

# TORINO PROCESS SYSTEM MONITORING REPORT: KYRGYZSTAN (2024 update)



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This 2024 Torino Process monitoring update was prepared by the European Training Foundation (ETF) using the most recent internationally comparable data from the ETF database of key indicators on education, skills, and employment (KIESE), with a cut-off date of August 2024. While this 2024 edition builds upon the foundation of the 2023 report, it was prepared without additional input or involvement from national authorities, experts, or stakeholders in Kyrgyzstan.

The 2023 edition of the monitoring report for Kyrgyzstan was prepared in close partnership with national stakeholders, including Deputy Minister of Education and Science Mr. Rasul Abazbek and Ms. Gulnur Amamyrova, Head of the Department for Initial VET at the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, who provided invaluable contributions during the previous monitoring exercise.

The ETF extends its gratitude to the national authorities, Deputy Minister Abazbek, Ms. Amamyrova, and all other contributors to the 2023 report for their foundational input and collaboration, which continues to support the Torino Process monitoring. The 2024 report was prepared by a team led by Mihaylo Milovanovitch, Senior Human Capital Development Expert and Coordinator for System Change and Lifelong Learning at the ETF, under the general supervision of Hugues Moussy, Head of the Human Capital Development Intelligence Unit, ETF.

## *Disclaimer*

This version of the report is preliminary. While it encapsulates the collaborative efforts and inputs from various counterparts at various stages, it awaits final verification by the participating country. Therefore, the report is released as “work in progress” which may be subject to refinement and subsequent endorsement in the future.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Scope of system performance monitoring:** The Torino Process monitoring covers three major areas of commitment to lifelong learners: access to learning (Area A), quality of learning (Area B), and system organisation (Area C). These areas are divided into eight monitoring dimensions: access and participation in Area A; quality, relevance, excellence, and innovation in Area B; and system management/administration and resources in Area C. In addition, the monitoring tracks how well policies and systems deliver to specific groups of learners: learners by age, female learners, young and adult learners at risk, and learners with a migrant background.
- **Scope of the 2024 update:** This monitoring report relies primarily on system performance indices derived from combining individual indicators from the ETF KIESE database. In 2023, the first year of the biennial monitoring cycle of the Torino Process, the data for calculating the SPIs included both KIESE indicators and self-assessments from countries to fill gaps where KIESE indicators were missing. In the second year of the cycle, 2024 – which is in focus of this report – only quantitative data from the KIESE database was collected and used to calculate the SPIs, without additional qualitative input from country self-assessments. Consequently, this monitoring report is intended as a selective, targeted update to the 2023 edition rather than a new, standalone report.
- **Access and attractiveness:** The monitoring results suggest opportunities for improvement in access to and attractiveness of vocational education and training (VET). Compared internationally, Kyrgyzstan's performance in providing access to lifelong learning, particularly in CVET and other adult education, has declined as other countries have made progress in these areas since 2023. Despite a high degree of flexibility and relatively smooth transitions between educational levels, practical barriers persist in supporting VET learners towards completion. Dropout rates have recently risen, partly due to stricter enforcement of attendance requirements. Support measures, such as scholarships, dormitory accommodations, and the Skills Development Fund, are in place; however, the funding model and incentives may need re-evaluation to prioritise educational outcomes over financial stability, ensuring these initiatives better support learner progression and completion.
- **Quality and relevance:** The monitoring results show that the VET system is effective in delivering essential skills that align with economic needs. Through the State School Education Standard, learners gain foundational skills such as problem-solving and literacy, reinforced by practical work-based learning (WBL) initiatives and training models connected to industry needs. However, between 2023 and 2024, other countries advanced more quickly in adapting their systems to evolving market demands, leading to a decline in Kyrgyzstan's relative performance. Regular updates to programmes remain challenging due to lengthy bureaucratic processes involving multiple government bodies. Skills levels among adults remain lower than in other countries, on average, possibly due to a preference for shorter, skill-specific courses. While efforts to incorporate green and digital skills are advancing, further work is needed to fully prepare learners for the future.
- **Excellence and innovation:** Kyrgyzstan has shown moderate progress in pedagogical excellence and strong performance in programme content, especially in integrating modern themes like digitalisation and the green transition. Between 2023 and 2024, Kyrgyzstan's relative performance improved in several areas of innovation, notably in access to and quality of learning. Noteworthy initiatives include dual training programmes, work-based learning, and the establishment of centres for training and pedagogical excellence. However, the pace of implementation remains slow, often dependent on donor support, limiting the system's overall impact. Kyrgyzstan's VET system remains open to innovation, with advancements in recognising non-formal and informal qualifications, improving adult education access, and supporting learners in VET. Yet, challenges

remain, as these innovations are frequently project-specific, limiting their reach and integration across the system.

- **System management and organisation:** Kyrgyzstan's VET system shows satisfactory performance in governance and stakeholder involvement, though it relies on external funding. Since 2023, positive shifts in national performance have strengthened participatory approaches, particularly in dual training and work-based learning, where partnerships with employers and practical training opportunities have expanded. However, progress in data-driven policymaking and quality assurance remains limited. Leadership capacity varies, with higher education institutions often demonstrating more autonomy and self-sustainability. Internationalisation efforts are notable in higher education, as tertiary VET providers engage in cooperative projects and adopt international practices. Despite these efforts, challenges in human and financial resources continue to create disparities in the quality, adequacy, and availability of physical resources across the VET system.
- **Quality and reliability of monitoring evidence:** Kyrgyzstan's monitoring results remain less comparable internationally than those of other countries in the Torino Process sample, though some improvement occurred between 2023 and 2024. While the potential for bias is higher due to limited quantitative evidence, Kyrgyzstan's self-assessment results appear balanced and not overly optimistic. However, the shortage of internationally comparable data continues to limit the reliability of Kyrgyzstan's monitoring outcomes, particularly for cross-country comparisons.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Focus of monitoring and scope of reporting

This ETF report summarises the results of monitoring VET system performance in Kyrgyzstan for 2024 in the context of the Torino Process initiative.<sup>1</sup> It updates the previous edition of the monitoring report, which covered the period up to 2023.

To allow for tracking country progress over time, this new edition retains the themes selected for monitoring and reporting in 2023. As in 2023, it discusses the performance of the education and training system in Kyrgyzstan, particularly VET, in providing opportunities for lifelong learning which are accessible, of good quality, and well-managed (Chapter 2). The report also assesses the equity of these opportunities for learners of different backgrounds, genders, origins, and ages (Chapter 3).

The focus of monitoring in 2024 remains on the contribution of initial and continuing VET (IVET and CVET) to the learning activities of youth and adults undertaken to improve their knowledge, skills, competences, and qualifications for personal, social and/or professional reasons. The purpose of the Torino Process monitoring exercise is to provide decision-makers, practitioners, and stakeholders with a reliable basis for informed decisions about policy improvement, resource allocation, strategy design, and follow-up analysis in support of lifelong learning.

