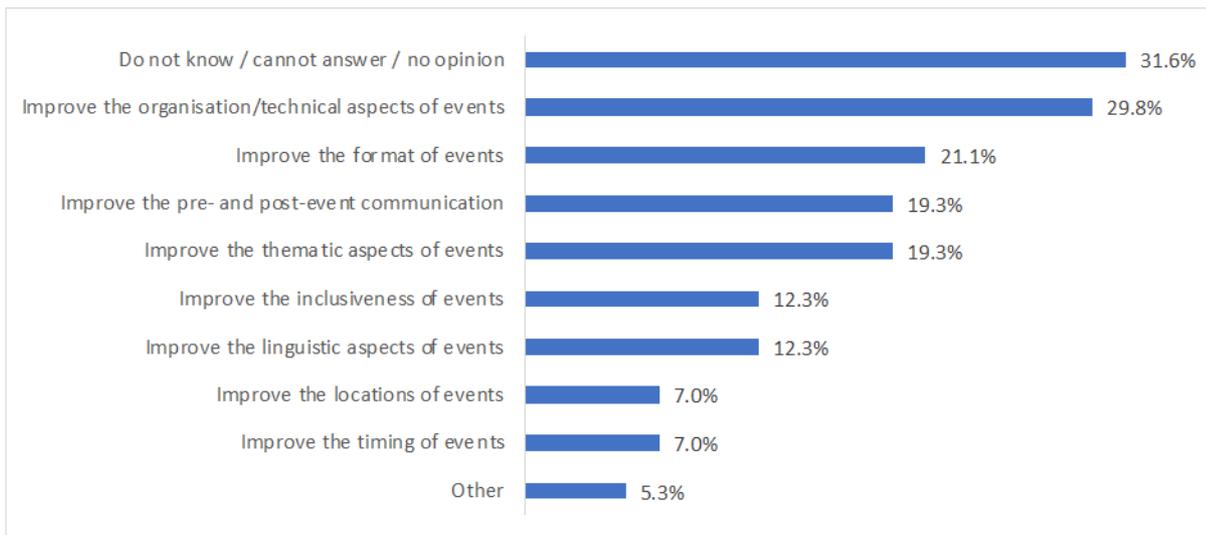
	The quality needs improvement	The quality is sufficient	The quality is very high	Do not know / cannot answer
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	20.0%	33.3%	26.7%	20.0%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	20.0%	30.0%	30.0%	20.0%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	12.5%	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	8.6%	57.1%	17.1%	17.1%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	43.8%	43.8%	6.3%	6.3%
Other	10.0%	60.0%	25.0%	5.0%

The most popular **areas for improvement** regarding the quality of events include the following (for percentages, see figure below):

- **Organisational/technical aspects.** Some respondents suggested that ETF could dedicate more human resources that would be responsible for the agenda development and programme building of the events. Accordingly, this could increase the attractiveness and better organisation of the future events organised by the ETF.
- **Format of events.** Respondents had some varying opinions towards the format of the events. While some of respondents suggested that the ETF events could be improved by introducing regular online events, others noted that ETF could deliver less formal presentations featured by more extensive dialogues among the different stakeholders. However, another group of respondents noted that it would be a mistake to eliminate face-to-face events from the agenda since these events usually are of higher quality than those organised online.
- **Pre- and post-event communication.** Respondents suggested that ETF does not always provide relevant materials for the stakeholders before and after the organised events. According to the respondents, reports with a snapshot of the topics and aspects discussed during the events could be delivered to stakeholders before the event. Additionally, those summary reports could be provided either in paper or in digital version (e.g. sent by email before the event).
- **Thematic aspects.** Respondents suggested that ETF could expand the subjects discussed. For instance, one respondent suggested that events focused on the review of the implementation of recommendations by the ETF in partner countries could be created.
- **Inclusiveness aspects.** Respondents suggested that sometimes ETF is focusing on “well-known or traditional stakeholders”. Following this, some respondents suggested that the ETF could invite more representatives of civil society. Furthermore, others noted that the ETF should invite a wider and changing group of decision makers and practitioners from both EU countries and partner countries.
- **Linguistic aspects.** Respondents noted that ETF does not offer enough language options, and this limits stakeholders’ rate of participation in the ETF events. Hence, some respondents noted that the availability of synchronous interpretation into the relevant languages would increase the attractiveness of the events.

- **Location of events.** Respondents suggested that ETF could offer more varied locations for its events. Accordingly, events could be more informal and organised in local VET schools or public universities and even “in the premises of an employer who is involved in work-based learning”.
- **Timing of events.** Respondents stressed the importance of organising regular events.

**FIGURE 21. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE TO MAKE THE QUALITY OF ETF MONITORING EVENTS VERY HIGH? NOTE: TERM 'QUALITY' INCLUDES ALL ASPECTS OF THE OUTPUTS, INCLUDING THEIR CONTENT AND FORM.**



In general, the ETF events are **very important** for the stakeholders, however twice as many respondents suggested that the quality of the ETF events is sufficient rather than very high. It can be also noted that the respondents were less satisfied with the quality of the ETF events than with the quality of ETF written outputs. In order to increase it, the ETF should focus mainly on the improvement of organisational/technical aspects, format of the events, pre- and post-event communication and thematic aspects of the events.

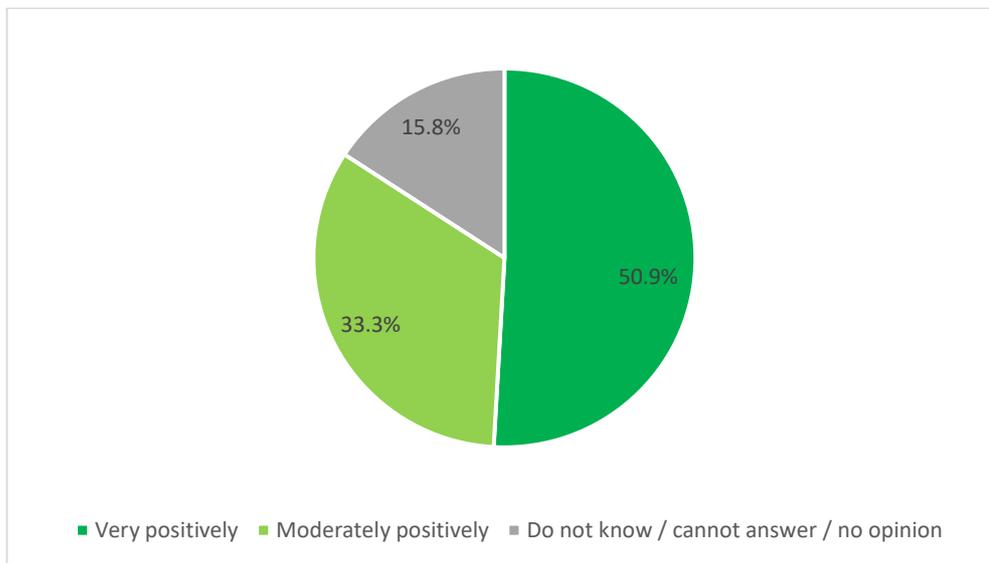
### 2.2.2. Quality of analysis by ETF in its Monitoring outputs (EQ1, EQ1.1, EQ1.4)

In this subsection we analyse the quality of analysis provided by ETF in its Monitoring outputs and the suggestions for improvements in the quality of analysis by the stakeholders. This question is relevant so that the ETF could make specific and reasonable improvements if needed. Higher quality of analysis in ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs could enlarge the network of stakeholders using ETF analysis, increase the better uptake of ETF Monitoring outputs by various stakeholder groups and crucially, improve stakeholders’ satisfaction with ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs in general.

The overview of the quality of analysis provided by ETF revealed that while the majority of respondents (84.2%) noted that they evaluate the quality of analysis **at least ‘moderately positively’**, the level of evaluation varied among different stakeholder groups (see figure below). While those who identified themselves as **other** (100%) and **partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)** (100%) more often than others evaluated the quality of analysis **at**

least **‘moderately positively’**, EU Member State representatives (50.0%) **less** often than others noted that they evaluate the quality of analysis at least ‘moderately positively’ (see figure below).

**FIGURE 22. HOW DO YOU EVALUATE THE QUALITY OF ANALYSIS QUALITY OF ANALYSIS PROVIDED BY ETF IN ITS MONITORING OUTPUTS? NOTE: TERM ‘QUALITY’ INCLUDES ALL ASPECTS OF THE OUTPUTS, INCLUDING THEIR CONTENT AND FORM.**



**FIGURE 23. HOW DO YOU EVALUATE THE QUALITY OF ANALYSIS PROVIDED BY ETF IN ITS MONITORING OUTPUTS? NOTE: TERM ‘QUALITY’ INCLUDES ALL ASPECTS OF THE OUTPUTS, INCLUDING THEIR CONTENT AND FORM (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	Very positively	Moderately positively	Do not know / cannot answer / no opinion
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	42,9%	28,6%	28,6%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	50,0%	0,0%	50,0%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	85,7%	0,0%	14,3%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	27,8%	50,0%	22,2%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	45,5%	54,5%	0,0%
Other	80,0%	20,0%	0,0%

Stakeholders’ opinions revealed **positive evaluation of the quality of analysis provided by ETF in its Monitoring outputs**. Some respondents suggested that ETF provides a high-standard expertise, because it focuses not only on quantitative but also on qualitative aspects of the data and provides clear

guidelines for further steps. Furthermore, respondents also noted that the quality of analysis provided by ETF is high because the ETF manages to reflect the trends in various sectors, the overall economy, country's development stages, etc. Some other respondents suggested that the quality of analysis in ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs distinguishes itself due to professional ETF staff working on the Monitoring outputs.

### 2.2.3. Quality of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs related to Torino Process (EQ1, EQ1.1, EQ1.4)

#### Opinions of stakeholders familiar with the Torino Process

When asked about the quality of ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs, the plurality of users who are familiar with the Torino Process think that the quality is sufficient (42.9% of the total number of respondents) and somewhat less respondents think that the quality is very high (39.3%). These values **place the evaluation of the Torino Process somewhere in the middle when compared to other activities**. Interviews indicate that stakeholder are generally satisfied, appreciating the "comprehensive picture."

Just as in the case of other activities, somewhat more respondents, who are familiar with the Torino Process said that written outputs are more useful to them (56.6%) than events (49.1%). **Written outputs** of the Torino Process are most often used for sharing with other stakeholders (54.7% of those who are familiar with the Torino Process), followed by policy-making (45.3%). **Information gained during ETF Monitoring and assessment events** was used mostly for sharing with other stakeholders (54.7% from those familiar with the Torino Process) and for policy-making and preparation for events in equal measure (43.4%).

Analysed by activities, the question on the usefulness of ETF Monitoring and assessment information types reveals that **information on specific themes is most useful** for respondents (64.2%) alongside cross-country comparisons (60.4%), among those who were familiar with the Torino Process.

Alongside shorter and more focused documents that summarise monitoring outputs, the **solution to translate outputs into regional and national languages** (38.8%) was identified as the best way to improve the use Torino Process outputs, closely followed by a **preference for presenting outputs in a more appealing way** (37.6%).

When asked about potential areas of improvement of written outputs, **respondents put more emphasis on topics** (41.5% of those familiar with the Torino Process) and **data** (43.4%). In case of respondents' view on improving ETF Monitoring and assessment events, the organisational/technical aspects of the events were emphasized across all types of ETF activities. However, respondents familiar with the Torino Process also thought that focusing on the **format of events** (20.8%) is important, while timing (7.5%) and location 7.5%) less so.

### 2.2.4. Quality of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs related to other activities (EQ1, EQ1.1, EQ1.4)

#### Opinions of stakeholders familiar with Key Indicators on Education, Skills and Employment (KIESE)

In case of the second-most well-known activity, 49% think that the quality is sufficient, while less people, 34.7% think that the quality is very high in the case of ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs, which is a **slightly worse result than the Torino Process**.

In case of those familiar with KIESE, **significantly more respondents prefer written** outputs (57.1%) than events (35.7%). Written outputs are most regularly used for preparing for **events and discussions** (57.1% of respondent familiar with the activity), followed by equal usage for policy-making, information sharing and research. In terms of the different information types (specific themes, specific countries, cross-country comparison, analytical insights) there are no substantial differences, although cross-country comparison was the least selected item (50%).

As we have seen in the case of the Torino Process, **translation of monitoring outputs into more languages** was also an expectation or way of improvement characteristic to KIESE (40.8% of the respondents familiar with KIESE selected this option). Such a need signals that if linguistic accessibility is advanced, the impact of both KIESE and the Torino Process could be further increased by having a larger outreach.

Respondents identified **structure** (42.9% of those who are familiar with the activity) and **data** (42.9%) of **written outputs** as key areas of improvement, while in the case of **events** the **thematic aspect** was most highlighted (42.9%), followed by the **organisational aspect** (35.7%), improvements on the format and pre- and post-event communication (21.4%).

Partner country representatives (both from public sector and social partners) and EU institutions are the most numerous group who are familiar with KIESE. These groups seem to lean on written outputs, hence the need for better structures and more data-focused output, while the need for translations is coming from the side of partner countries.

### Opinions of stakeholders familiar with National Data Collection (NDC)

Among the activities, the quality of National Data Collection **was also evaluated more positively** on the quality of written outputs. 52.4% of who are familiar with NDC said that the quality is sufficient, and 34.7% that it is high. However, NDC received the third largest share of responses who said that quality needs improvement (14.3%), which **signals some discord among respondents in the evaluation of NDC**.

Those familiar with NDC think that **written outputs are a bit more useful** (72.7%) than events (63.6%). National Data Collection written outputs are most used during preparation for events and discussions (81.8% of those familiar with NDC selected this option) and for further information sharing (81.8%). Information gained through **attendance of events was highly utilised for information dissemination to other stakeholders** (90.9%), for preparing for **events** (72.7%) and for **research** (54.5%) by those familiar with this activity. Furthermore, **significantly more stakeholders prefer information on specific themes** (81.8%) and **cross-country information** (72.7%) **than in the case of other information types**.

A new, online, publicly available database was a popular expectation across all the different activity types, but respondents would also expect **more events on the dissemination of NDC outputs** (63.6%). Given that the output is one of the less well-known by stakeholders than other outputs, dissemination efforts should be one of the main focus areas when improving NDC.

Improvements on **data** (54.5%) and **analysis** (63.6%) were the most selected options by respondents who are familiar with NDC. Lastly, respondents would most prefer to **improve the format and the organisation aspect of the events** (36.4% in both cases).

#### Opinions of stakeholders familiar with Inventories (e.g. on qualifications or governance)

Exactly half of the respondents who are familiar with Inventories think that the quality of the output is sufficient, while 35.5% think that quality is very high. However, there are also some (11.8%) who think that quality needs improvement, placing this activity on the **more negatively evaluated side of the axis**.

Attitudes on the usefulness of different kind of outputs by familiarity with inventories do not differ substantially. Inventories was one of the activities where **written outputs are prominently used for research** than for other cases of use (66.7%). In terms of information gathered during **events**, respondents familiar with this activity use information mostly in equal measure (60-66.7%), except responding to inquiries, which was selected by 33.3% of the participants. Moreover, **analysis and analytical insight** (73.3%) was preferred in case of stakeholders familiar with inventories, together with **information on specific themes** (73.3%).