"Performance," in this context, refers to the extent to which the VET system delivers on a targeted selection of commitments to learners and other stakeholders in support of lifelong learning (LLL). The term "VET system" encompasses the network of institutions, people, policies, practices, resources, and methodologies in a country and the way they are organised to provide individuals of any age with the practical skills, knowledge, and competencies needed for specific occupations, trades, or professions.<sup>2</sup>

As in 2023, the monitoring framework which underpins this report covers three major **areas of commitment** to lifelong learners: access to learning (Area A), quality of learning (Area B), and system organisation (Area C). These areas are divided into **eight monitoring dimensions**: access and participation in Area A; quality, relevance, excellence, and innovation in Area B; and system management/administration and resources in Area C. The dimensions are described at the beginning of Section 2.1 of this report.

To bring these dimensions of VET performance closer to real-world contexts, they were further broken down into **30 specific policy and system outcomes**. Here, 'outcomes' refer both to the commitments made by the education system—pledges to achieve specific results for defined groups of learners and stakeholders—and to the measurable results that demonstrate how successfully these commitments have been met in each country. For instance, an outcome such as "access to initial VET" indicates the presence of a commitment to provide access, and it also identifies an area of measurement of system performance in fulfilling this commitment. The 30 outcomes are described at

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<sup>1</sup> The Torino Process is a multiannual review of vocational education and training (VET) in countries in East and South-East Europe (including Turkey), Central Asia, and the South and East Mediterranean region, which the ETF is carrying out in partnership with countries in these regions on a regular basis since 2010. For more information see <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/what-we-do/torino-process-policy-analysis-and-progress-monitoring>

<sup>2</sup> For a full overview of the Torino Process system performance monitoring framework and its conceptual underpinnings, see <https://bit.ly/47YGA6I>.

the beginning of the corresponding section and subsections in this report (Section 2.2, Subsections 2.2.1 to 2.2.4).

At the final step of disaggregation in the Torino Process monitoring framework, the 30 outcomes are broken down into specific, measurable targets (**monitoring targets**) that reflect how the 30 outcomes apply to the different groups of learners they are intended to serve. These groups include youth and adults, female learners, socio-economically disadvantaged youth, adults at risk of exclusion (long-term unemployed, adults with low or no education, economically inactive adults), and first-generation migrants. In 2023 and 2024 the Torino Process monitoring framework tracks a total of 82 monitoring targets: 30 core targets that reflect the outcomes irrespective of who the learners are (outcomes for the general learner population, so to speak), and 52 additional targets focused on specific groups of learners. A selection of results related to these additional, learner-specific targets is discussed in Section 2.3 of this monitoring report.

## 1.2 Monitoring metrics

In the context of Torino Process monitoring, performance is measured through a system performance index (SPI). The index is available for each of the monitoring targets in the Torino Process framework. The SPIs can range from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates maximum or best performance.

These SPIs are aggregate metrics which combine multiple administrative or big data indicators to provide a more comprehensive and realistic picture of what policies and systems are delivering across countries. Although such synthetic indices are more fragile and unstable than individual data points, they are necessary, as many of the outcomes in the Torino Process monitoring are complex and multifaceted and therefore cannot be fully captured by a single indicator. The diversity of learners within countries also limits how effective a single indicator can be in representing performance across various populations or settings.

To address this, the ETF monitoring combines conceptually coherent sets of indicators from its database of key indicators on education, skills, and employment (KIESE) to create the SPIs.<sup>3</sup> This approach produces one index for each of the 82 outcomes monitored through the Torino Process.

The SPIs are intuitive and user-friendly way of presenting system performance even in areas that are otherwise difficult to monitor with traditional administrative measures. The single score they provide simplifies the interpretation of the otherwise complex data and is easier to use for planning and decision-making purposes. Therefore, in 2024, these indices, along with the KIESE data used for their calculation, continue to serve as key information source for the updated monitoring reports of all countries participating in the Torino Process.

This report showcases a selection of key monitoring results based on those indices, as follows: overall performance by broad monitoring dimension (Section 2.1), performance by specific area and system deliverable (Section 2.2 and subsections), and performance in support of specific groups of learners (Section 2.3). The report also provides an international average score<sup>4</sup> for these results for reference purposes, and, where relevant, it showcases disaggregated data used to calculate the system performance indices and information provided by national authorities through the monitoring

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<sup>3</sup> The full list of KIESE indicators and the selection of indicators used as proxies in constructing the Torino Process SPIs can be found at <https://bit.ly/4exAkFO>.

<sup>4</sup> “International average” refers to the average for countries participating in the Torino Process.

questionnaire. Links to the full dataset for Kyrgyzstan and to the Torino Process monitoring framework and methodology can be found in the third and final section of this document.

### 1.3 Scope of update in 2024

As in 2023, this monitoring report relies primarily on system performance indices derived from combining individual indicators from the ETF KIESE database. In 2023, the first year of the biennial monitoring cycle of the Torino Process, the data for calculating the SPIs included both KIESE indicators and self-assessments from countries to fill gaps where KIESE indicators for certain monitoring targets were missing.

In the second year of the cycle, 2024 – which is in focus of this report – only quantitative data from the KIESE database was collected and used to calculate the SPIs, without additional qualitative input from country self-assessments. This lighter approach was adopted to reduce the reporting burden on countries by removing the need to provide detailed questionnaire responses every year. In addition, to maintain consistency in the types of data used to calculate system performance indices across years, the 2024 update of monitoring results included only those SPIs for which quantitative data was available in both 2023 and 2024.

Since the 2024 update of performance indicators relies solely on internationally comparable KIESE data, without supplementary qualitative inputs from countries, SPI values for which such data was not available for Kyrgyzstan in 2024, or for which it was not available consistently in both years, have remained unchanged from 2023. In some instances, this also means that some sections of the report may have remained the same as in 2023.

Where that happens, it does not necessarily indicate a lack of progress or stagnation; it may simply reflect the absence of new internationally comparable data beyond what was collected in 2023, or that data is available for only one of the two reference years (2023 or 2024). This may also result in fewer noticeable shifts in the landscape of system performance in 2024 as reflected by the SPIs. Consequently, this monitoring report is intended as a selective, targeted update to the 2023 edition rather than a new, standalone report.

Considering that each SPI refers to a specific monitoring target which tracks policy and system performance across a wide range of learner groups and areas in education and training, any change in the SPIs indicates a corresponding shift in performance in support of learners in those areas. Therefore, the proportion of monitoring targets with updated SPI values in a country shows, on average, how much the performance of education and training in that country has changed from one year to the next.

How many of the 82 system performance indices available for Kyrgyzstan have shifted between 2023 and 2024? In other words, what was the scale of changes in policy and system performance in the country over that period? Table 1 shows the total number of monitoring targets with validated SPI changes by country participating in the Torino Process monitoring, as well as the percentage of all monitoring targets in the framework that have changed between 2023 and 2024.

**TABLE 1. AVERAGE SCALE OF CHANGE IN POLICY AND SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, KYRGYZSTAN AND ETF PARTNER COUNTRIES (2023-2024)**

Country	Monitoring targets with validated change (total number)	Monitoring targets with validated change (share of all targets)
KGZ	12	14.63%

ALB	24	29.27%
ARM	12	14.63%
AZE	12	14.63%
BIH	33	40.24%
DZA	1	1.2%
EGY	28	34.15%
GEO	32	39.02%
JOR	32	39.02%
KAZ	27	32.93%
LBN	11	13.41%
MAR	31	37.8%
MDA	15	18.29%
MKD	33	40.24%
MNE	33	40.24%
PSE	10	12.2%
SRB	43	52.44%
TUN	21	25.61%
TUR	46	56.1%
UKR	30	36.59%
XXK	25	30.49%

Source: Torino Process database

System performance in Kyrgyzstan has seen fewer noticeable shifts since 2023 compared to many other countries in the Torino Process monitoring. The data indicates that only 12 of the 82 monitoring targets (14.63%) were affected by an SPI change between 2023 and 2024, with most changes occurring in the domain of system management and organisation, as will be discussed later.