Respondents familiar with this activity, among which public officials from partners countries and representatives of EU institutions are the most numerous, would also like to have **more output dissemination events** connected to Inventories, as compared to other activities (62.9% of the respondents familiar with Inventories selected this option). Therefore, as we previously established in the case of NDC, Inventories lack outreach capacities, as it is one of lesser known activities.

#### Opinions of stakeholders familiar with Country fiches for the European Commission

Country fiches are seen by respondents as **one of the highest quality activity of ETF**, alongside thematic fiches. Among stakeholders, it reached average familiarity levels and 42.9%, the plurality of those who are familiar with the output think that the quality is very high, the largest share out of all the activities.

When asked about the usefulness of different kinds of outputs, 63.6% chose written outputs, while less, 54.5% chose events. Respondents familiar with Thematic fiches reported that they use written outputs mostly for **policy-making** (63.6%), followed by information sharing with other stakeholders (54.5%). When it comes to information usage from ETF events, those familiar with Country fiches selected **information sharing** (76.9%) and policy-making (63.6%). According to the expectations, 81.8%, **the most out of all activities, find country-specific information useful as well as specific themes** (72.2%), while other information types were much less appreciated.

In case of written outputs, respondents would like to see **better visual appeal** (53.6% selected this option among those who are familiar with the activity) and the most selected areas of improvement were **topics** (45.5%), **data** (45.5%) and **analysis** (45.5%). Country fiches were discussed as a highly useful collection of data, where the different topical areas and sections provide swift access to information. In case of ETF Monitoring and assessment **events**, people who know Country fiches would like to see improvements on the organizational and **technical aspects of the event** (45.5%) and improved **pre- and post- event communication** (27.3%) as well as **timing** (18.2%), which was not a recurrent suggestion for most activities.

### Opinions of stakeholders familiar with Thematic fiches (e.g. on quality assurance, work-based learning)

As results showed, the third-most well-known activity were thematic fiches, where 46.2% of the respondents think that the quality is sufficient and for 40.4% the quality is very high, which makes **Thematic fiches** one of the **most successful activities** in this sense, alongside Country fiches. However, in contrast to the latter, Thematic fiches were almost twice as familiar to respondents (40.8% compared to 24.5% in Round 1) and were much more familiar to EU member state representatives.

In case of Thematic fiches, respondents familiar with the activity prefer written outputs slightly more than events (57.7% as compared to 46.2%). According to respondents, **information sharing** (73.1% of those familiar with the activity), **preparing for events and discussions** (69.2%) and **research** (69.2%) were the most typical areas of use. Information conveyed on events was utilised in higher than usual rates for **research** (57.7%), aside from the typical use types of policy-making, information dissemination and preparation for events.

Similarities of Thematic fiches to Country fiches continue with regards to areas of improvement as well. Aside from the **database** (64.3%), **better visual appeal** and more national, regional and international **dissemination events** were most often selected in terms of improvements. This is quite natural as fiches by their nature are a product heavily reliant on strong visual presentation. Respondents familiar with Thematic fiches noted that monitoring **events** should be improved in what considers **the organisational and technical aspects** (30.8%) as well as improvement in pre- and post-event communication (26.9%), thematic aspects (23.1%) and linguistic aspects (23.1%).

### Opinions of stakeholders familiar with Riga mid-term deliverables monitoring and reporting

**Respondents were the least satisfied with Riga mid-term deliverables monitoring and reporting**, out of those who are familiar with this activity, 23.1% said that the quality needs improvement. However, the Riga mid-term deliverables (and the upcoming Monitoring of implementation of Osnaabrück Declaration) are also outputs that were the least well-known by respondents and it is likely that even those familiar with them may have less reliable information due to their overall lower prominence.

Almost **double of the respondents** who are familiar with the Riga mid-term deliverables **would prefer events** (54.5%) **to written outputs** (28.6%). Sharing **written outputs** with stakeholders is the most used form of the activity (85.7%), after which comes policy-making with a considerably lower proportion (57.1% of the respondents familiar with Riga mid-term deliverables selected this). There are no discernible characteristics in terms of information use from ETF **events**.

Respondents would prefer to see **more active dissemination of outputs online, at a national level** (53.8% of those who are familiar with the Riga mid-term deliverables activity). In contrast to other activities, the **timing** was an emphasised aspect when asked about possible improvements (28.6%), together with **organisation** and **technical improvement** (42.9%) and **thematic improvements** (28.6%).

### Summary

Most respondents thought that the quality of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs are sufficient or very high. Data type and quality, topics and the analysis were the most popular areas for improvement. The **most highly evaluated were the Country and Thematic fiches** monitoring outputs, while the worst performing in terms of quality were the Riga mid-term deliverables (while they were also quite poorly

known among the stakeholders and therefore less prominent overall – only targeting the five EU candidate countries).

When respondents evaluated an output as having lower quality compared to others, **dissemination issues** was one of the recurring elements, as in the case of **Inventories, and the monitoring of the Riga mid-term deliverables**. It seems that once activities reach a certain level of familiarity among the stakeholder groups, the focus shifts to **improvements in data, analysis and visuals** as in the case of **Country Fiches, the NDC and Thematic Fiches**. **Translation of monitoring outputs into more languages** was a popular suggestion from stakeholders who are familiar with KIESE and the Torino process. The importance of this suggestion is all the more increased as sharing information with other stakeholders is one of the most frequent type of usage of these deliverables.

### 2.2.5. Unique elements of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs (EQ2, EQ2.1, EQ6.1)

In this sub-section we analyse the unique elements of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs, their importance for stakeholders and the comparison of ETF written outputs with outputs provided by other actors (OECD, UNESCO, World Bank, etc.). Based on the stakeholder interviews we identified that the unique elements of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs include the following: wide stakeholder involvement (including social partners), high quality data, continuity over a long period of time, strong connections with national governments and stakeholders, applicability to solve real policy issues and other aspects (for more, see figure below). This question is relevant so that the ETF could identify the most appreciated and unique elements of its Monitoring outputs, could further improve them and in this way increase stakeholders' appreciation on ETF Monitoring and assessment activity and outputs. By clearly identifying the unique elements of its outputs, ETF could further increase its competitiveness and advantage in the field.

The overview of the importance of unique elements within ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs revealed that **all elements are important** to the stakeholders with the value range being 7.02-8.04. The **top five most important unique elements** were the following (also see figure below):

- **Wide stakeholder involvement (including social partners)** (value of 8.04 given by the respondents),
- **Particularly high quality of data** (7.76),
- **Continuity over a long period of time** (7.66),
- **Strong connections with national governments and stakeholders** (7.59), and
- **Highly applicable to solve real policy issues** (7.52).

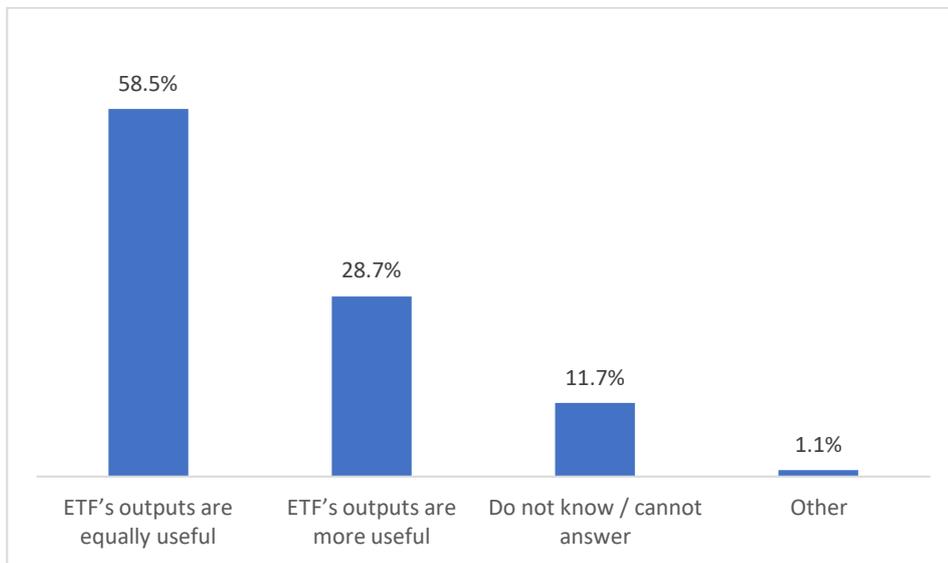
FIGURE 24. UNIQUE ELEMENTS OF ETF MONITORING FROM 1 (LEAST IMPORTANT) – TO 10 (MOST IMPORTANT)

<b>Wide stakeholder involvement (including social partners)</b>	8.04
<b>Particularly high quality of data</b>	7.76
<b>Continuity over a long period of time</b>	7.66
<b>Strong connections with national governments and stakeholders</b>	7.59
<b>Highly applicable to solve real policy issues</b>	7.52
<b>Geographic scope</b>	7.43
<b>Unique monitoring methodology</b>	7.29
<b>Unique data not collected elsewhere</b>	7.27
<b>Focus on the wider concept of human capital development and not only on VET</b>	7.26
<b>Strong theoretical background</b>	7.02

When asked to compare the usefulness of ETF written outputs with outputs provided by other actors, the **majority of respondents** (58.5%) suggested that 'ETF's outputs are equally useful'. According to one respondent, "mostly they [outputs provided by ETF and other bodies] are complementary to each other because these are system-level observations." Less than a third of respondents (28.7%) noted that 'ETF's outputs are more useful'. However, none of the surveyed stakeholders answered that the outputs of other organisations were more useful (although this option was clearly provided). While there is clearly a selection bias in that the Policy Delphi was supported by ETF and used ETF contacts for dissemination, this result still points to a clearly perceived added value and relevance of ETF Monitoring and assessment among stakeholders.

Among the different stakeholder groups, the most popular answer was that the 'ETF's outputs are equally useful'. However, the EU institutions (40.0%) and partner country representatives (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies) (31.4%) were most likely to claim that 'ETF's outputs are more useful'. On the other hand, the EU Member State representatives (75.0%) and those who identified themselves as other (70.0%) were most likely to say that 'ETF's outputs are equally useful' (for more details, see figure below).

**FIGURE 25. HOW DOES THEIR USEFULNESS FOR YOUR WORK COMPARE WITH WRITTEN OUTPUTS FROM OTHER ACTORS (WORLD BANK, OECD, ILO, UNESCO ETC.)?**



**FIGURE 26. HOW DOES THEIR USEFULNESS FOR YOUR WORK COMPARE WITH WRITTEN OUTPUTS FROM OTHER ACTORS (WORLD BANK, OECD, ILO, UNESCO ETC.)? (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	ETF's outputs are more useful	ETF's outputs are equally useful	Do not know / cannot answer	Other
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc )	40,0%	46,7%	13,3%	0,0%
EU Member State representative (e g ministry, governmental agency etc )	12,5%	75,0%	12,5%	0,0%
Partner country representative (public sector, e g government, ministries, agencies)	31,4%	57,1%	11,4%	0,0%
Partner country representative (social partners, e g trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	25,0%	50,0%	18,8%	6,3%
Other	25,0%	70,0%	5,0%	0,0%

Respondent open answers noted the unique elements of ETF framework when compared to other practices/organisations which include the following:

- **Coverage.** Respondents suggested that the ETF offers a broader overview of the situation in the human capital development field. Also, ETF distinguishes itself because it analyses the situation in different countries, including EU Member States and partner countries. As some respondents suggested, “at least when the OECD or UNESCO are preparing the reports, they

are mostly focused on the European countries“; or “ETF is working with our region, and it differs from what World Bank does.”

- **Applicability to solve real policy issues.** Respondents noted that the monitoring outputs of other organisations cannot be so easily applied when solving existing issues (e.g. implementation of VET policies, creation of relevant bodies and structures). According to one respondent, “the main difference is that ETF does not only develop a methodology and indicators, it also takes part in the implementation <of the recommendations>. Meanwhile the majority of international organisations stay at the level of recommendations. Others write reports but they never get back to check how it is going on”.
- **Clear focus on VET.** Respondents suggested that other bodies and organisations do not have such sophisticated knowledge of VET systems as ETF has. According to some respondents, “not many international organisations pay attention to the monitoring of VET systems”, “the analytical center of the Ministry of Education cooperates with OECD, too. They are interested in other levels, while ETF is more focused on vocational education” and “ETF is focused on vocational education and training while other organizations are focused more on general education”. While ETF has continued to focus on overall lifelong learning and human capital development for a while already, it is still perceived as a VET-oriented actor in many cases, and is actually appreciated because of it.
- **Regularity.** Respondents noted that ETF offers frequent and regular monitoring activities to the countries. As some respondents identified, “ETF offers more frequent reporting and monitoring, as you most probably know, for example, this work-based learning monitoring is done every year.” Another stakeholder claimed: “ETF is more regular, it releases its country fiches almost every year. We can rely on ETF because they are known to have their regularity”.
- **Continuity over a long period of time.** Respondents claimed that other organisations are rather project-oriented and operate on a shorter timeframe compared to ETF. Meanwhile, for ETF often there is no definitive end-date of an activity and ETF continuously and regularly performs its Monitoring in the countries. According to one respondent, “the added value of the Torino Process is that it is consistent, it happens every couple of years”. Similarly, others suggested that “even though we have cooperation with additional international organisations and institutions present in <our country> or regionally for a long period of time, no one is having such continuity like ETF.”

Overall, the respondents found the unique elements of ETF Monitoring and assessment important. Although the majority of survey respondents suggested that ETF’s outputs are equally useful when compared with other organisations and bodies, the respondents identified several unique elements of ETF Monitoring and assessment. These included the coverage of more varied countries, applicability to solve identified policy issues, high standard expertise on VET, and regularity as well as continuity of Monitoring activities. These indications clearly point the way for ETF to continue focusing on, as this would further foster stakeholders’ satisfaction with ETF Monitoring and assessment activities.

## 2.2.6. Digital products and channels (EQ5, EQ5.1, EQ5.2)

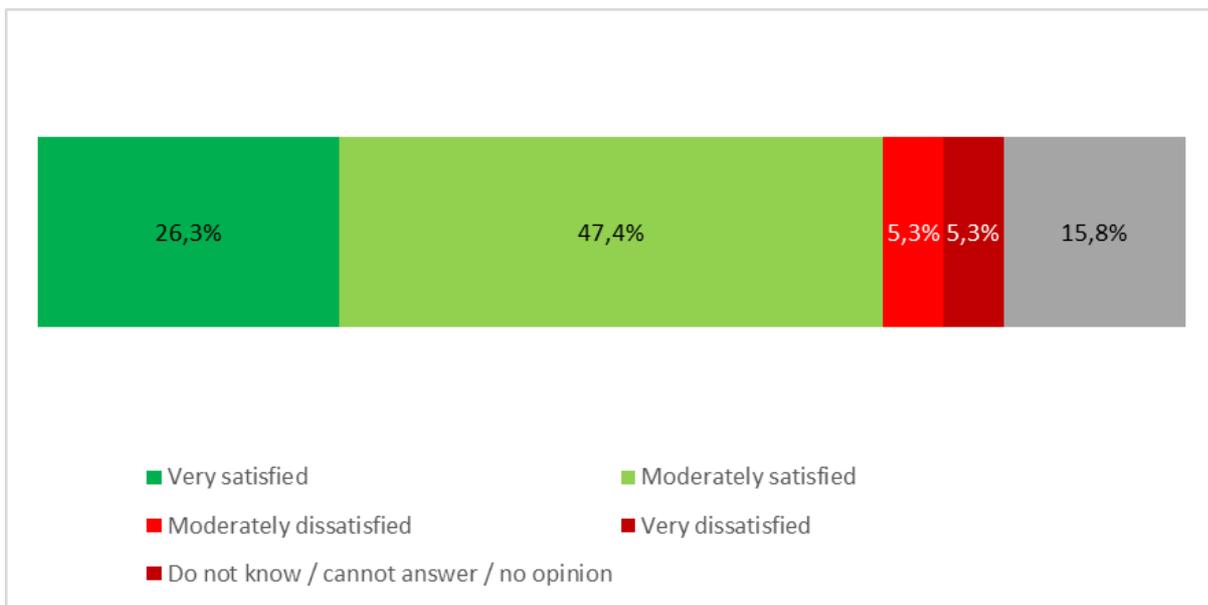
### ETF website

In this subsection we analyse stakeholders’ satisfaction with ETF website and with the presentation of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs on the ETF website. We also focus on the areas of improvement suggested by various stakeholder groups. This question is relevant so that the ETF could increase the quality of the ETF website if needed and make changes that are calculated and reasonable. Furthermore,

improving the quality of the ETF website and the presentation of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs on website could increase the number of stakeholders using the ETF website and access to relevant Monitoring outputs provided there.