This places Kyrgyzstan on the lower end of the spectrum of change, similar to Armenia and Azerbaijan, which had a change in performance of similarly low intensity. However, it is important to note that, since the table includes only targets with validated, data-driven changes, it likely presents a more conservative estimate of overall shifts in system performance in Kyrgyzstan since 2023 than may actually be occurring.

## 1.4 Comparability and reliability of monitoring data in Kyrgyzstan

In addition to messages about system performance, the Torino Process monitoring methodology foresees keeping accurate records about the availability, origin and type of evidence used to calculate the 82 performance indices and corresponding results for each country, including Kyrgyzstan. In 2023, this mix of KIESE and self-assessment data led to the creation of three supplementary indices to help interpret the robustness of country results: an index of their international comparability, an index for the risk of bias in the results, and a self-assessment index which tracks the degree to which countries tend to be self-critical.

The international comparability index tracks the proportion of internationally comparable KIESE indicators available for calculating the system performance indices of each country. The higher the share of indicators available, the more internationally comparable the monitoring results. The risk of

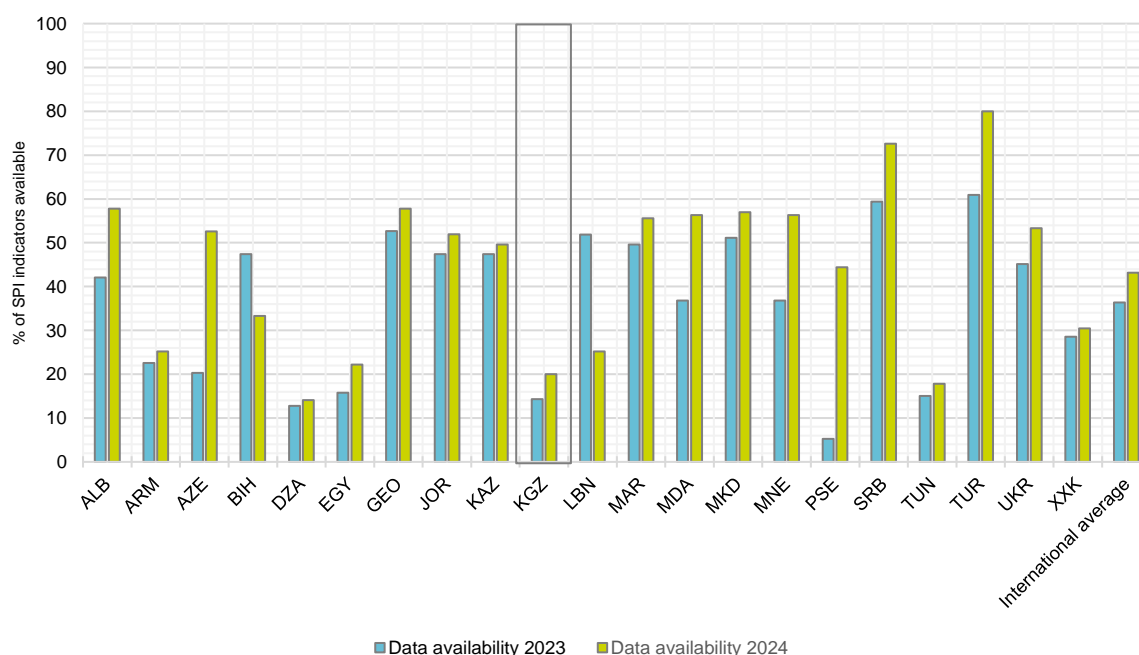
bias index, on the other hand, measures how many of the 82 SPIs per country are based on quantitative data versus self-assessment responses; a greater reliance on self-assessments increases the risk of bias. Finally, the self-assessment index reflects whether a country tends to be self-critical in reporting its policy and system performance through the self-assessment questionnaire.

In 2024, two of these indices remain unchanged, but still relevant: the risk of bias index and the self-assessment index, both of which are carried over from 2023. The risk of bias index remains relevant because it reflects the proportion of SPIs based on quantitative data versus self-assessment responses. This mix, which was established in 2023, continues to define the data composition of the 2024 results, as no new self-assessment evidence was collected from countries and thus, the proportion of SPIs which in 2023 relied on self-assessment responses by countries has remained the same for all of them.

The self-assessment index remains unchanged as well. Its relevance stems from the fact that it provides insights into how countries tend to report within the self-assessed portion of the results. Since no new self-assessment responses were collected in 2024, this index still continues to reflect tendencies toward positive or critical self-reporting within the self-assessed data from 2023.

The monitoring results of Kyrgyzstan are at higher risk of bias compared to other countries in the Torino Process, on average: less than 13% of the monitoring results for 2024 are based on quantitative evidence, compared to an average of 23.9% for the other countries participating in the system monitoring. Despite the higher bias potential, however, the responses provided by Kyrgyzstan in 2023 in the supplementary monitoring questionnaire are not significantly more positive than the self-assessment results of other countries in the Torino Process. This implies that even with a lower reliance on quantitative data, the self-assessment of performance by authorities and stakeholders in Kyrgyzstan does not appear overly inflated when compared to that of other countries, on average.

**FIGURE 1. AVAILABILITY OF INTERNATIONALLY COMPARABLE DATA FOR SYSTEM PERFORMANCE MONITORING, KYRGYZSTAN AND ETF PARTNER COUNTRIES (2023-2024)**



Source: Torino Process database

The international comparability of the data used for monitoring is the only reliability metric that has changed since 2023. Kyrgyzstan's position on this metric has improved somewhat, from 14.29% in 2023 to 20% in 2024 (Figure 1). Despite improvement, however, in the group of countries covered by the Torino Process monitoring in 2024, Kyrgyzstan continues to rank in the lowest quartile in terms of the international comparability of its monitoring results. This positions the country well below the international average of 43.18%.

If the risk of bias in the monitoring results depends on the availability of internationally comparable evidence, and if Kyrgyzstan has more of this data in 2024 than in 2023, why has this not improved the reliability of monitoring results regarding risk of bias?

As already noted, to maintain consistency in the types of data used to calculate system performance indices across years, the 2024 update of monitoring results included only those SPIs for which quantitative data was available in both 2023 and 2024. Consequently, the mix of SPIs by data type (quantitative or self-assessment) in 2024 remained the same as in 2023. Since the number of SPIs based on self-assessment responses in Kyrgyzstan in 2024 remained the same as in 2023, the risk of bias remains the same as well. Furthermore, a simple increase in the volume of internationally comparable data would not necessarily reduce this bias risk for a country, even if this methodological limitation were set aside, as additional data may only enrich SPIs already based on quantitative evidence in 2023.

The results so far do not necessarily indicate that Kyrgyzstan lacks data at the national level. However, they do suggest a significant shortage of information that meets international standards, which may limit the ability to make cross-country comparisons on the performance of its VET and lifelong learning systems.