The overview of the ETF website revealed that while the majority of the respondents (73.7%) noted that they are **at least 'moderately satisfied'** with the ETF website, slightly more than 10 percent of the respondents suggested that they are at least 'moderately dissatisfied' (see figure below).

**FIGURE 27. OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE ETF WEBSITE, AS A PLATFORM TO FIND ETF MONITORING OUTPUTS?**



The results showed that partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations) (90.9%) more often than others were **at least 'moderately satisfied'**, whereas partner country representatives (public sector, e.g. government, ministries and agencies) (27.8%) more often than others said that they are **at least 'moderately dissatisfied'** with the quality of the ETF website (see figure below).

**FIGURE 28. OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE ETF WEBSITE, AS A PLATFORM TO FIND ETF MONITORING OUTPUTS? (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	Very dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied	Do not know / cannot answer / no opinion
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	0,0%	0,0%	57,1%	28,6%	14,3%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	0,0%	0,0%	25,0%	25,0%	50,0%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	14,3%	0,0%	28,6%	28,6%	28,6%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	11,1%	16,7%	44,4%	16,7%	11,1%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	0,0%	0,0%	63,6%	27,3%	9,1%
Other	0,0%	0,0%	50,0%	40,0%	10,0%

Respondents were also asked about the extent to which they agree or disagree with the given statements about the presentation of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs provided on the ETF website. The results revealed that **majority of the respondents at least ‘agree’** with almost every statement provided, including (see figure below):

- **“I am able to use the search function while looking for information”** (67.0% of respondents),
- **“The speed of navigation is appropriate”** (65.5%),
- **“It is easy for me to find the exact information I need”**(62.9%),
- **“The presentation of outputs is visually appealing”** (62.5%),
- **“I am able to navigate without technical issues”** (60.0%), and.
- **“It is easy for me to find where the ETF Monitoring outputs are located”** (58.9%).

At the same time, the respondents were **quite often likely to disagree** with the following statements:

- **“It is easy for me to access the information using mobile device”** (16.9%),
- **“It is easy for me to find where the ETF Monitoring outputs are located”** (14.4%),
- **“The presentation of outputs is visually appealing”** (13.6%).

**FIGURE 29. DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT PRESENTATION OF ETF MONITORING OUTPUTS ON THE ETF WEBSITE?**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Do not know / cannot answer / no opinion
It is easy for me to find the exact information I need	2,1%	11,3%	62,9%	10,3%	13,4%
It is easy for me to find where the ETF Monitoring outputs are located	0,0%	14,4%	58,9%	11,1%	15,6%
It is easy for me to access the information using mobile devices	0,0%	16,9%	40,4%	7,9%	34,8%
The speed of navigation is appropriate	0,0%	6,9%	65,5%	4,6%	23,0%
The presentation of outputs is visually appealing	0,0%	13,6%	62,5%	9,1%	14,8%
I am able to use the search function while looking for information	0,0%	10,2%	67,0%	5,7%	17,0%
I am able to navigate without technical issues	0,0%	10,6%	60,0%	8,2%	21,2%

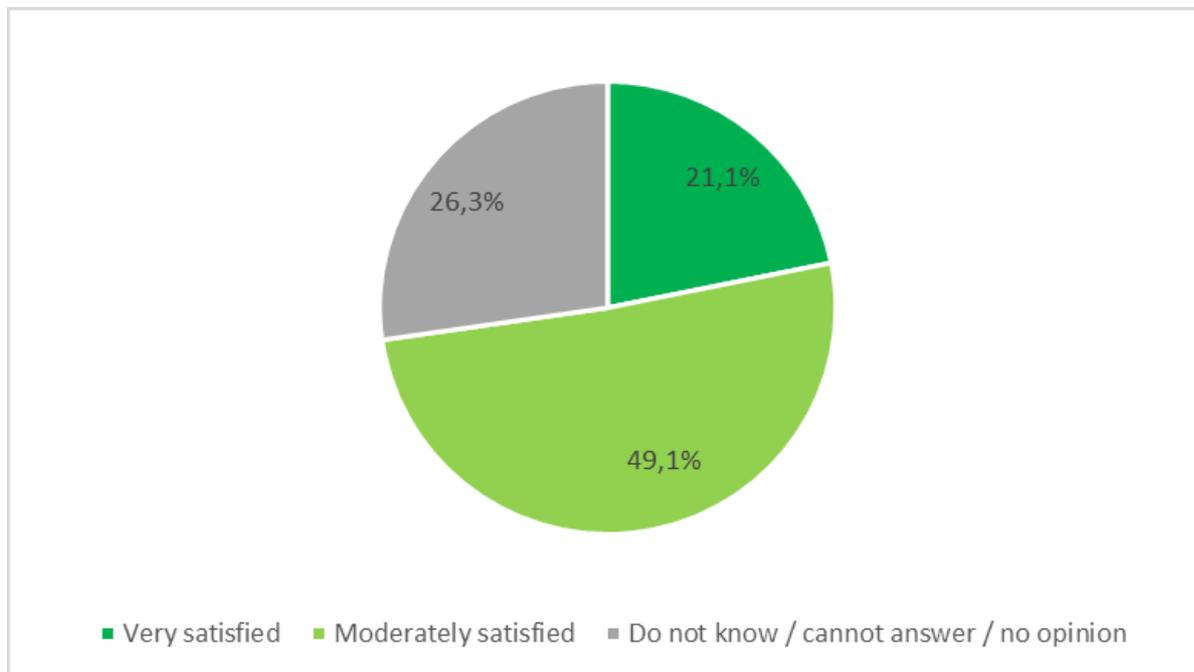
In general, the stakeholders had varying opinions about the satisfaction with the ETF website. Some respondents noted that the ETF website is user-friendly and easy to navigate because it provides various sub-sections on country activities, practices and similar. Others suggested that the ETF website is quite messy, and it requires some time for the stakeholders to find the relevant materials. However, the overall data suggests that respondents have **more positive than negative opinions towards the ETF website and ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs presentation on the website.**

### ETF Open Space

In this subsection we analyse stakeholders’ satisfaction with ETF Open Space and with the presentation of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs on the ETF Open Space. We also focus on the areas of improvement suggested by various stakeholder groups. This question is relevant so that the ETF could increase the quality of the ETF Open Space if needed and make changes that are calculated and reasonable. Furthermore, improving the quality of the ETF Open Space and the presentation of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs on Open Space could increase the number of stakeholders using the ETF Open Space and access to relevant Monitoring outputs provided there.

The overview of the ETF Open Space also focused on the satisfaction with its usage and areas for improvement suggested by stakeholders. While the majority of the respondents (70.2%) noted that they are **at least ‘moderately satisfied’** with the ETF Open Space platform, the level of satisfaction varied among different stakeholder groups (see figure below). While **partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)** (90.9%) more often than others were **at least ‘moderately satisfied’**, members from the **EU institutions** (42.9%) **less** often than others noted that they are at least ‘moderately satisfied’ with ETF Open Space platform (see figure below).

**FIGURE 30. OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE ETF OPEN SPACE, AS A PLATFORM TO FIND ETF MONITORING OUTPUTS?**



**FIGURE 31. OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE ETF OPEN SPACE, AS A PLATFORM TO FIND ETF MONITORING OUTPUTS? (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied	Do not know / cannot answer / no opinion
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	42,9%	0,0%	57,1%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	25,0%	25,0%	50,0%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	28,6%	42,9%	28,6%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	62,5%	12,5%	25,0%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	63,6%	27,3%	9,1%
Other	50,0%	30,0%	20,0%

Respondents were also asked about the extent to which they agree or disagree with the given statements about the presentation of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs provided on the ETF Open Space.

The results revealed that the **majority of the respondents at least ‘agree’** with almost every statement provided, including (also see figure below):

- **“I am able to use the search function while looking for information”** (59.1% of respondents),
- **“The speed of navigation is appropriate”** (58.4%),
- **“It is easy for me to find the exact information I need”**(57.0%),
- **“It is easy for me to find where the ETF Monitoring outputs are located”** (56.5%),
- **“I am able to navigate without technical issues”** (54.7%), and
- **“The presentation of outputs is visually appealing”** (53.0%), and

However, the respondents were **quite often likely to disagree** with the following statements:

- **“It is easy for me to access the information using mobile device”** (14.0%),
- **“It is easy for me to find the exact information I need”**(12.9%),
- **“It is easy for me to find where the ETF Monitoring outputs are located”** (12.0%).

**FIGURE 32. DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT PRESENTATION OF ETF MONITORING OUTPUTS ON ETF OPEN SPACE?**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Do not know / cannot answer / no opinion
It is easy for me to find the exact information I need	2,2%	12,9%	50,5%	6,5%	28,0%
It is easy for me to find where the ETF Monitoring outputs are located Space?	1,1%	12,0%	51,1%	5,4%	30,4%
It is easy for me to access the information using mobile devices	1,2%	14,0%	33,7%	5,8%	45,3%
The speed of navigation is appropriate	1,1%	7,9%	52,8%	5,6%	32,6%
The presentation of outputs is visually appealing	0,0%	10,6%	47,1%	5,9%	36,5%
I am able to use the search function while looking for information	1,1%	8,0%	53,4%	5,7%	31,8%
I am able to navigate without technical issues	1,2%	10,5%	47,7%	7,0%	33,7%

While the quantitative data shows overall positive evaluation of the Open Space as a platform for ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs, it was less positively evaluated than the website. Also, when analysing open answers, stakeholders’ opinions towards the **user-friendliness of ETF Open Space** were **more negative than positive**. According to one respondent, “Open Space is also very kind of user-unfriendly. [...] it’s really, short-term kind of dissemination of information, it’s not super structured. Open space is only for quick exchanges, blogs, this kind of elements. But we are not very happy”. While some stakeholders suggested that while the ETF Open Space helped to create a network of experts which today are users of Open Space (including those involved in various monitoring efforts), others noted that it is quite difficult to understand what kind of information is kept there since there is no

structure on ETF Open Space. Some respondents also noted that the lack of user-friendliness on ETF Open Space encourages them to look for relevant monitoring-related material on ETF website instead.

### 2.2.7. Future products (EQ1, EQ1.1, EQ1.4, EQ6.2)

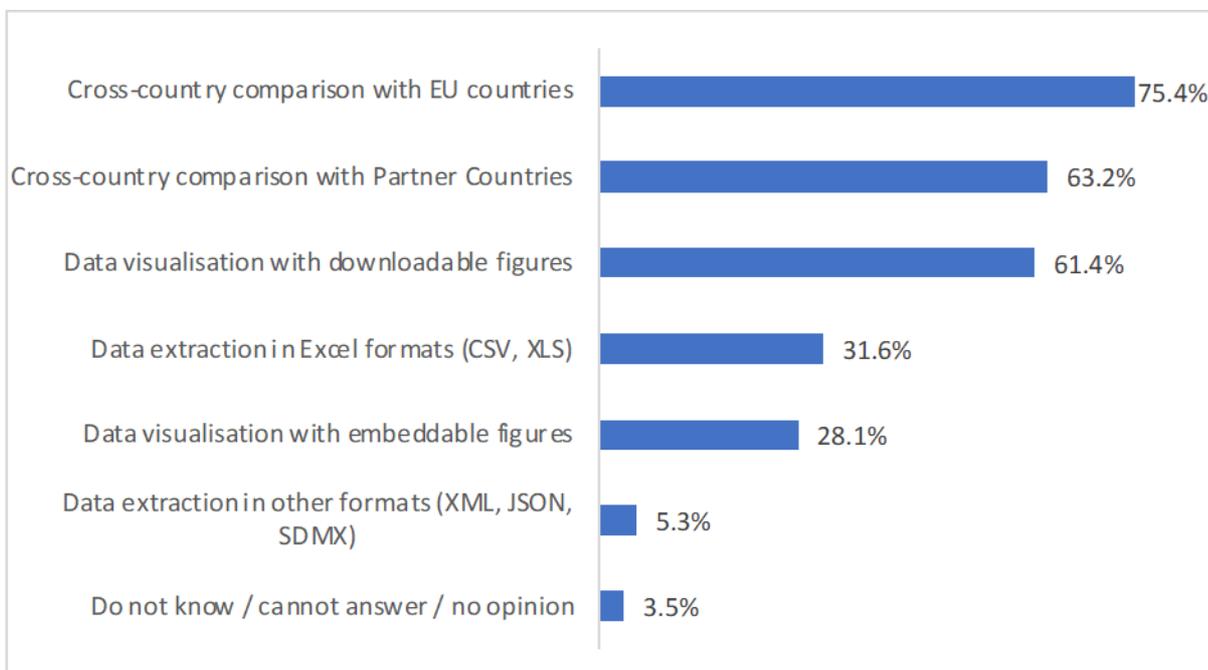
#### New database

In this subsection we analyse the need for new database provided for stakeholders. We also focus on the elements of the new database and frequency of its update. The potential need for such database was raised during the interview sessions and discussions with the ETF staff. This question is relevant so that the ETF could create (if so decided) sophisticated database with the most important elements and the up-to-date information on it that is relevant for stakeholders. Furthermore, by having relevant and attractive database, the ETF could enlarge the network of stakeholders interested in ETF Monitoring and assessment activities and hence, increase the usage of other ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs.

The analysis showed that various stakeholders would welcome the creation of a new database. Respondents suggested that the three most important elements of such a database would be the following (also see figure below):

- **Cross-country comparison with EU countries** (75.4% of respondents),
- **Cross-country comparison with partner countries** (63.2%), and
- **Data visualisation with downloadable figures** (61.4%).

FIGURE 33. WHAT WOULD BE THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF SUCH A DATABASE?



When asked about the preferred elements of new database, there were some differences among the stakeholder groups. While **almost every stakeholder group** prioritised the ‘Cross-country comparison

with EU countries' element for new database, members from the **EU institutions** (85.7%), **international organisations** (85.7%) and **partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)** (72.7%) more often than others noted the importance of 'Data visualisation with downloadable figures' element. Furthermore, the **EU Member State representatives** (100%) and **partner country representatives (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)** (72.7%) more often than others noted the importance of 'Cross-country comparison with partner countries' element. For more details, see the figure below.