## 2. MONITORING RESULTS: KYRGYZSTAN

### 2.1 Policy and system performance in 2024: overall results

The Torino Process monitoring draws on multiple, often disparate, information sources and data. To facilitate a quick, efficient, and focused communication of key messages despite the diversity of information collected, the reporting of monitoring results aggregates the evidence in ways which facilitate a quick overview of system performance without sacrificing too much detail.

The eight monitoring dimensions mentioned in the previous section are the top layer of reporting in this respect. They capture VET system performance in various domains, the selection of which is aligned with national and international country commitments and reform and development priorities concerning learning. These eight dimensions are described in Table 2.

TABLE 2. DIMENSIONS OF POLICY AND SYSTEM PERFORMANCE MONITORING THROUGH THE TORINO PROCESS

Code	Dimension	Description
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<b>A.1</b>	<b>Access to learning</b>	This dimension captures the degree to which initial VET (IVET), continuing VET (CVET), and other adult learning opportunities to which VET could contribute, are accessible and attractive for learners irrespective of who they are and why they wish to engage in learning.
<b>A.2</b>	<b>Participation in learning</b>	This dimension captures the likelihood of VET learners to survive and thrive in the education and training system by looking at its vertical and horizontal permeability, that is whether learners can switch between general and vocational pathways and between formal and non-formal learning, as well as whether they complete their learning.
<b>B.1</b>	<b>Quality and relevance</b>	This dimension captures the extent to which learners in IVET and CVET are provided with basic skills and key competences, whether their learning has exposure to, and is relevant for, employment, and also whether they are provided with adequate career guidance.
<b>B.2</b>	<b>Excellence</b>	This dimension captures the presence of system-wide policies and measures to promote highest quality practices and results in teaching and training, content design and provision, governance and VET provider management, and equity and social inclusion.
<b>B.3</b>	<b>Innovation</b>	This dimension captures the presence of innovative practices and priorities on system level in the areas of access to learning, support for successful completion of learning, and quality of learning and training outcomes.
<b>B.4</b>	<b>System responsiveness</b>	This dimension captures the extent to which curricula for youth and adults consider themes of significance for sustainability, climate change awareness, and digitalisation, as well as whether the IVET and CVET systems are responsive to labour market needs, demographic changes, and socio-economic developments.
<b>C.1</b>	<b>Steering and management</b>	This dimension captures the availability of evidence for informed decision-making, the degree to which governance of VET is participatory, the presence and transparency of quality assurance arrangements, the quality and capacity of staff in leadership positions, and the degree of internationalisation of IVET and CVET.
<b>C.2</b>	<b>Resourcing</b>	This dimension captures the adequacy and efficiency of human and financial resources in IVET and CVET, and the extent to which the material base for learning and training is adequate, that is – conducive to effective teaching, training, and learning.

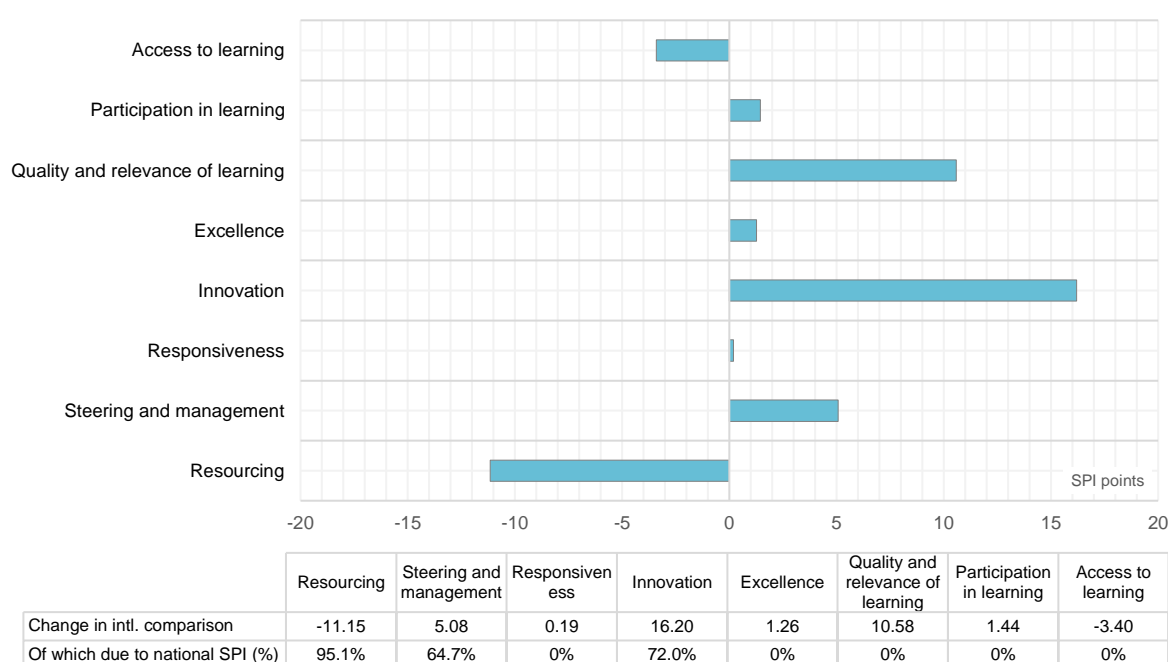
This chapter of the monitoring report presents the performance of the VET system in Kyrgyzstan across the eight dimensions of Torino Process monitoring, and the evolution of that performance since 2023. Since data is currently available for only two years (2023 and 2024), it is too early to determine whether a consistent pattern or direction of change – a trend – exists over time, both in Kyrgyzstan and in other countries participating in the Torino Process monitoring.

One way to address this temporary limitation is to track the relative standing of the country against the international average instead of looking at the national data in isolation. This approach allows for a more meaningful assessment of progress by placing the national monitoring results within a broader context, to show not only if performance in a given domain of monitoring is improving or declining, but also how that compares to developments elsewhere.

Looking at relative changes in performance, specifically the difference between national and international monitoring results, can be a useful proxy for the evolution of policy and system performance in a country even when a limited number of data points, or data points which lack update, restrict the ability to establish longer term performance trends. The approach also draws attention to the changing average performance of countries, which allows for a discussion of the broader context and how shifts in the average might reflect trends or challenges shared by countries participating in the monitoring.

Figure 2a provides a snapshot of how the performance of VET in Kyrgyzstan has evolved in the eight dimensions of monitoring since 2023, viewed through the lens of the average level of performance of other countries participating in the Torino Process. It presents the SPI point changes for each area – how much the results have diverged or converged relative to the international average since 2023 in each category – and it also distinguishes whether these changes stem from a shift in national SPIs and/or shifts in the broader landscape of cross-country performance. Keeping track of this information is important to avoid the appearance of progress or decline in cases where there is no change in national performance but only an evolution in the international context.

**FIGURE 2a. CHANGE IN SYSTEM PERFORMANCE BY MONITORING DIMENSION: KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2023-2024)**



Source: Torino Process database

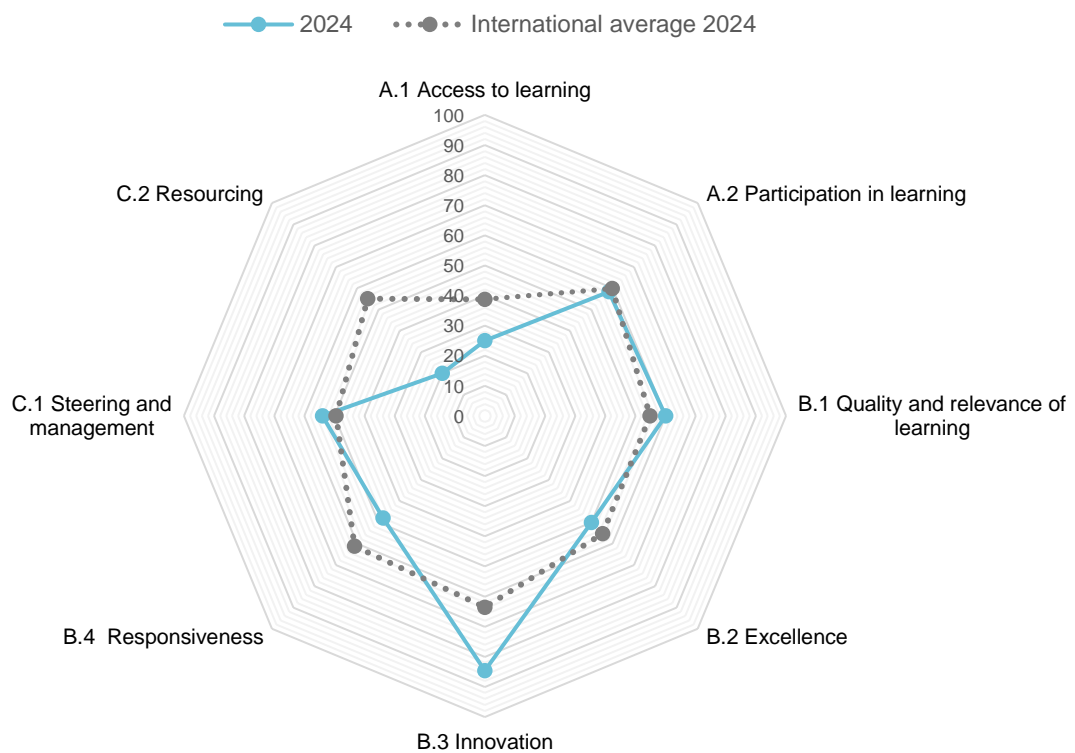
The data suggest that the largest score point changes were positive and occurred in the dimension of Innovation, largely driven by shifts in system performance at the national level. The dimension of Resourcing has also evolved, albeit with a decline in relative performance, again primarily due to national factors that will be explored further in Section 2.2.4. In contrast, the domain of Steering and Management has shown a positive change in relative performance, with an SPI score point increase of 5.08, of which 64.7% were attributable to national developments.

Conversely, in all other dimensions—including Access to Learning, Participation in Learning, Quality and Relevance of Learning, Excellence, and Responsiveness—the shifts, whether positive or negative, can be traced back to developments in other countries within the Torino Process sample, which have influenced the international average. The biggest change in this group of results is in the domain of quality and relevance of learning, where despite no new results for Kyrgyzstan in 2024, the relative position of the country has improved by more than 10 SPI points due to an overall decline in average performance internationally.

National authorities report that lifelong learners in Kyrgyzstan are well-positioned to benefit from the education and training offer, which they describe as focused on quality and relevance (Dimension B.1, SPI of 60, unchanged from 2023) and committed to promoting innovation in vocational education and training (VET) (Dimension B.3, SPI increased to 84.6 from 80 in 2023). The VET system in Kyrgyzstan is also perceived as having institutional capacity in steering and management comparable to other countries in the Torino Process (Dimension C.1, SPI increased from 43 to 54).

However, it appears that not all learners are able to benefit fully from these strengths. Participation in learning remains an area of average performance (Dimension A.2, SPI of 58.3, nearly stable compared to 58 in 2023), and support for access to and attractiveness of VET programmes continues to lag behind other dimensions, with no change in the SPI score of 25 for Dimension A.1.

**FIGURE 2b. INDEX OF SYSTEM PERFORMANCE BY MONITORING DIMENSION, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2024)**



*Theoretical<sup>5</sup> index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100*

Source: Torino Process monitoring database

The VET system of Kyrgyzstan also has a strong inclination towards innovation and responsiveness to external developments. Yet, despite a declared commitment to excellence in strategic documents, the promotion and support of high-quality practices in teaching and learning remain areas with room for growth (Dimension B.2, SPI of 50, unchanged from 2023). Furthermore,

<sup>5</sup> The Torino Process makes a distinction between theoretical (full) index range and index range used for reporting purposes. For reporting purposes, rare instances of extreme values on the low end (SPI < 10) and on the high end (SPI > 90) of the index scale are truncated at the upper (10) and lower (90) decile end. This means that the reporting does not discriminate SPI values below 10 and above 90. The international average, on the other hand, is calculated using the full range of the index.

securing adequate financial, human, and physical resources for VET remains a significant challenge, with a decline in SPI from 32 to 20 in Dimension C.2.

## 2.2 Policy and system performance in specific areas of monitoring and against specific outcomes

VET performance in Kyrgyzstan in the eight monitoring dimensions presented above is driven by 30 policy and system outcomes. It is through these outcomes that the IVET and CVET subsystems work to meet the needs and expectations of stakeholders, particularly of youth and adult learners. This section of the monitoring report presents findings about system performance on the level of these deliverables. To facilitate reading and the navigation of content, the section groups the presentation of the 30 outcomes by the three major areas of commitment to learners, which were introduced in the first section of this report: access to learning (Area A), quality of learning (Area B), and system organisation (Area C). Reporting in Area B, the largest by the number of outcomes, is divided into B (1) and B (2).

### 2.2.1 Area A. Opportunities for lifelong learning: access and participation

In Area A (Access and participation in opportunities for LLL), the Torino Process tracks the first two monitoring dimensions presented in Section 2.1 – access/attractiveness and participation, with six system outcomes (Table 2). These outcomes include access to IVET, CVET, and other opportunities for lifelong learning, the vertical and horizontal permeability of the VET system, as well as the prospects of learners in IVET and CVET to graduate and - where relevant – progress to subsequent levels of education and training. The outcomes included under Area A are defined as follows:

**TABLE 3. POLICY AND SYSTEM OUTCOMES INCLUDED UNDER MONITORING AREA A: ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION**