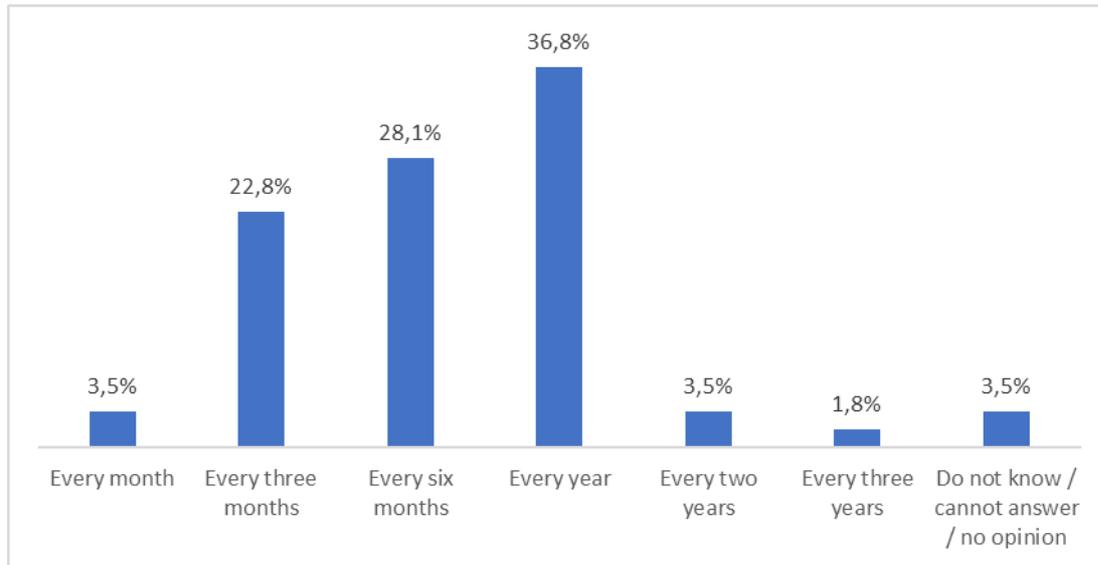
**FIGURE 34. WHAT WOULD BE THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF SUCH A DATABASE? (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	Cross-country comparison with EU countries	Cross-country comparison with Partner Countries	Data visualisation with downloadable figures	Data visualisation with embeddable figures	Data extraction in Excel formats (CSV, XLS)	Data extraction in other formats (XML, JSON, SDMX)	Do not know / cannot answer / no opinion
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	71,4%	57,1%	85,7%	0,0%	28,6%	0,0%	14,3%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	50,0%	100,0%	25,0%	25,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	85,7%	57,1%	85,7%	57,1%	42,9%	14,3%	0,0%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	77,8%	72,2%	50,0%	16,7%	38,9%	5,6%	5,6%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	81,8%	54,5%	72,7%	27,3%	18,2%	0,0%	0,0%
Other	70,0%	50,0%	50,0%	50,0%	40,0%	10,0%	0,0%

Respondents were also asked about the frequency at which this new database should be updated to remain relevant for their needs. The results revealed that respondents would most likely prefer the following frequency of update (also see figure below):

- **Every year** (36.8% of respondents),
- **Every six months** (28.1%), and
- **Every three months** (22.8%).

**FIGURE 35. TO REMAIN RELEVANT, THIS DATABASE SHOULD BE UPDATED AT LEAST...**



The preferences for frequency of update varied among the respondents with international organisations (57.1%), EU Member State representatives (50.0%) and partner country representatives (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies) more often choosing update **‘every year’**. Furthermore, while the EU institutions (42.9%) and partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations) (36.4%) more often than others chose update **‘every six months’**, the EU Member State representatives (50%) and partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations) (36.4%) more often than others chose update **‘every three months’** (see figure below).

**FIGURE 36. TO REMAIN RELEVANT, THIS DATABASE SHOULD BE UPDATED AT LEAST... (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	Every month	Every three months	Every six months	Every year	Every two years	Every three years	Do not know / cannot answer / no opinion
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	28,6%	0,0%	42,9%	14,3%	0,0%	0,0%	14,3%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	0,0%	50,0%	0,0%	50,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	0,0%	28,6%	0,0%	57,1%	0,0%	0,0%	14,3%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	0,0%	11,1%	33,3%	50,0%	0,0%	5,6%	0,0%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	0,0%	36,4%	36,4%	27,3%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
Other	0,0%	30,0%	30,0%	20,0%	20,0%	0,0%	0,0%

All things considered, stakeholders would welcome the creation of new database that most importantly would be able to provide cross-country comparison with EU countries, cross-country comparison with partner countries, and data visualisation with downloadable figures. Furthermore, such database should be updated at least every three months and ideally, every year. Hence, the ETF could consider the creation of new database since the stakeholders’ preferences for its elements are quite clearly voiced.

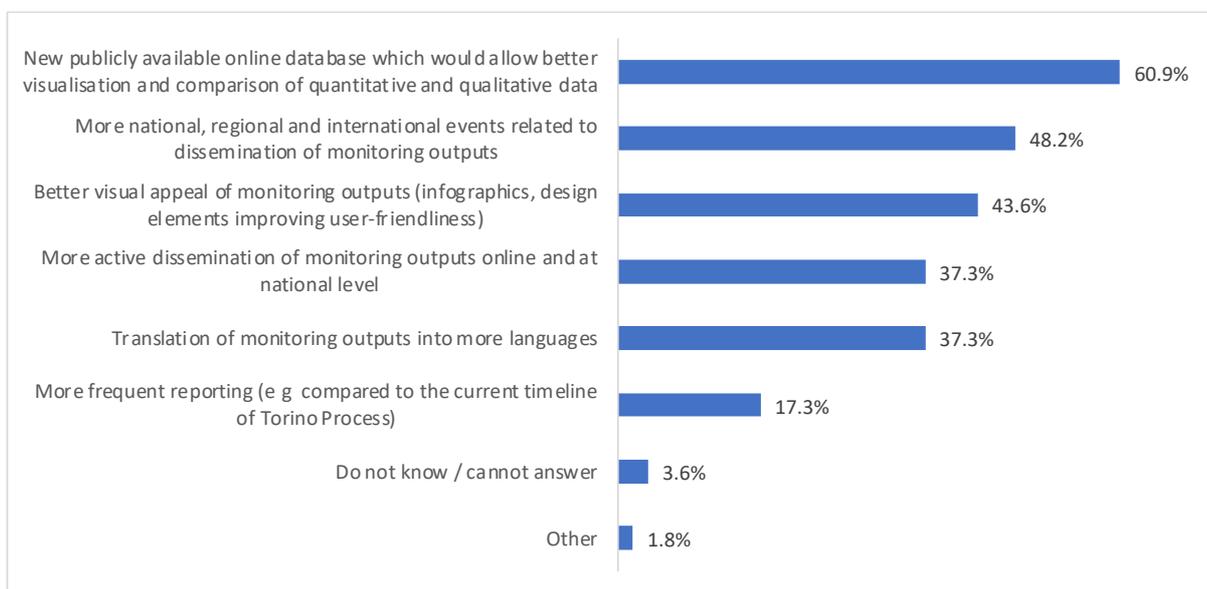
### Desired features of the ETF Monitoring and assessment

In this subsection we analyse the need for new ETF Monitoring and assessment approach. More precisely, we focus on the potential improvements that could be made to make the ETF Monitoring and assessment approach more attractive for different stakeholders. Creating the database according to stakeholders’ needs could increase the stakeholders’ satisfaction with it. Furthermore, this question is relevant so that ETF could increase the attractiveness of ETF activity and the usefulness of ETF Monitoring and assessment for stakeholders.

The overview of the new ETF Monitoring and assessment approach focused on the preferred improvements that could be established to make the ETF Monitoring and assessment framework more user-friendly. Among the provided improvements for new ETF Monitoring and assessment approach, three the most popular ones include the following (also see figure below):

- **‘New publicly available online database which would allow better visualisation and comparison of quantitative and qualitative data’** (60.9% of respondents),
- **‘More national, regional and international events related to dissemination of monitoring outputs’** (48.2%), and
- **‘Better visual appeal of monitoring outputs (infographics, design elements improving user-friendliness)’** (43.6%).

**FIGURE 37. IF THE ETF MONITORING IS MADE LIGHTER IN THE FUTURE, IT IS LIKELY THAT SOME IMPROVEMENTS TO ITS FUNCTIONING COULD BE MADE WITH THE RESOURCES SAVED. WHICH IMPROVEMENTS WOULD BE PREFERABLE, FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE?**



When asked about the preferred improvements for the new ETF Monitoring and assessment approach by different stakeholders, the results showed that EU institutions (71.4%) and other (70.0%) more often than others chose **‘New publicly available online database which would allow better visualisation and comparison of quantitative and qualitative data’** as their preferred improvement for the new ETF Monitoring and assessment approach. However, partner country representatives (public sector, e.g.

government, ministries, agencies) (52.8%) more often than others chose **‘Translation of monitoring outputs into more languages’** as their preferred improvement.

While international organisations (60.0%) and partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations) (56.3%) more often than others chose **‘Better visual appeal of monitoring outputs (infographics, design elements improving user-friendliness)’**, partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations) (68.8%) more often than others chose **‘More national, regional and international events related to dissemination of monitoring outputs’** as their preferred improvement for new ETF Monitoring and assessment approach.

In addition to this, international organisations (30.0%) and EU institutions (28.6%) more often than others chose **‘More frequent reporting (e.g. compared to the current timeline of Torino Process)’**, whereas EU Member State representatives (75.0%) more often than others chose **‘More active dissemination of monitoring outputs online and at national level’** as their preferred improvement for new ETF Monitoring and assessment approach. For more details, see figure below.

**FIGURE 38. IF THE ETF MONITORING IS MADE LIGHTER IN THE FUTURE, IT IS LIKELY THAT SOME IMPROVEMENTS TO ITS FUNCTIONING COULD BE MADE WITH THE RESOURCES SAVED. WHICH IMPROVEMENTS WOULD BE PREFERABLE, FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE? (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	New publicly available online database which would allow better visualisation and comparison of quantitative and qualitative data	Translation of monitoring outputs into more languages	Better visual appeal of monitoring outputs (infographics, design elements improving user-friendliness)	More national, regional and international events related to dissemination of monitoring outputs	More frequent reporting (e.g. compared to the current timeline of Torino Process)	More active dissemination of monitoring outputs online and at national level	Do not know / cannot answer	Other
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	71,4%	21,4%	35,7%	50,0%	28,6%	35,7%	7,1%	0,0%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	50,0%	30,0%	60,0%	20,0%	30,0%	20,0%	0,0%	10,0%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	62,5%	0,0%	50,0%	37,5%	12,5%	75,0%	12,5%	12,5%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	63,9%	52,8%	38,9%	47,2%	13,9%	36,1%	2,8%	0,0%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	50,0%	31,3%	56,3%	68,8%	18,8%	37,5%	0,0%	0,0%
Other	70,0%	45,0%	40,0%	50,0%	15,0%	30,0%	5,0%	0,0%

Overall, stakeholders’ opinions towards the establishment of a new **‘lighter’ ETF Monitoring and assessment approach** were positive. While one respondent claimed that ETF could “go for a lighter approach where it allows ETF to grow as an institution”, another suggested that the new “approach could be good because <ETF> could focus more on specific issues across different countries”.

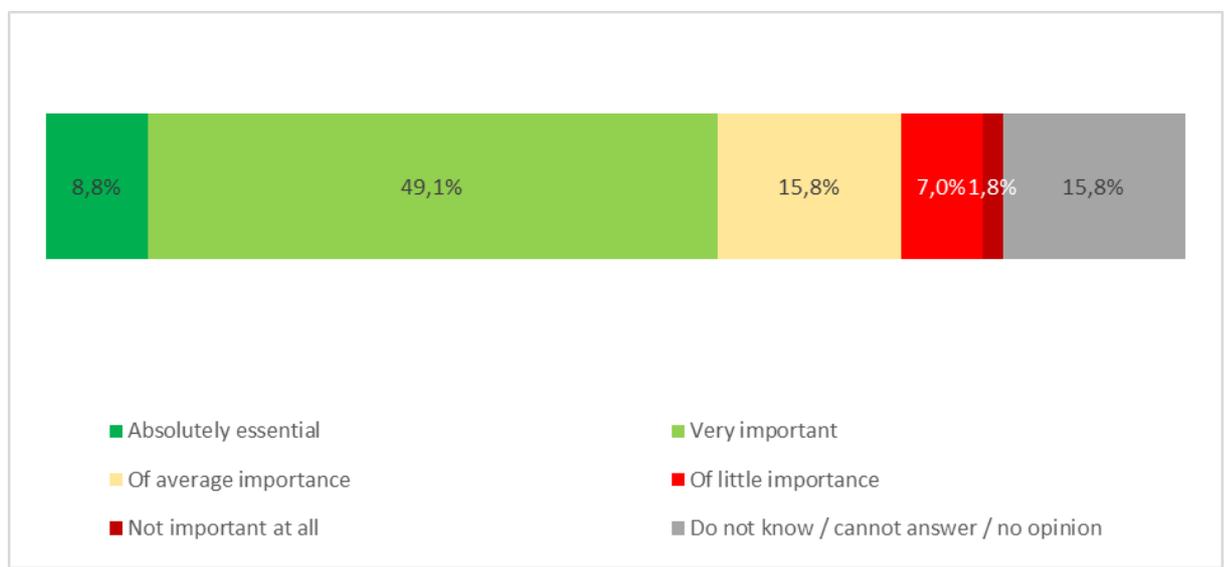
**Potential for a new network**

In this subsection we analyse the need for creating a new expert network. The need for such a structure was raised during the interview sessions with stakeholders and discussions with the ETF staff. This question is relevant so that the ETF could clearly understand the level of interest in the creation of such expert network by different stakeholders and could plan the establishment of it (if so decided) accordingly. Creating the new expert network could attract new stakeholders into ETF activity and increase the attractiveness of the ETF Monitoring and assessment in general. Furthermore, by having a

wider network of experts, the ETF could improve the dissemination of ETF deliverables and stakeholders’ awareness of the latter.

The overview of the stakeholders’ opinions on the prospective creation of new expert network revealed that the **majority of stakeholders** (57.9%) would see such a network as **at least ‘very important’** (see figure). When asked about the importance of new expert network by different stakeholders, the results varied. While those who identified themselves as other (85.8%), international organisations (85.8%) and Member State representatives **more often** found the creation of a new expert network at least ‘very important’, partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations) (52.9%), partner country representatives (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies) (50.0%) and EU institutions (42.9%) did so less frequently (see figure below).

**FIGURE 39. HOW IMPORTANT WOULD YOU FIND THE CREATION OF A NEW EXPERT NETWORK FOCUSED ON ETF MONITORING (E.G. A GROUP OF EXPERTS ON THE ETF OPEN SPACE)?**



Creating a new expert network for ETF Monitoring and assessment was perceived as absolutely essential more often by international development organisations (42.9%) and EU Member State representatives (25%). Partner country representatives from the public sector and social partners and EU institutions did not signal such a strong need.