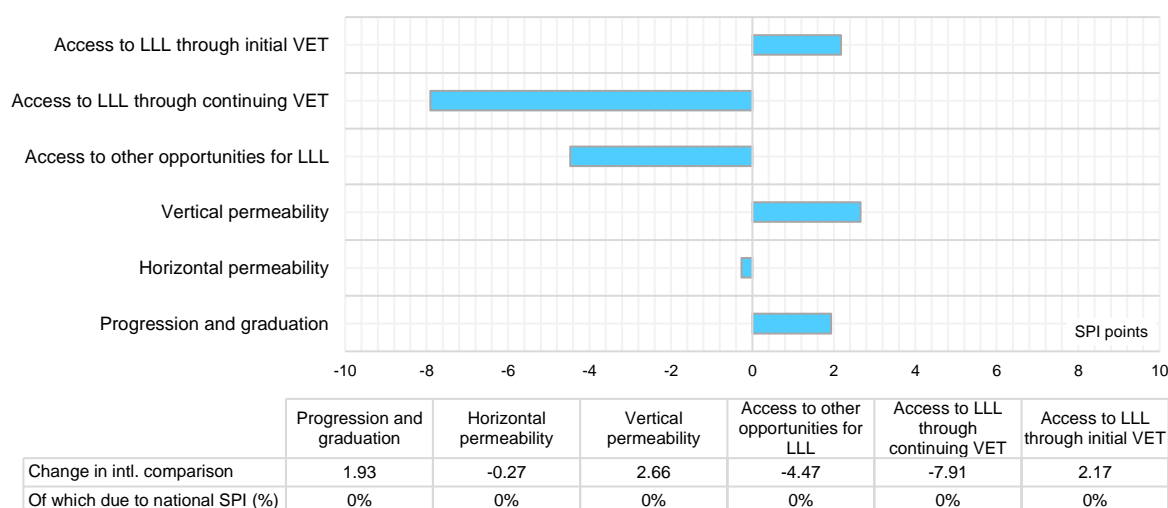
Code	Deliverable (outcome)	Description
A.1.1	<b>Access and attractiveness: initial VET</b>	This outcome captures the degree to which initial VET is an attractive educational choice in comparison with other learning alternatives, and whether that choice is accessible to various target groups of learners.
A.1.2	<b>Access and attractiveness: continuing VET</b>	This outcome captures the degree to which continuing VET is an attractive choice in comparison with other skills development alternatives, as well as whether that choice is accessible to various target groups
A.1.3	<b>Access to other opportunities for LLL</b>	This outcome captures access to other opportunities for lifelong learning not covered by outcomes A.1.1 and A.1.2 and VET, such as active labour market policies (ALMPs)
A.2.1	<b>Flexible pathways: vertical permeability</b>	This outcome strives to capture the vertical permeability of the education and training system vis-à-vis initial and continuing VET, understood as possibility for transition between consecutive tracks of education and training (general and vocational).
A.2.2	<b>Flexible pathways: horizontal permeability</b>	This outcome strives to capture the horizontal permeability of the education and training system vis-à-vis initial and continuing VET, understood as the possibility for transition between parallel tracks of education and training (general and vocational), and between formal and non-formal learning settings
A.2.3	<b>Progression and graduation of learners</b>	This outcome refers to the degree of success (graduation, progression) of learners in VET, for instance in comparison with other education and training alternatives

Figure 3a provides a snapshot of how the relative performance of VET in Kyrgyzstan has changed since 2023 against the international average in delivering access and participation to learners.

The data show a decline in the relative performance of Kyrgyzstan in two domains tracking the availability of opportunities for adult education – Access to CVET (Outcome A.1.2) and access to other opportunities for lifelong learning (Outcome A.1.3). Since these changes are not due to shifts in national system performance, the declines suggest that other countries in the Torino Process sample have, on average, made advancements in these areas since 2023.

Conversely, the results of Kyrgyzstan have improved in international comparison in domains that monitor first time access to formal learning (A.1.1), access to higher levels of education (A.2.1) and support for learners towards progression and graduation (A.2.3). However, as there has been no national evolution of results in these domains, the data suggest that, on average, ETF countries may be experiencing greater challenges than in 2023 with the capacity of their education and training systems to provide access, facilitate upward mobility, and support young learners in completing their programmes.

**FIGURE 3a. ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION - CHANGE IN SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2023-2024)**



Source: ETF Torino Process database

The preceding section highlighted the comparatively weak performance of Kyrgyzstan in accessibility and participation in VET. National authorities noted that IVET programmes were broadly available to citizens aged 15 to 30, with admissions based on applications and medical examinations. However, disparities persist in this domain, which may disadvantage some learners by age. System performance in the domain of access to lifelong learning through initial VET was average, with an SPI of 50 in 2024 (Outcome A.1.1, Figure 3b), below the international average of 65. Despite approximately 32,000 to 35,000 state-funded training seats available annually, many go unused, particularly in popular trades where demand is high.

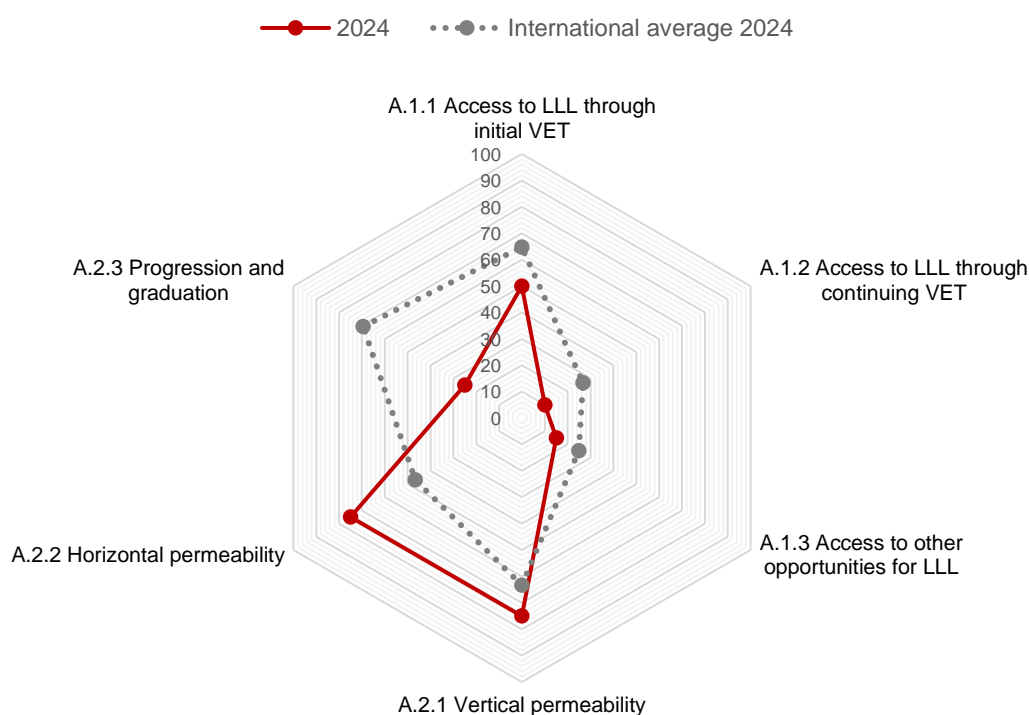
Participation in CVET remains a significant concern (Outcome A.1.2, SPI of 10 in 2024), compared to an international average of 27, which indicates that there is a challenge with attracting learners. National authorities acknowledged a decrease in VET enrolments, from 34,400 in 2018 to 28,600 in 2021, despite efforts to increase the appeal of VET through shorter training periods in integrated

programmes and the introduction of a credit-based system. Challenges remain in drawing students to VET, particularly in rural areas where options are limited, though these areas represent a large share of VET participation.

Support for access to other lifelong learning opportunities beyond VET was slightly better but remained low overall (Outcome A.1.3, SPI of 15 in 2024), below the international average of 25. The establishment of the Skills Development Fund in 2020 and new professional development programmes were promising steps, especially for targeted economic sectors requiring updated skills.