**FIGURE 40. HOW IMPORTANT WOULD YOU FIND THE CREATION OF A NEW EXPERT NETWORK FOCUSED ON ETF MONITORING (E.G. A GROUP OF EXPERTS ON THE ETF OPEN SPACE)? (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	Absolutely essential	Very important	Of little importance	Of average importance	Not important at all	Do not know / cannot answer / no opinion
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	0,0%	42,9%	0,0%	14,3%	0,0%	42,9%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	25,0%	50,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	25,0%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	42,9%	42,9%	0,0%	0,0%	14,3%	0,0%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	0,0%	50,0%	10,0%	30,0%	0,0%	10,0%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	0,0%	52,9%	11,8%	11,8%	0,0%	23,5%
Other	42,9%	42,9%	0,0%	0,0%	14,3%	0,0%

To summarise, the **creation of new expert network would be welcomed and appreciated** by the stakeholders.

### 2.2.8. Dissemination channels and awareness about deliverables (EQ5, EQ5.1)

In this subsection we analyse the usage of ETF dissemination channels used to get the ETF Monitoring and assessment output deliverables. The analysed dissemination channels include ETF website, direct emails, ETF events, web search and others (see figure below).

The overview of the ETF dissemination channels focused on the ways through which stakeholders currently receive information from the ETF and the preferred channels to receive information in the future. This comparison shows a clear indication on whether a majority of stakeholders are happy with the current dissemination and where ETF could put more focus in the future.

In terms of **currently used** dissemination channels, three the most popular ones include the following (also see figure below):

- **ETF website** (61.8% of respondents),
- **Direct emails from ETF staff** (54.9%), and
- **Participation in ETF events** (47.1%).

However, when asked about the preferred dissemination channels that could potentially be **used in the future**, the ordering of the preferred options changed in the opposite way and include the following:

- **Participation in ETF events** (48.0% of respondents),
- **Direct emails from ETF staff** (46.1%), and
- **ETF website** (38.2%).

**FIGURE 41. THROUGH WHICH CHANNELS DO YOU USUALLY RECEIVE INFORMATION ABOUT ETF MONITORING AND ITS UPDATES (EG. NEW DATA AVAILABLE)? THROUGH WHICH CHANNELS WOULD YOU PREFER TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ABOUT ETF MONITORING AND ITS UPDATES?**

	I currently receive information from this channel:ETF website	I would prefer to receive information from this channel in the future	Do not know / cannot answer
ETF website	61.8%	38.2%	6.9%
ETF Open Space	36.3%	36.3%	7.8%
Direct emails from ETF staff	54.9%	46.1%	2.0%
Web search	34.3%	20.6%	8.8%
Social media (professionally oriented, e.g. LinkedIn)	14.7%	28.4%	13.7%
Social media (personal, e.g. Facebook, Twitter)	18.6%	30.4%	12.7%
Personal connections (e.g. colleagues)	39.2%	29.4%	9.8%
Participation in ETF events	47.1%	48.0%	2.9%

These results show that while all three top dissemination channels should remain the same, ETF’s focus should be shifted more towards events, which is consistent with other data, e.g. the perception of events and stakeholder engagement as key elements of added value especially by the partner country stakeholders. As one stakeholder put it, “the best way to disseminate the outcomes is organise a workshop or a conference in the country where you invite local actors, stakeholders, and you give space for people to discuss the outcomes, the recommendations”.

While social media (both personal and professionally-oriented) was neither among the most used nor among the most preferred dissemination channels, it was the dissemination channel with the highest number of respondents who are not currently reached but would like to be. Respondents also provided some **suggestions on ETF social media presence in relation to disseminating monitoring outputs**. These include providing information on indicators comparing countries, as well as short pieces of information based on monitoring data, and in general making ETF social media more active and sophisticated. .” Some other respondents also noted that social media should become one of the main tools to communicate the ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs. Generally speaking, respondents suggested that the ETF should be even more active on social media space and provide various deliverables, including reports, interviews, visualisations, and other as it increases ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs attractiveness.

Stakeholders also provided other suggestions on dissemination channels. Some suggested that there is potential of making the ETF’s internal IMAGE system available for the external users and that it could be used to develop publicly available information, others said that there is a need to have different pre-developed templates for the dissemination of various ETF outputs so that they are more uniform and more easily recognisable. Furthermore, another respondent suggested that ETF could more actively make use of external conferences, workshops, and events to raise the awareness of the stakeholders who might not yet be in their network.

## 2.3. Content

In this section we focus on themes and types of content within ETF outputs and preferred to be seen by various stakeholders. We provide the overview of the most relevant themes and types of ETF Monitoring and assessment information for stakeholders based on the data collected during Policy Delphi, interviews with stakeholders and focus group discussions. Getting to know the areas of interest is important so that the ETF could reach its targeted audiences most sufficiently and its outputs were used by the stakeholders.

### 2.3.1. Themes (EQ1, EQ1.1)

The overview of the stakeholders' opinions on the topics reflected within ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs revealed the **key themes** which stakeholders wanted to (continue to) see reflected and which are of high importance to them. The stakeholders reflected their theme preferences during the interviews, focus group discussions and through the open-ended questions provided in the surveys. This information was not originally agreed to be requested in the Policy Delphi and therefore no quantitative data is available. The themes identified as the most important include the following:

- **Qualifications,**
- **Quality assurance,**
- **Work-based learning,**
- **Lifelong learning,**
- **Social inclusion,**
- **Mobility of workforce,**
- **Governance, and**
- **Digitalisation.**

By focusing on the above-mentioned themes, ETF would make sure that in the short-term stakeholders are satisfied with the ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs and that they are not too heavy in content. However, a stakeholder needs assessment would need to take place periodically to ensure that the topics remain relevant in the changing realities in partner countries.

### 2.3.2. Types of content (EQ1, EQ1.1)

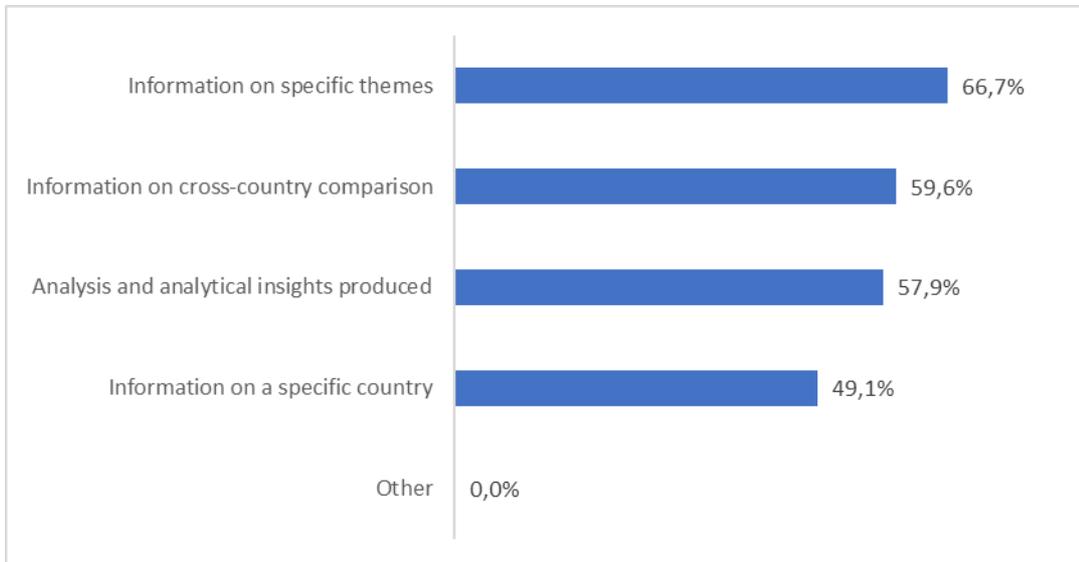
In this subsection we analyse the most relevant types of content offered by ETF. The different types of content offered by ETF include information on specific themes (e.g. qualifications, quality assurance, lifelong learning, etc.), information on cross country comparison, analysis and analytical insights and information on a specific country. This question is important so that ETF could provide the most relevant information for its targeted audiences and its outputs were used sufficiently by the stakeholders.

The overview of the ETF Monitoring and assessment information revealed the most relevant types of content among various stakeholder groups. The usefulness of various types of ETF Monitoring and assessment information were the following (see figure below):

- **Information on specific themes** (66.7% of respondents),
- **Information on cross-country comparison** (59.6%),
- **Analysis and analytical insights produced** (57.9%), and

— **Information on a specific country** (49.1%).

**FIGURE 42. WHAT TYPES OF ETF MONITORING INFORMATION ARE THE MOST USEFUL TO YOU?**



When asked about the usefulness of various types of ETF Monitoring and assessment information by different stakeholder groups, the results varied among the respondents. While **almost every group of stakeholders** chose 'Information on specific themes' as the most useful type of information, **international organisations** more often than others chose 'Information on a specific country' (85.7%) and 'Analysis and analytical insights produced' (85.7%) as the most useful types of information for their needs. Furthermore, **partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)** (90.9%) more often than others chose 'Information on cross-country comparison' as the most useful type of information for their needs. For more details, see figure below.

**FIGURE 43. WHAT TYPES OF ETF MONITORING INFORMATION ARE THE MOST USEFUL TO YOU? (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	Information on specific themes	Information on a specific country	Information on cross-country comparison	Analysis and analytical insights produced
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	71,4%	57,1%	57,1%	28,6%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	75,0%	25,0%	25,0%	50,0%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	71,4%	85,7%	42,9%	85,7%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	61,1%	55,6%	50,0%	55,6%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	63,6%	27,3%	90,9%	54,5%
Other	70,0%	40,0%	70,0%	70,0%

The results revealed that ‘Information on specific themes’ seems to be the most useful type of content for the stakeholders. On the other hand, the selection of ‘Information on a specific country’ and ‘Analysis and analytical insights produced’ as the most useful types of content by international organisations points to their need to have highly specific data on one particular country, as well as the need to have strong evidence base for informing decisions. Similarly, partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations) chose the ‘Information on cross-country comparison’ as the most useful type of content indicating that the comparative element and putting their own country in perspective were the most important issues for them.

To summarise, different priorities in types of content by stakeholders show the need for ETF to produce different products on different content for different groups of stakeholders. While one type of deliverables could show deeper, more analytical and thematically focused content, another could offer a broader, more comparable and generalised perspective on situation across different countries.

## 2.4. Processes

Many stakeholder consultation activities in this evaluation study focused on improving the processes of the ETF Monitoring and assessment. We inquired about the current processes and asked for stakeholder feedback on various areas, including stakeholder needs assessment, stakeholder involvement, and impacts of the ETF Monitoring and assessment service. We also dived deeper into the flagship of ETF Monitoring and assessment – the Torino process, while also maintaining interest in other Monitoring activities and potential new networks. Further in this chapter, we present our analysis of processes in each of the afore-mentioned areas.

### 2.4.1. Stakeholder needs assessment (EQ1.3, EQ6.2)

Most of the interviewed stakeholders think that the ETF takes enough time to consult them and understand their needs and that a massive effort is made by ETF staff in this regard already. The stakeholders feel that they are involved in various consultations and encouraged to express their needs. In cases where certain needs are not taken into account, the stakeholders seem to understand that this is inevitable as most arrangements are “a compromise between all participants”.

Most respondents believe that two methods of stakeholder needs assessment are the most effective: **surveys** (59.8% of respondents) and **centralised collection of stakeholder needs by one person per country** (53.9%), e.g. by Torino process coordinator or equivalent in the future. Less relevant, but also often-selected methods were **informal and personal exchanges** (47.1%) and **gathering opinions at events** (45.1%).

While surveys were appreciated across all groups, **partner country representatives from social partners and EU institutions prefer informal and personal exchanges** more than others (71.4% and 61.5%). Conversely, **gathering opinion at events were less preferred by EU institutions** (30.8%) and **international development organisations** (22.2%). Lastly, **centralised collection of stakeholder needs were preferred by most of the stakeholder groups, except social partners from partner countries** (35.7%). These results show that there are important differences across stakeholder regarding needs assessment, which should be taken into account in the future to ensure the inclusion of a variety of opinions and groups.

### 2.4.2. Stakeholder involvement and ownership (EQ1.2, EQ1.3, EQ4.1, EQ6.2)

As the new Monitoring framework is made up of two levels (**Level 1: monitoring systems performance for lifelong learning** and **Level 2: reviewing policies for lifelong learning**), the question arises: to what extent should the stakeholders be **involved** and **own** the results of the ETF Monitoring and assessment – specifically, monitoring systems’ performance and reviewing them?

Stakeholder **involvement** and **ownership** of results are two closely related parts of the ETF Monitoring and assessment service and, as discovered in the evaluative study, important drivers for its success.

#### Stakeholder involvement

The stakeholders think that their participation in ETF Monitoring and assessment is crucial: 63.2% of respondents think that **countries and stakeholders should be heavily involved in data collection and system performance monitoring** from a lifelong learning perspective (Level 1 of the NMF) and 57.9% of them think that **countries and stakeholders should be heavily involved in lifelong learning systems performance and policies review** (Level 2 of the NMF).

Only around one in four respondents believe that the ETF alone should conduct data collection, monitoring, and reviews. Among those who think that the ETF should collect the data and monitor systems performance, the largest percentage (38.9%) comes from **partner country representatives from the public sector**. This result could stem from the reality that public sector employees from partner countries are likely to have the highest workload related to the ETF Monitoring and assessment efforts in their countries. Among those who think that the ETF should conduct reviews, the largest percentage (42.9%) comes from **EU institutions**. The suggested interpretation for this result is that reviews

conducted by the ETF could be seen as more objective than reviews conducted by the partner countries. This 'external eye' was also noted as one of the important elements of added value for ETF Monitoring and assessment in other sections of the report.

We also asked the respondents to mention the potential **advantages and disadvantages of having the collection of qualitative and quantitative data by the ETF**, without involving countries and stakeholders. The comments focused on the following aspects:

- **Advantages:** a faster, centralised process, based on a consistent approach, full of potential for benchmarking, comparative analysis, and higher objectivity.
- **Disadvantages:** a process lacking access to information, understanding of national landscapes and participation of various stakeholders, with increased risk of inaccurate and incomplete data that is difficult to verify, and a long-term dependency on the ETF. Besides, lesser involvement of countries and stakeholders would reduce the capacity building effect that ETF Monitoring and assessment now has in the partner countries.

When asked if they feel **sufficiently involved** in ETF Monitoring and assessment activities, 44.6% of respondents answered positively and 16.1% of respondents answered negatively. The stakeholder group that feels involved the least is **partner country representatives from the public sector** (38.9% answered positively and 22.2% answered negatively). The surprising result is that public sector employees were most likely to feel insufficiently involved, while also often being those who think that ETF alone should conduct data collection, monitoring, and reviews. This indicates that the partner country representatives from the public sector are the most diverse group that greatly varies by country and even individual levels. While some public sector employees are extremely motivated and would like to be more involved, others might feel that the required workload is already too high for their preferences.

### Stakeholder ownership

In the context of this study, we understand **stakeholder ownership** as stakeholders' perspective towards the ETF Monitoring and assessment results and outputs in a way that makes them feel like they have great attachment to the final product. This may be the result of having significantly contributed to it, or simply recognising oneself and one's needs in it. This perspective is important because we expect that the feeling of ownership increases the chance of the final product (e.g. a report) being used, disseminated, and advocated by the stakeholders.