Once enrolled, learners in Kyrgyzstan generally find navigating between education levels relatively easy, with strong vertical and horizontal permeability (Outcomes A.2.1 and A.2.2, both with an SPI of 75 in 2024), surpassing the international averages of 63 and 47, respectively. Legislative updates to the State SVE and HVE standards in July 2021 support these transitions, allowing learners to progress within the system by recognising prior education and aligning qualifications with the National Qualification Framework levels.

**FIGURE 3b. ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN OPPORTUNITIES FOR LLL: INDEX OF SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2024)**



Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100

Source: Torino Process monitoring database

In 2023, various measures were reported as being in place to support successful student progression and graduation in VET, including scholarships for academic merit, dormitory accommodations for disadvantaged students, and opportunities to retake failed exams. These interventions aim to assist students facing academic challenges.

Despite these supportive measures, in 2023 national authorities report that VET providers are often reluctant to expel students, largely due to the financial implications of losing state and extra-

budgetary funding. In many cases, students with poor academic performance are allowed to graduate, primarily to maintain institutional funding levels. For those expelled due to academic failures or other significant reasons, re-admission provisions exist. Expelled students can reapply at the end of a semester, subject to seat availability and the relevance of their previous studies. Their curriculum is then adjusted to address educational gaps within a year, ensuring they meet the required standards.

These findings highlight a critical issue within the structure and incentives of VET in Kyrgyzstan, which was discussed in the previous edition of this report as well. While support measures like scholarships and accommodations are intended to mitigate financial and logistical barriers to education, the underlying funding model of institutions may unintentionally create misaligned incentives that impact educational outcomes.

If financial considerations drive institutions to prioritise retaining students who might otherwise fail—due to the risk of losing funding—this may result in financial stability taking precedence over academic success and genuine skill development. Consequently, graduates may enter the workforce underprepared despite completing their courses. This dynamic also explains the relatively low performance score in this monitoring dimension (Outcome A.2.3).

Re-evaluating the support measures and the institutional funding model could help address these challenges. Shifting the focus towards more targeted academic support and restructuring institutional incentives could align them more closely with student success and educational quality, rather than financial outcomes. Such changes would ensure that support measures not only assist students in overcoming barriers but also enhance the substantive progression and skill acquisition of VET graduates.

### 2.2.2 Area B (1). Lifelong learning outcomes: quality and relevance

In the first part of Area B (Quality and relevance of LLL outcomes), the Torino Process follows another two of the dimensions presented in Section 2.1, namely quality/relevance and responsiveness of VET, with a total of eight policy and system outcomes.

These outcomes cover the quality of learning of youth and adults in VET in terms of key skills and competences, the exposure of learners in VET to the world of work, the employability of graduates from IVET and CVET, the availability of career guidance for them, as well as the relevance of learning and training content in VET. Under relevance, the monitoring records the responsiveness of the VET programme offering to demographic, labour market, and socio-economic developments, as well as the inclusion in VET curricula of themes pertaining to the green and digital transition. The outcomes included under Area B (1) are defined in Table 4.

**TABLE 4. POLICY AND SYSTEM OUTCOMES INCLUDED UNDER MONITORING AREA B (1): QUALITY AND RELEVANCE**

Code	Deliverable (outcome)	Description
B.1.1	<b>Key competences for LLL, quality of learning outcomes</b>	This outcome captures the extent to which the education and training system succeeds in the provision of basic skills and key competences for learners in formal education (including IVET), as defined in regular international surveys and international assessments
B.1.2	<b>Adult skills and competences</b>	This outcome captures the extent to which adults in working age dispose of basic skills and key competences, as captured by regular international surveys.

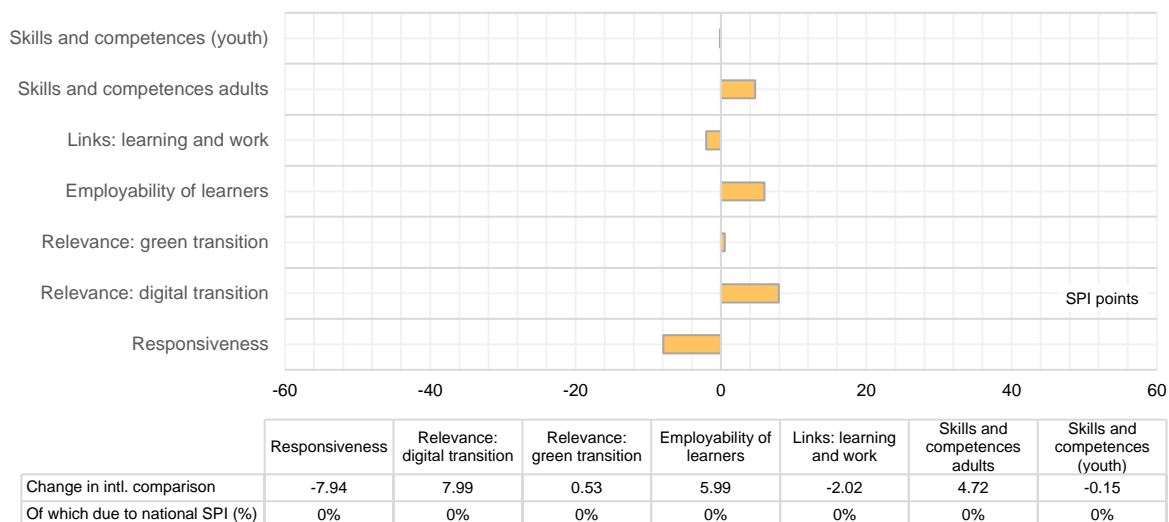
<b>B.1.3</b>	<b>Links between learning and the world of work</b>	This outcome reflects the pragmatic relevance of IVET and CVET programmes through the lens of participation in work-based learning (WBL) and the share of programmes with outcomes/objectives that include a WBL component
<b>B.1.4</b>	<b>Employability of learners</b>	This outcome refers to the labour market relevance of opportunities for LLL as captured through evidence of labour market outcomes of graduates from IVET, CVET, and other forms of LLL with a VET component
<b>B.1.5</b>	<b>Opportunities for career guidance</b>	This outcome strives to capture the timely availability of up-to-date information about professions and education programmes, which information allows prospective and current students in VET to take informed decisions concerning their education and employment paths
<b>B.4.1</b>	<b>Relevance of learning content: green transition</b>	This outcome captures the extent to which curricula for youth and adults consider themes of significance for sustainability and climate change awareness, including “green skills” for sustainable economies
<b>B.4.2</b>	<b>Relevance of learning content: digital transition</b>	This outcome tracks the extent to which curricula for youth and adults incorporate themes concerning digitalisation, and the extent to which learners are provided with basic digital skills as a result
<b>B.4.3</b>	<b>Responsiveness of programme offering</b>	This outcome captures the degree and speed of responsiveness of initial and continuing VET systems to the needs of the labour market and to other changes concerning demography and socio-economic developments

Figure 4a provides a snapshot of how the relative performance of VET in Kyrgyzstan has changed since 2023 against the international average in delivering quality and relevance to learners. The data suggest that the international performance context in the area of quality and relevance has indeed experienced shifts across the full range of outcomes it encompasses, while the results for Kyrgyzstan have remained stable between 2023 and 2024.