The respondents suggested various ways to improve the ownership of the Monitoring service by countries and stakeholders, but it was clear that the main driver of ownership is involvement. Different respondents suggested that ownership could be improved in various ways. First, by involving the concerned countries in **collecting the data**. Second, by involving stakeholders from the beginning in **setting the Monitoring criteria**. Third, by establishing stronger links between ETF's initiatives and policy-making decisions on reforms in the respective countries. Others suggested having permanent structures with dedicated contact points or organising regular meetings as ways to increase ownership. All these suggestions made by stakeholders show that **the key to increased ownership is stakeholder involvement** in various stages and processes of the ETF Monitoring and assessment service. Nevertheless, some specific groups like international organisations feel sufficient attachment to the ETF outputs despite not having directly contributed to them – simply because they perceive these outputs as highly relevant to their purposes. As evidenced by the somewhat lower perceptions of relevance and

quality of outputs by partner country stakeholders, this is not the case for all groups. If stakeholder involvement in developing ETF Monitoring and assessment is to be reduced in the future, this could therefore be compensated by more tailored and relevant products to different types of stakeholders.

### 2.4.3. Management of the Torino brand

As we have seen previously, the Torino process is the most familiar brand to respondents by a wide margin. It is the flagship of ETF Monitoring and assessment, with a fairly high perception of quality, only surpassed by some other ETF outputs (e.g. Thematic and Country fiches). It became an integral part of partner countries’ policy processes and monitoring systems, some even have dedicated budget lines for it. Thus, the Torino Process is a well-established brand with a continuous impact on partner countries which, in turn, necessitates a careful consideration for reform. In the context of the New Monitoring Framework, the question is whether to introduce it as a new brand or to build upon the successes of the Torino process and make use of previous monitoring and data collection efforts by strengthening continuity between the two brands.

The overview of the Torino Process brand first focuses on its relevance for various stakeholders and stakeholders’ opinions on the hypothesised changes in the Torino Process brand. While the brand of ‘Torino Process’ seems to be **important** for the respondents, who gave **an average value of 8.03** (1-10, where 1=not important and 10=very important), the level of importance of the ‘Torino Process’ brand varied among the stakeholder groups.

While international organisations, partner country representatives (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies) and partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations) evaluated the importance of the ‘Torino Process’ brand by giving it values of 8.5, 8.2 and 8.2 accordingly, those who identified themselves as other (8.0), EU institutions (7.9) and EU Member State representatives (7.1) were slightly less positive about the importance of ‘Torino Process’ brand.

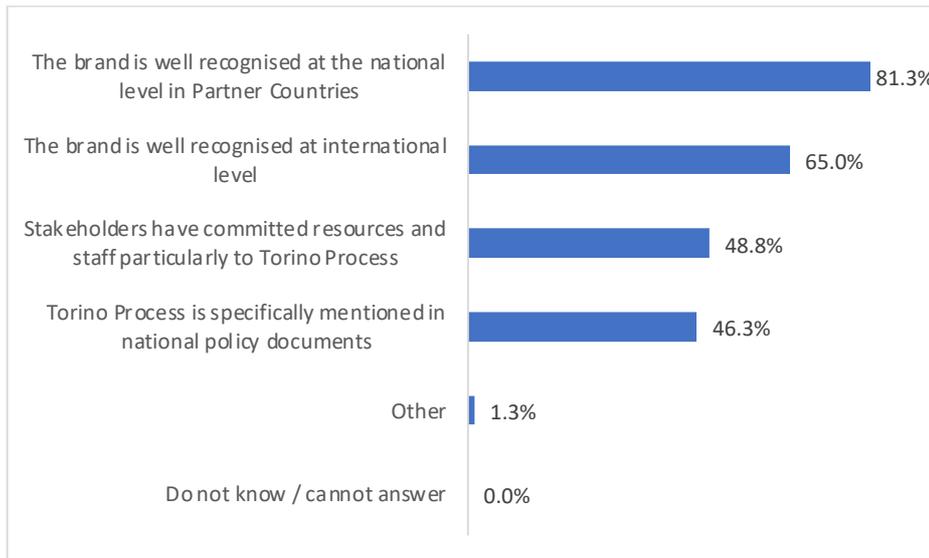
**FIGURE 44. IMPORTANCE OF THE ‘TORINO PROCESS’ BRAND FOR ETF MONITORING (1-10, AVERAGE BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP)**

	Mean	Median
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	7,9	7,5
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	8,5	9,0
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	7,1	8,0
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	8,2	8,0
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	8,2	9,0
Other	8,0	9,0

When asked about the reasons determining the **importance of ‘Torino Process’ brand**, the main reasons were the following (also see figure below):

- ‘The brand is well recognised at the national level in partner countries’ (81.3% of respondents),
- ‘The brand is well recognised at international level’ (65.0%),
- ‘Stakeholders have committed resources and staff particularly to Torino Process’ (48.8%), and
- ‘Torino Process is specifically mentioned in national policy documents’ (46.3%).

**FIGURE 45. REASONS FOR THE ‘TORINO PROCESS’ BRAND IMPORTANCE**



Similarly, when asked about the reasons of ‘Torino Process’ brand importance by different stakeholders, the results revealed that the reason ‘The brand is well recognised at the national level in partner countries’ was the **most popular almost among all stakeholder groups** (except for those who identified themselves as ‘Other’). Therefore, a considerable part of the Torino Processes’ reputation is its long-lasting presence in partner countries’ domestic policy field. For more details, please, see the figure below.

**FIGURE 46. REASONS FOR THE 'TORINO PROCESS' BRAND IMPORTANCE (BY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS)**

	The brand is well recognised at the national level in Partner Countries	The brand is well recognised at international level	Stakeholders have committed resources and staff particularly to Torino Process	Torino Process is specifically mentioned in national policy documents	Other	Do not know / cannot answer
EU institution (Commission, Parliament, Council, agencies etc.)	80,0%	50,0%	60,0%	20,0%	0,0%	0,0%
International development organisation (non-EU: World Bank, OECD, ILO, UNESCO etc.)	83,3%	66,7%	50,0%	50,0%	0,0%	0,0%
EU Member State representative (e.g. ministry, governmental agency etc.)	83,3%	50,0%	33,3%	50,0%	0,0%	0,0%
Partner country representative (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies)	89,7%	62,1%	44,8%	55,2%	3,4%	0,0%
Partner country representative (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations)	90,9%	72,7%	45,5%	45,5%	0,0%	0,0%
Other	62,5%	75,0%	56,3%	43,8%	0,0%	0,0%

Respondents were also asked how they would feel if the 'Torino Process' brand was changed. The results revealed that while 42.1% of respondents would feel **at least 'moderately positively'**, 31.6% of respondents would feel **at least 'moderately negatively'**. Thus, there is an uncertainty among stakeholders, as most respondents are neither too negative nor too positive about the possibility of change.

When asked about the changes in 'Torino Process' brand by different stakeholder groups, those who identified themselves as other (60.0%), EU institutions (57.2%) and international organisations (57.2%) were **more often at least 'moderately positive'** about the changes than the partner country representatives (public sector, e.g. government, ministries, agencies) (50.0%), partner country representatives (social partners, e.g. trade unions, chambers, employer associations) (9.1%) or EU Member States representatives (0.0%).

## 3. Looking forward: recommendations and options for the future New Monitoring Framework

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Our look at the future of ETF Monitoring and assessment follows the structure of the previous chapter on findings by focusing on four subjects: processes, content, products and channels, and use and impact. The key takeaways are presented in the format of **recommendations, each leading to several options**.

The recommendations and options we present are **not a ‘must have’ list, but a menu of options that can be mixed and matched**. Therefore, it is important to underline that **some of the presented options are co-existent and complementary, and some are not**. We indicate this difference in brackets: mark them as **complementary** or **non-complementary**.

### 3.1. Processes

#### 3.1.1. Recommendation 1: Maintain and improve stakeholder ownership of ETF Monitoring and assessment

Ultimately, ETF Monitoring and assessment service should strive to have an impact on the work of its stakeholders and users such as the European Commission, partner countries and their governments, international organisations including those active in development cooperation. ETF’s own activities in the partner countries should also be heavily based on the findings of ETF Monitoring and assessment. The impact could happen e.g. through the use of ETF Monitoring and assessment data for policymaking and planning of investments and interventions. In fact, the data in previous sections of the report shows that ETF Monitoring and assessment data is having an impact on investment both by national governments and particularly by the European Commission services and international development cooperation.

At the heart of the impact of ETF Monitoring and assessment is ownership. The stakeholders have to recognise themselves and their needs in the data and the outputs to be able to use them properly. There are different ways to ensure stakeholder ownership. One way is involving stakeholders directly via participation or putting forward own resources. The more certain stakeholders take part in creating a certain product, the more likely it is that they will feel the owners of that product. This is what ETF has been doing with national level stakeholders in partner countries. However, as ETF’s prior experience shows, this deep involvement of stakeholders in data collection comes with a price of heavy, long and not always efficient and high-quality process. These drawbacks are precisely what the new ETF Monitoring framework is aiming to address.

There is another way to ensure ownership – by providing exactly what the stakeholders need, in terms of both data itself (e.g. topics, granularity, comparative potential) and presentation (types of deliverables, length, user-friendliness, interactivity, dissemination). Although they are not involved in data collection for ETF, their ownership of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs is ensured by high relevance of the outputs produced (although the same outputs are less relevant to other groups). Therefore, ownership may also be improved by simply targeting the data and outputs better to various stakeholder groups.

That being said, it is important to note that stakeholder involvement is recognised as the key defining feature of ETF Monitoring and assessment, as evidenced by the Policy Delphi results. It was the highest rated added value element when compared to other monitoring efforts on the market, and mentioned multiple times in stakeholder interviews as one of the most distinctive elements. Maintaining and even increasing stakeholder involvement would therefore be necessary to continue distinguishing ETF Monitoring and assessment from other efforts. However, this involvement does not necessarily need to take place at all stages of monitoring (although numerous stakeholders argued otherwise).

Involvement of stakeholders (especially from Partner Countries) in the monitoring activities can be at different levels of intensity. E.g.:

- A more passive role, limited to discussions, provision of individual or organisational opinions and positions, and sharing and dissemination;
- A more active, participatory approach where stakeholders would be involved as co-developers of the products from the beginning until the end of an exercise.

As mentioned in introductory sections of the report, the new ETF Monitoring Framework is planned at two levels: Level 1, focusing on monitoring system performance for lifelong learning and providing system performance indicators; and Level 2, explaining and adjusting performance via performance and policies reviews. The stakeholders may be involved in one or both of these levels, and have either a more passive or a more active and participatory role in each of the levels. In the options below, we list out different ways in which stakeholder involvement could take place, and how otherwise stakeholder ownership could be ensured.

**Option 1.1 (non-complementary): Involve stakeholders in performance and policies reviews only (Level 2 of the NMF)**

The majority of Policy Delphi respondents from different groups agreed that countries and stakeholders should be involved in performance and policies reviews, instead of them being done only by ETF itself. There are multiple ways to do this as well, e.g. through peer reviews, surveys, interviews, written contributions and other consultations. However, it is important to consider that meetings, events and roundtable discussions bringing together different stakeholders in a certain partner country and in relevant cases several partner countries are particularly valued by national stakeholders taking part in ETF Monitoring and assessment. These events could also play a double role of both providing inputs into the systems and policies reviews (Level 2) and in promoting the ETF Monitoring and assessment overall.

Pros:

- The connection with stakeholders was the key defining feature of ETF Monitoring and assessment in the previous period, distinguishing it from other similar monitoring efforts.

- Involvement of stakeholders could make them more likely to use the outputs, disseminate them and trust them.

Cons:

- As it is currently planned, the Level 2 engagements would be demand-driven (only those who express a clear desire would take part). There is also a limited capacity of ETF to accommodate Level 2 reviews (e.g. one region or several selected countries per year). This would mean that only involving stakeholders in Level 2 would not provide sufficient opportunities for them to take part in ETF Monitoring and assessment, as they desire..
- ETF being able to issue reviews (assessments in the previous Torino round) on its own behalf as an authoritative expertise source holds a deep value in the eyes of national stakeholders. Featuring national stakeholders heavily may influence the perception of impartiality; also, some pre-existing relations of stakeholders may come into play.
- Due to complexity and the need to maintain ETF as the authoritative source of reviews, Level 2 involvement of stakeholders could be limited to peer reviews and consultations while ETF would still be the main developer of reviews. ETF should remain the main body accountable for both levels of Monitoring.
- If the overall number of events related to ETF Monitoring and assessment would increase, it might become costly.

**Option 1.2 (non-complementary): Involve stakeholders in data collection and systems performance monitoring (Level 1) to a limited extent, and in performance and policies reviews (Level 2) in a participatory way**

The involvement of stakeholders in Level 1 (data collection) was even more supported than in Level 2 (reviews) in Policy Delphi.

However, having the heavy participatory involvement at Level 1 could lead to a situation where the workload to the stakeholders would be similar to that in the Torino Process previously and would diminish the desired changes brought by the new ETF Monitoring framework. As a compromise, stakeholders should be mainly limited to a consultative role at Level 1, or could have a more active role only in gathering qualitative (opinion-based) but not quantitative (objective) data.

Pros:

- Involvement of stakeholders in both stages is strongly supported by the Policy Delphi results.
- Stakeholders also often considered that being involved in all stages of monitoring from planning to reviews is one of the most important ways to ensure ownership of ETF Monitoring and assessment.

Cons:

- Even passive involvement in Level 1 could mean a necessity for additional resources and keep the exercise less timely than desired.

With the different levels of direct stakeholder involvement in mind, there are other ways to ensure their ownership. As mentioned, one of the most important aspects in improving ownership is the relevance of data and outputs. To be able to tailor them carefully to the needs of stakeholders, ETF has to carry out periodic, robust and comprehensive stakeholder needs assessment.

**Option 1.3 (complementary): Improve and consolidate stakeholder needs assessment in relation to ETF Monitoring and assessment**

The preferred ways in which stakeholders want to be consulted are surveys and informal personal exchanges (either by country liaisons or thematic staff in ETF, or a government-appointed person in the country) with stakeholders. These needs should be collected in a centralised way so that a full picture is always seen, by a specifically appointed person, and follow a clear methodology that is periodically repeated.

<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuous follow-up of stakeholder needs would help understand problems that need solving and bring confidence to decisions on improving the ETF Monitoring and assessment, both content- and format-wise.</li> </ul> <p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resources need to be dedicated to needs assessment, especially if needs assessment is to be done by a specifically appointed person organising surveys or other ways of engagement.</li> </ul>
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**Option 1.4 (complementary): Work on other ways to strengthen the ownership**

Finally, there are more ways which can improve ownership. For example, establishing stronger links between ETF Monitoring and assessment data and ETF’s own activities in countries is important, as multiple stakeholders in countries and ETF own staff mentioned that the timing of activity planning and monitoring outputs was not always favourable to be taken into account. Basing activities very clearly on ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs would help to show national stakeholders that monitoring can very directly lead to changes and interventions and thus improve credibility of both ETF Monitoring and assessment (to be seen as more impactful) and activities themselves (to be seen as more evidence-based). Organising permanent cooperation structures with assigned contact points (e.g. a specific network on Monitoring) could foster the monitoring culture in the countries and create or sustain national leadership in monitoring and thus assist dissemination and buy-in. Finally, organising training sessions for stakeholders on how to implement monitoring or how to use monitoring data as part or in addition to dissemination activities and events could lead to better understanding of relevance of the data and better formulation of needs, eventually also leading to better impacts.

<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- These measures could be implemented in any case and would not require significant modification of the stakeholder involvement process.</li> </ul> <p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- While requiring additional resources, these additional efforts to improve ownership would not likely lead to the same level of ownership as direct participation.</li> </ul>
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## 3.2. Uptake, use and impact

### 3.2.1. Recommendation 2: Focus on maintaining the impact of ETF Monitoring and assessment

To ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of ETF Monitoring and assessment, it is important to focus on the impact that the ETF Monitoring and assessment service and its outputs have. The focus on impact should be clearly communicated to all the people involved in activities of monitoring and review.

#### Option 2.1 (complementary): Maintain ETF Monitoring and assessment contributions in the areas that are impactful

The key areas to focus ETF Monitoring and assessment service on are **capacity building, providing resources and data, and other ways of informing the work and decisions** of various stakeholders. Consequently, the ETF Monitoring and assessment and its outputs should focus on the areas that stakeholders already use them in because this could lead to a more direct impact. The areas to focus on could include making the outputs **easier to share**, making them **more convenient to use when preparing for events** (e.g. presenting key data points in an easy to quote way), or **ensuring that they have all the qualities necessary for policymaking** (e.g. country-specific relevance) and **further research** (e.g. information on how to cite them).

#### Pros:

- The impact is more likely to be achieved if it is consciously ingrained as the key purpose of all activities and outputs.

#### Option 2.2 (complementary): Increase efforts to encourage sustainable monitoring

The single effect that, according to most respondents, the ETF did not yet achieve is ensuring that the partner countries would continue their monitoring activities even if ETF support would be discontinued. We suggest focusing on reducing the dependence of the partner countries on the ETF in terms of their monitoring efforts. Building of a self-dependent monitoring culture (essentially, a country-wide habit by different stakeholders to seek evidence for decision making) is a particularly long-term impact. There could be a few different interrelated avenues for action to assist it, e.g.:

- **Leadership and its commitment.** Continuous engagement with formal and informal leaders in partner countries and recognition of Monitoring and assessment's importance at the highest levels is necessary.
- **Habits and behaviours** of stakeholders. Here, ownership again becomes crucial, and better recognition of necessity of Monitoring and assessment (e.g. through more relevant, better tailored and accessible outputs) may improve it.
- **Capacity and resources.** While the resources would mainly be made by partner country governments or donors, ETF should continue playing a capacity building and supporting role which has been highly appreciated by the stakeholders.

Most of these elements ultimately rely on simply a **clear perception among stakeholders that monitoring and assessment is useful, for every partner country, every stakeholder, and for their own**

**very specific needs.** First, one should focus on **making the impacts of monitoring happen** (e.g. disseminating the outputs, encouraging their use, adapting to specific needs and training how to use them). Second, once they happen they should be **highlighted and publicised widely**, encouraging other stakeholders to try reproducing the outcomes.

Other recommendations listed out in this section may be helpful in this regard. For example, a specific network on Monitoring and assessment could strengthen the stakeholder community's engagement with monitoring practices and exchange of steps taken, as well as success or failure stories. A focus on events and social media would also help disseminate such stories.

Pros:

- Reduced dependence on the ETF would indicate the partner countries' improvements in the monitored areas and capacity built.

Cons:

- Little involvement from the ETF could potentially lead to diminishing quality of the monitoring activities.

**Option 2.3 (complementary): Clearly position ETF Monitoring and assessment vis-à-vis its competition (similar work done by international organisations)**

The ETF Monitoring and assessment already holds quite a good standing among its key stakeholders compared to other competing sources of data and information; most surveyed stakeholders considered that ETF's Monitoring and assessment outputs were equally useful to their work than those of other organisations (e.g. World Bank, ILO, UNESCO, OECD); over a quarter valued ETF's outputs more and none preferred those of other organisations. It is likely that there is a selection bias in that people more sympathetic to ETF answered the survey; however, the interview data also confirms that ETF Monitoring and assessment data is also significantly used by donor organisations to plan investment, and by international organisations in general, for various purposes related to research and policy making.

The reasons why ETF Monitoring and Assessment outputs were often more valuable to stakeholders are also clear from the survey. The most appreciated aspects were the stakeholder involvement, high quality of data, continuity of exercise over the years, strong connections with national governments and stakeholders, and applicability to solve real policy issues.

It is important to not only acknowledge and maintain these elements which distinguish ETF Monitoring and Assessment, but also **actively utilise them** in creating a unique identity for the New Monitoring Framework, for example, when presenting or promoting the NMF to external audiences.

This could be formulated in a 'mission statement' format:

'ETF Monitoring and Assessment provides high-quality, policy-applicable, long-term, comparable data and information on human capital development, based on continuous engagement of national governments and stakeholders in their collection and revision.'

**Option 2.4 (complementary): Better utilise ETF Monitoring and Assessment outputs in ETF's own work on policy advice, other products, and in planning ETF's activities in partner countries**

The disconnect between the findings of ETF Monitoring and Assessment and other ETF's work, and the often-lacking usage of collected data to base decisions on activities to be implemented in partner countries should be addressed. ETF Monitoring and Assessment is supposed to collect trustworthy data, and the findings from national stakeholders and international donors point that it is indeed trustworthy. Having this as an assumption, it should therefore be used to make ETF's other activities more evidence-based. It should also help ETF avoid duplicating analysis or other parallel work. Possible ways to assist this include:

- **More thematic focus.** One of the reported issues by ETF staff on lower usage of Monitoring and assessment data while planning policy advice was that the most important part of it, the Torino Process, was a country product and not a thematic product. This is however changing significantly in the New Monitoring Framework as it delineates clear thematic areas of system performance and monitoring dimensions. This brings the monitoring products closer to thematic ETF work and to its thematic staff.
- **Closer work between ETF staff working on Monitoring and assessment, and staff working on partner country policy advice activities.** Similar to uptake by stakeholders, a level of ownership needs to be felt by all ETF staff for it to happen. Therefore, thematic ETF staff should collaborate more on the ETF Monitoring and Assessment. This collaboration could take place in different ways, but it is important that a consensus is always reached on what to monitor, why to monitor, and a clear vision and agreement is had in advance on how this data will be used for policy advice.
- **Timing.** The monitoring data needs to be there when ETF activities are planned and decisions are being made. ETF Monitoring and Assessment should time the release of new data with such instances (e.g. meetings of ETF Governing Board). Alternatively, if no new data is available at this specific time, briefing notes should be prepared highlighting the latest available monitoring data released previously.
- Evidence from Monitoring and Assessment data could become more prominent in **planning documents**, e.g. by providing more monitoring data as justification for activities.
- **Bottom-up use.** The other recommendations presented in this report focus on improving the relevance of ETF Monitoring and Assessment to national stakeholders, in particular those not in government. The stakeholders need to recognise their own issues and realise how ETF Monitoring and Assessment is able to help them. Once the stakeholders are better able to utilise ETF Monitoring and Assessment in this way, they will also be able to better voice their needs to ETF and this will translate in ETF activities being well grounded in monitoring data.
- **More active and regular monitoring needs assessment** not only among stakeholders but also **among ETF staff.** The ETF staff should be encouraged to not only voice their needs when asked, but also to proactively suggest or request monitoring data for their needs.
- **More convenient presentation of data and new types of products.** It is likely that as presentation of data is improved by making the reports more streamlined, visual and shorter, by producing short and targeted outputs to national stakeholders, and by developing a new database, it would also be easier for ETF staff to easily pick up and interpret data.
- **Finally, evaluation of both ETF Monitoring and assessment, and of thematic ETF areas, should take into account the connection between monitoring data and policy advice.** In other words, evaluators should always look not only how much ETF's monitoring data has been used for its policy advice when evaluation the M&A service; but also how much the policy advice provided is based on evidence gathered by ETF Monitoring. Such a formal

evaluation criterion could act as an incentive for thematic staff to use the monitoring data more.

**Option 2.5 (complementary): Provide necessary improvements to specific Monitoring and Assessment activities but maintain them as each activity has its clear audience**

Overall, ETF’s different monitoring activities have their clear audiences and purposes. The stakeholders who were familiar with the activities were very positive about their achievements. There are strong differences in their uptake, but one also needs to take into account that some of the activities have only been implemented recently, and others have a very limited thematic or geographic scope. Comparatively low uptake is not a sufficient reason to recommend discontinuation of any activity, as long as it serves a clear target group and a clear purpose. More important is to find synergies among the activities and properly integrate them into the New Monitoring Framework.

There are however some key considerations arising from analysis on how the activities should be improved:

- For **KIESE**, translation of monitoring outputs, better structuring and data-focused output is necessary. This activity was mostly used by EU institutions and both public sector and social partners within partner countries.
- For **NDC**, more events on dissemination of outputs would be expected, and their format and organisational aspects should be improved. The focus should be put on specific themes and cross-country comparison, as these were the elements most valued in NDC.
- For **inventories**, same as for NDC, more outputs dissemination events are advised. It is also very important to maintain robustness and soundness of analysis, as analytical insight was particularly valued by the stakeholders of the inventories, but the quality of outputs was somewhat more often than in other activities perceived negatively.
- For **country and thematic fiches**, visual appeal was key, which is expected from a product intended to provide a summarised view of the data.
- For monitoring of **Riga deliverables and Osnabrück declaration**, a more active dissemination of outputs at national level, especially online, is necessary.
- There are also specific **improvements on written outputs** of ETF Monitoring and assessment which are necessary, based on the opinion of surveyed stakeholders. These include the type and quality of data; coverage of more topics and practice areas; and methodological robustness of analysis.

**3.2.2. Recommendation 3: Develop and maintain a set of KPIs**

To assess the success of the New Monitoring Framework internally, we suggest developing a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and tracking them regularly to provide ETF employees with goals to strive towards, milestones to track progress, and insights to make better decisions.

**Option 3.1 (complementary): Concentrate on a set of KPIs based on use and impact**

The use of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs and the impact of ETF Monitoring and assessment are the basis for the newly developed KPIs. We propose the following list of KPIs to be used for the New Monitoring Framework (see table below).

Key Performance Indicator	Level	Source
Number of <b>visits to website and Open Space sections</b> relevant to ETF Monitoring and assessment	Output	Analytics
Number of <b>visits to a newly created platforms</b> for ETF Monitoring and assessment (central hub, new network, new database, etc.)	Output	Analytics
Number of <b>downloads of ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs</b> from different platforms	Result	Analytics
Percentage of relevant stakeholders who <b>feel sufficiently involved in ETF Monitoring and assessment</b>	Result	Stakeholder survey
Percentage of relevant stakeholders who <b>think that the themes covered by ETF Monitoring and assessment are important to them</b>	Result	Stakeholder survey
Percentage of relevant stakeholders who <b>agree that:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ETF Monitoring and assessment <b>outputs are user-friendly</b></li> <li>- It is <b>easy to access</b> ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs online</li> </ul>	Result	Stakeholder survey
Percentage of relevant stakeholders who <b>agree that the outputs were used in:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policymaking</li> <li>- Research</li> <li>- Events, networking</li> <li>- Dissemination</li> </ul>	Result	Stakeholder survey
Percentage of European Commission delegations' and headquarters services' employees who <b>agree that ETF Monitoring and assessment has been used in their work</b>	Result	Stakeholder survey
Percentage of by international development organisations' and donors' employees who <b>agree that ETF Monitoring and assessment has been used to inform their activities</b>	Result	Stakeholder survey
Percentage of relevant stakeholders who <b>agree that ETF Monitoring and assessment has contributed to policy developments and reforms in partner countries</b>	Impact	Stakeholder survey Interviews
Percentage of relevant stakeholders who agree that <b>ETF Monitoring and assessment has influenced the decisions of European Commission delegations and headquarters services</b> (e.g. related to investment)	Impact	Stakeholder survey Interviews
Percentage of relevant stakeholders who agree that <b>ETF Monitoring and assessment has influenced the decisions of international development organisations and donors</b> (e.g. related to investment)	Impact	Stakeholder survey Interviews

<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Measuring performance allows identifying weak areas and making decisions to improve them to reach the goals faster.</li> <li>- Measuring performance increases accountability.</li> </ul> <p>Cons:</p>
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- Additional workload to ETF staff (e.g. analysing web analytics and other collected data, tracking performance).

**Option 3.2 (complementary): Consult stakeholders to collect data for KPIs and to decide on new KPIs**

They important aspect of tracking KPIs is collecting the data related to organisation’s performance. To ensure the access to the data needed, regular stakeholder consultations (possibly happening in parallel with stakeholder needs assessments) would be crucial to collect data for tracking the new KPIs.

Pros:

- Consulting stakeholders would ensure that KPIs tracking is based on high-quality and reliable data.
- Consulting stakeholders on what to measure could be an integral part of a wider consultation on stakeholder needs.

Cons:

- Additional workload to stakeholders (e.g. taking surveys, participating in the interviews).

### 3.3. Products and channels

#### 3.3.1. Recommendation 4: Cater to all audiences with specific outputs

There is a tension on which groups ETF Monitoring and assessment should serve – e.g. first and foremost the partner countries, the European Commission, or even the wider development cooperation and research community. Creating specific outputs for different audiences addressing specific needs could help resolve these tensions.

**Option 4.1 (complementary): Focus on international development organisations and EU institutions**

Outputs dedicated to these stakeholders should be more focused on specific countries or themes according to their policy needs, and always include thorough and robust analysis and evidence. Outputs dedicated to EU institutions should primarily focus on specific themes in line with relevant policy priorities at the time, with a broad overview across different countries. Stakeholders from international development organisations and EU institutions also ask for data visualisation more than other audiences. Dissemination and proactive reaching out to these stakeholders remains essential to maintain a close understanding of their needs.

Pros:

- Better serving the needs of the European Commission.
- Improving/maintaining the standing in academic and development cooperation circles as a provider of high-quality data and analysis.
- These audiences perceive that ETF Monitoring and assessment data influences development cooperation and to some extent national investment in partner countries. Continuous provision of high-quality data may bring much-needed resources and help donors target them.

Cons:

- It is likely that some stakeholders in partner countries would still see themselves as target groups of these products and may feel excluded if the analysis does not cover their needs.

#### Option 4.2 (complementary): Focus on partner country and EU Member State stakeholders

Partner country and EU Member State representatives from the public sector are equally interested in receiving information on specific themes and countries, and on the cross-country comparison. Partner country representatives who are social partners mostly prefer cross-country comparison; besides, they are the only audience that prefers events to written outputs, especially those focused on dialogue rather than presentation. The national stakeholders also have a preference for shorter and clearer documents with actionable recommendations and ideas adapted to specific types of stakeholders.

There is also evidence from interviews that stakeholders themselves prepare short summaries after ETF Monitoring and assessment events, and disseminate those among the wider stakeholder community. Therefore, to ensure quality and decrease the chance of misinterpretation, it is essential that ETF steps up the pre- and post-event communication and produces easily shareable and understandable materials on key topics being discussed for stakeholders. These should be done in uniform format and in local languages. The events should also be improved in terms of:

- **Organisational/technical aspects**, e.g. more attention to agenda and programme development;
- **Format**, e.g. less formal presentations featured by more extensive dialogues among the different stakeholders;
- **Thematic aspects**, e.g. events focused on the review of the implementation of recommendations by the ETF in partner countries;
- **Inclusiveness aspects**, e.g. inviting a wider and changing group of decision makers and practitioners from both EU countries and partner countries.
- **Linguistic aspects**, e.g. full availability of synchronous interpretation into the relevant languages.

#### Pros:

- The previous monitoring outputs were perceived as too lengthy and complicated, and the quality was perceived as lower by partner countries than by EU/international actors (due to lower perceived usefulness).
- Focusing on events for national stakeholders would strengthen the key added value for this group and the distinguishing characteristic of ETF Monitoring and assessment.
- By providing a clearer added value to stakeholders, their involvement, sense of ownership, and commitment to ETF Monitoring and assessment may be improved, in the time leading to both the take-up of ETF Monitoring and assessment outcomes and capacity building.

#### Cons:

- Translations and the organisation of events may be quite costly. Efficient ways of implementation need to be explored, e.g. use of machine translation, hybrid and online events, making use of stakeholders' own resources for events/translations.

### 3.3.2. Recommendation 5: Improve promotion and access to information

Improving access to information from ETF Monitoring and assessment could increase the take up of outputs among various stakeholders. Currently, some stakeholders especially at the national level and among the social partners might be missing out because they cannot properly comprehend the outputs due to length or complexity. Improving the presentation of information could increase stakeholder satisfaction with the outputs and time spent searching for relevant information. Moreover, many of the stakeholder groups are unable to use the monitoring outputs and do not feel attachment to them, because they either do not recognise their own needs in these outputs, do not know how in principle they could use them, or do not have a capacity to do so.

#### Option 5.1 (complementary): Create a new database for monitoring data with a specific focus on cross-country comparison and with data visualisation capabilities

Various stakeholders would welcome the creation of a new database, especially if it provides a cross-country comparison of the EU Member States and partner countries and data visualisation with downloadable figures.

Pros:

- Creating a new product from scratch would allow for deep exploration of and high adaptation to stakeholder needs, ensuring that the new database contains features and data that are highly relevant to potential users.

Cons:

- Even though there is a basis for the database in ETF in existing data management systems, creating a new tool is a significant investment; a lack of exploratory research could result in wasted resources

#### Option 5.2 (complementary): Create a central hub for all the information related to ETF Monitoring and assessment

Currently, there is no clear platform where one should go to find all ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs – some of them are on the website (and scattered across different sections), others are on the Open Space. This makes it more difficult to access the outputs. The new hub would be a one-stop-shop clearly explaining the overall approach of ETF Monitoring and assessment, introducing different monitoring tools, and offering downloads of reports, access to the new database etc.

Pros:

- Makes it easier to find all content related to ETF Monitoring and assessment.
- Makes it easier to share (e.g. one hyperlink with all easy to find information).

Cons:

- Requires changes to the website, e.g. creating a separate section for the hub.
- Some information might also be relevant to present under other sections of the website and this may lead to repetitions of content on different web pages.

#### Option 5.3 (complementary): Improve the information architecture and usability of current channels

With or without the central hub, work on improving the information architecture and usability of current dissemination channels, e.g. ETF's website or online platforms, by conducting user experience research and implementing changes.

Pros:

- Conducting user research would help identify the problematic aspects of these platforms and provide ideas for improving them.

Cons:

- Additional research is needed, which requires human and financial resources.

#### **Option 5.4 (complementary): Work on producing user-friendly outputs**

Even keeping in mind the different needs of different target groups, all outputs could be improved by focusing on their design (providing more visual elements, graphs, and infographics) and content (providing shorter, more focused information). The outputs should also be adapted to use on mobile devices.

Pros:

- User-friendly outputs are likely to be used by more people and used more often; the information they contain could be more easily understood.

#### **Option 5.5 (complementary): Wherever possible, translate more outputs to selected languages depending on geographic focus**

It would be especially important to produce translations to national languages of partner countries or widely used international languages such as French or Russian. The potential costs of translations could be minimised by focusing on shorter outputs (which the national stakeholders prefer anyway) and looking at implementing machine translation where feasible. Machine-translating short texts and quickly over-viewing the quality of translation with the assistance of either ETF staff working on the same task or a highly engaged national stakeholder could be a more frequent practice.

Pros:

- Translated outputs have the potential to reach broader audiences in partner countries.

Cons:

- Translating outputs to many languages requires resources. Machine translation could be used to lower the costs, but it would also lower the quality.

#### **Option 5.6 (complementary): Create and implement a new promotion strategy for monitoring outputs**

After the outputs are translated, they should be more actively promoted online and at the national level. For example, organising promotional events that would be more inclusive (involve more stakeholders) could be successfully used to promote the outputs. The new promotion strategy should partially shift the promotion focus from the ETF website and personal communication to both professionally oriented and personal social media. Moreover, improving national level cooperation is essential. Events should

be a crucial part of the promotion strategy, as they are highly appreciated by diverse stakeholder groups and in particular by national stakeholders as key elements of added value of ETF Monitoring and assessment. The events should include both live, mixed/blended and fully online events, depending on their profile, purpose, foreseen length, participating parties, available resources etc.

Pros:

- Promoting outputs online and at the national level could be effective because of the great potential of targeting specific audiences, e.g. while using online advertising.
- The new promotion strategy is likely to increase social inclusion because it allows for reaching underrepresented audiences or audiences in faraway corners of each partner country (everyone is fairly equal online and every city or town is equally close online).

Cons:

- Developing a good new promotion strategy would require a lot of human resources (ETF and potentially a communication strategist contractor) and implementing the strategy would require significant financial resources (for activities like advertising, travelling, etc.).

### 3.3.3. Recommendation 6: Work on the Torino brand

The question of what to do with the Torino brand is divisive. While the Torino brand is perceived to be important by the stakeholders (they gave an average importance of 8.03 out of 10 in the Policy Delphi), there is an almost even split in stakeholder opinions (in Policy Delphi) on the need to continue or to change the Torino brand, with slightly more opting for a change. Overall, this is a question of continuity versus novelty.

#### Option 6.1 (non-complementary): Maintain the Torino brand for the whole Monitoring framework

The brand could be applied to the new Monitoring framework overall.

Pros:

- There is a lot of familiarity with Torino at the national level. Particularly, the non-governmental national stakeholders, which are a group especially difficult to reach and engage, feel an attachment to the brand.
- Some countries have dedicated and foreseen resources to Torino Process, integrated it into national systems, and even foreseen budget lines for it (e.g. in Kazakhstan). If the brand is discontinued by ETF entirely, 'Torino Process' would likely continue to exist at the national level, while being discontinued by ETF, creating an unusual situation.
- This would alleviate the potential 'shock' of Torino Process being discontinued.

Cons:

- The Torino brand is connected with certain expectations on how its stakeholder involvement or outputs look like. The changing nature of involvement or outputs may be perceived negatively. A new brand would not have any expectations.
- Putting other monitoring efforts (previously seen as separate) under Torino label might lower their visibility and distinction.

### **Option 6.2 (non-complementary): Maintain the Torino brand for part of the new Monitoring Framework**

The Torino brand would be kept for part of the framework, e.g. for the levels where the stakeholder involvement would be still foreseen (if only a Level 2 involvement is foreseen, then Level 2 of the Monitoring framework would keep the Torino brand).

Pros:

- The partial rebranding could be utilised in different ways. For example, it could be used to distinguish 'the old' from 'the new' (e.g. Torino brand applied to those elements which were in place before); or it could be used to outline the parts where stakeholder involvement is wanted (so that it is better recognised and the buy-in is better); or only the deliverables could bear the Torino name if it is likely that this keyword could lead to better recognition and more downloads.

Cons:

- Partial branding could lead to a confusion among stakeholders and likely ETF itself of what is and what is not included under the Torino brand. This could also lead to a perception that Torino process is 'not what it used to be'.

### **Option 6.3 (non-complementary): Discontinue the Torino brand**

The Torino brand would be abandoned, and a new brand would be implemented instead.

Pros:

- A new monitoring framework should be perceived as 'new' by the stakeholders, to distinguish it from past engagements. The planned stakeholder involvement would be significantly different so the stakeholders do not need to have expectations of 'business as usual'.

Cons:

- A significant amount of explanatory work would need to be carried out with stakeholders to clarify the decision to discontinue the Torino Process, the relationship between the new Monitoring framework and the old monitoring efforts.
- A lot of work also would need to be done to disseminate the new brand name to the same extent as the Torino brand. It is likely this process could take years.
- It is likely that some of the stakeholders would miss the news about the new Monitoring framework replacing the Torino brand and would become less involved in ETF Monitoring and assessment, or would not easily find the deliverables of the new Monitoring framework compared to Torino outputs.

## **3.3.4. Recommendation 7: Improve networking**

Improving networking opportunities in relation to ETF Monitoring and assessment could be beneficial for various stakeholders and ensure inclusiveness of those who are not always invited to policymaking discussions.

### Option 7.1 (complementary): Create a new expert network on Monitoring

The new network should include a wide range of experts who are interested in the field. It could be created on a popular social network (e.g. a Facebook group). The possibility of using specific community platforms (e.g. Mighty Networks) could be considered because of their advanced features (e.g. hosting virtual events, accessing via an app). Improving networking opportunities could build on the results of the recent external evaluation of the ETF networks. The new network should aim to be formalised and have a clear owner, a pre-defined list of members, and key performance indicators. It should aim to become a community of practice based on peer learning.

Pros:

- Improving networking opportunities has the potential for increasing overall engagement of stakeholders, peer learning potential and overall inclusiveness of different audiences.

Cons:

- There are already a lot of networks organised by the ETF; it is important to ensure that the new network would bring clear added value and would not overlap with existing networks.
- It is likely that a facilitator from ETF would need to ensure that the network is 'alive', which would require some resources.

### Option 7.2 (complementary): Use the ETF Open Space for more engaged discussions on ETF Monitoring and assessment

Using the ETF Open Space is another possibility, although the limitations of the platform could affect the performance of the newly created network.

Pros:

- Creating a community on the ETF Open Space could be easier and safer because the platform is owned by the ETF and the organisation has full control over it.

Cons:

- The ETF Open Space has some limitations (e.g. it is impossible to create a closed group) that would create limitations for this new community.
- The network members would have to specifically join the Open Space each time they want to discuss; while this may lead to more focused attention, potentially this could also mean lower activity for the group.

## 3.4. Content

### 3.4.1. Recommendation 8: Focus on the areas preferred by stakeholders

The evaluation has found that some themes and types of content are more than others interesting to stakeholders. Also, the interest varies between stakeholder groups to some extent. We suggest focusing on the areas that are preferred by most stakeholders and taking into account the needs of specific groups. However, it should be noted that the topics identified by this evaluation are of course limited by the nature of its data collection (e.g. focus on five selected countries, limited number of stakeholders

consulted). A periodic and robust stakeholder needs assessment should be the tool to continuously track the key preferred themes.

**Option 8.1 (complementary): Maintain focus on the key themes preferred by stakeholders**

Since the respondents indicated qualifications, quality assurance, work-based learning, lifelong learning, and social inclusion as the key themes important for them, focusing on these themes could ensure that the outputs of the ETF Monitoring and assessment service are relevant to wide stakeholder groups.

<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus on themes that are relevant to parties involved could increase their involvement and ETF’s impact.</li> </ul> <p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some important themes were possibly not mentioned by stakeholders in this study; therefore, the need to conduct further stakeholder needs assessment remains.</li> </ul>
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**Option 8.2 (complementary): Maintain focus on the key types of content preferred by stakeholders**

The popularity of various types of content also differs between stakeholders. The most popular type of content is focused on specific themes, cross-country comparison, and analysis. However, there are still many stakeholders that mostly prefer information on specific countries. These needs, including differences among stakeholders, should be taken into account when producing future outputs. We describe the different needs of stakeholders in more detail under Recommendation 5.

<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focusing on specific types of content can ensure that the outputs are relevant to a wide number of stakeholders.</li> </ul> <p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some underrepresented stakeholder groups might prefer different types of content; therefore, it is important to consult them on their needs to offer them different outputs.</li> </ul>
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**Option 8.3 (complementary): Conduct regular stakeholder consultations to understand key themes and types of content, as well as areas for improvement**

As established in previously, the needs of stakeholder groups often differ. It is also likely that the needs of a specific stakeholder group might evolve over time. Therefore, it is useful to consult them regularly to uncover new emerging themes and preferences related to types of content. Currently, according to survey data the areas for improvement of ETF Monitoring and assessment written outputs include the type and quality of data; coverage of more topics and practice areas; and methodological robustness of analysis. However, these might be different in the future and this needs to be estimated periodically.

<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular consultations ensure that themes and types of content covered by the ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs remain relevant.</li> </ul>
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Cons:

- Regular consultations require input and resources from both sides, the ETF's and the stakeholders'.

### 3.5. Considerations for future evaluations of ETF Monitoring and assessment

The current evaluation of the ETF Monitoring and assessment has been based on varied and robust data. It has also followed the general evaluation questions set out in the European Commission's Better Regulation Framework. Nevertheless, we have some considerations of how the next evaluation could be carried out. The following issues could be noted to make the evaluations of ETF Monitoring and assessment more robust in the future:

- Focus on KPIs – as part of the recommendations, we suggested a series of potential KPIs which could be developed to keep track of the performance of the New Monitoring Framework between the evaluations. These data would also form basis for a deeper analysis and for better formulation of questions for evaluation overall and the specific evaluation tools.
- The evaluation showed that the stakeholders could tell very little about monitoring activities which were more recent and not focused on all partner countries, e.g. Riga and Osnabrück. In the future, the scope of the evaluation should be clearly delineated to the level of specific activities, and should not include those activities which have not yet had time to achieve any prominence.
- Maintaining an active network of monitoring-related stakeholders (one of the recommendations of this evaluation) would also be very helpful for dissemination of surveys, inviting interviewees, organising focus groups, and gathering country-level intelligence.
- The next evaluation should also look in more details at the newly suggested elements such as the comparative online database and different types of products targeted at specific audiences, by employing online services evaluation methods such as usability testing and user experience research.
- Finally, the next evaluation should give particular importance to the question whether the recommendation for a stronger connection between ETF's Monitoring and assessment and Policy advice services has been properly ensured. This is the key element leading to both a more impactful monitoring and assessment, and a more evidence-based policy advice.

# Annex 1. Questionnaire of Round 1 of the Policy Delphi survey

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The annex is included as a separate document.

# Annex 2. Questionnaire of Round 2 of the Policy Delphi survey

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The annex is included as a separate document.

# Annex 3. Categories of sources used for desk research

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1. The 2018 Torino Process external evaluation;
2. All ETF Monitoring and assessment outputs falling within the evaluation period, such as:
  - a. Torino Process toolbox (Torino Process analytical framework, HCD policy assessment guidelines, Policy analysis guidelines, ETF manual on the use of indicators, Quality assurance guidelines, Assessment of the Torino Process implementation, various templates and structures of reports and other deliverables);
  - b. Torino Process National Reports (NRFs), ETF assessments on HCD, Regional Torino Process reports;
  - c. Other reports which include data from ETF Monitoring;
3. The EU policy documents relevant to ETF Monitoring and assessment, including:
  - a. EU strategic and policy documents related to human capital development;
  - b. EU's external policy documents (such as those related to enlargement, neighbourhood, development cooperation policy);
4. ETF planning information and documents (e.g. ETF Strategy 2027, ETF Single Programming Document 2021 – 2023 Annual Work Programmes, ETF Consolidated Annual Activity Reports (CAAR), New ETF monitoring framework discussion note);
5. ETF studies, evaluations, reports related to the Torino Process and other monitoring efforts;
6. Academic literature providing context or supporting the evaluation findings;
7. Statistics and factsheets;
8. Documentation related to KIESE statistical framework, National data collection (NDC), ETF Stats database, and IMAGE, as well as their contents;
9. Information provided and discussions carried out on ETF Open Space in relation to ETF Monitoring and assessment;
10. Other documents provided by ETF staff.