The data also indicates that, during this period, the challenge of maintaining standards of quality in adult skills and competences, as well as in the employment outcomes of learners, may have grown more pronounced in ETF partner countries on average than in Kyrgyzstan. Additionally, capacity and will to address the digital transition through the VET programmes and curricula have seen a decline across the board of countries in the Torino Process sample as a whole, unlike in Kyrgyzstan.

However, beyond foundational skills, other countries are becoming more agile in adapting their education systems to changing needs, as seen in the lower relative score of Kyrgyzstan in this domain of monitoring since 2023. In 2024, the alignment between education and the labour market has also become somewhat stronger than in Kyrgyzstan.

**FIGURE 4a. QUALITY AND RELEVANCE - CHANGE IN SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2023-2024)**



Beyond comparisons with past periods, the system performance data for Kyrgyzstan in 2024 indicate robust delivery of foundational skills and competences aligned with emerging economic trends. According to official information, the VET system in the country continues to be effective in imparting key competences to young learners, with strong performance in support of skills and competences for youth (Figure 4b, Outcome B.1.1, SPI of 75, well above the international average of 45 for 2024). A cornerstone of this design remains Kyrgyzstan's State School Education Standard, which mandates that all VET programme entrants possess basic skills like problem-solving, reading, and maths. The Standard ensures that programmes equip learners with essential competences necessary for societal participation, such as environmental protection, ICT usage, teamwork, and basic entrepreneurial skills, all described in the state standards.

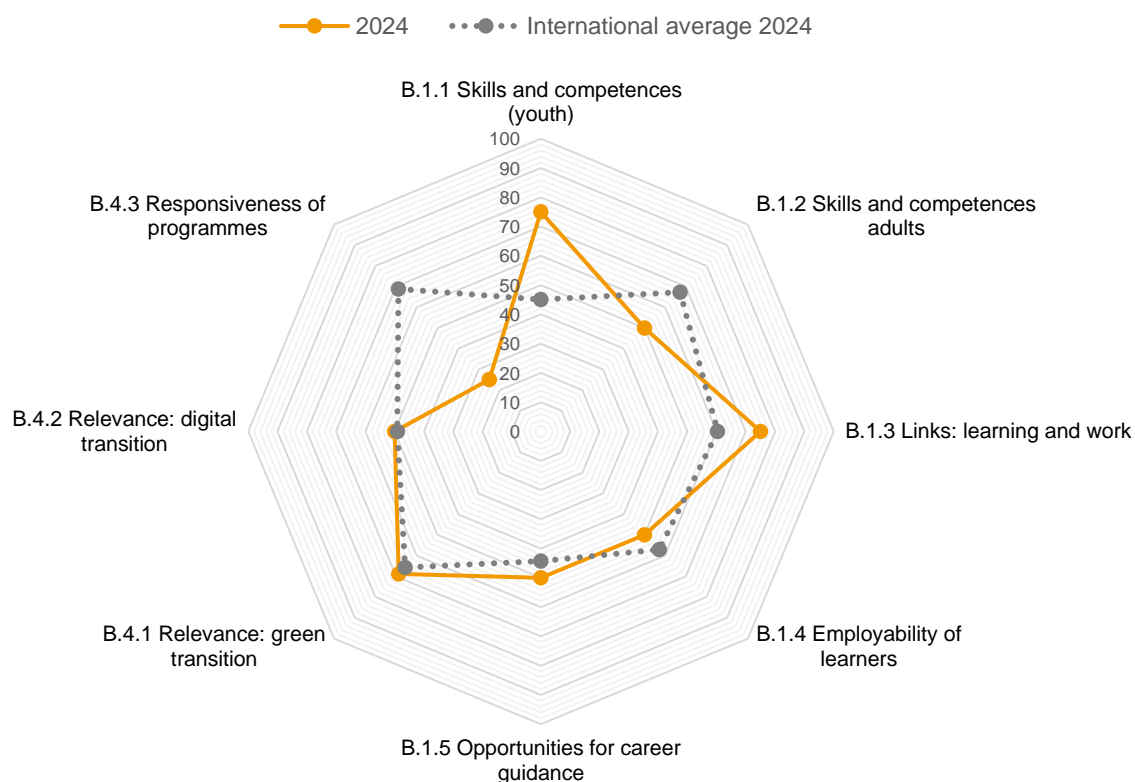
In line with this ongoing approach, VET in Kyrgyzstan continues to bridge education with the labour market rather well (Outcome B.1.3, SPI of 75, which is above the international average of 60 for 2024). An example of this integration is the development and approval of the Work-Based Learning (WBL) concept, which includes hands-on learning, on-the-job training, and practical and laboratory classes, now accounting for a significant portion of the curriculum in VET programmes. By 2022, dual training regulations were solidified, expanding the range of trades covered and engaging more vocational schools in this model, thus enhancing practical training directly linked to current industry needs.

Despite these advances, official information provided in the course of monitoring in 2023 reaffirmed that IVET and CVET programmes require continual updates to keep pace with rapidly evolving production technologies and labour market needs. Revisions have focused on switching to competence-based modular programmes, improving relationships with the labour market, updating content and methodologies, and employing the dual training system to ensure practical relevance. Courses such as 'Fundamentals of migration laws and processes' and 'Critical analysis of media content and fact-checking,' are in place to meet contemporary demands.

Nevertheless, the skills and competences of adults remain only average (Outcome B.1.2, SPI of 50) and continue to be below the average performance of other countries, even as that international average declined to an SPI of 67 in 2024. This may be linked to the continuing focus of adult learners on acquiring specific, immediately applicable skills through short-term courses, often sidelining broader educational components that might contribute to long-term career stability and growth. The emphasis on rapid skill acquisition is reflected in the popularity of courses designed to deliver quick

returns on educational investment, such as 2-week to 1-month courses in practical trades, which align with the observed preferences of adults in the labour market.

**FIGURE 4b. QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF LLL: INDEX OF SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2024)**



*Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100*

Source: [Torino Process monitoring database](#)

System performance in support of the employability of VET learners declined by 6 SPI points internationally in 2024, yet Kyrgyzstan’s results in this area remain below the international average (Outcome B.1.4, SPI of 50). Despite a framework geared towards high-quality learning outcomes and stronger links between VET programmes and the labour market, demand for VET graduates continues to be subdued. Possible reasons range from an economic slowdown at the time of monitoring to a potential mismatch between the perceived value of VET qualifications and industry expectations. There may also be challenges in ensuring that VET programmes fully align with labour market relevance as a priority outcome.

In 2023, authorities reported that, despite policy intentions, it is challenging to assess how well graduates at all VET stages are equipped with the key competences specified in the state standards. This variability is reflected in mixed outcomes for graduates—while some navigate their careers successfully, others struggle to find their footing in the labour market and society. This inconsistency might contribute to the subdued demand for VET graduates, as employers may perceive a lack of uniform competence. Notably, work-based learning initiatives, though substantial, continue to face hurdles in sectors like agriculture due to a lack of large enterprises and limited employer participation.

The limited responsiveness of VET to immediate employer needs persists in 2024 (Outcome B.4.3, SPI of 25). Kyrgyzstan's performance in this area continues to fall well below the international average, which rose from an SPI of 61 in 2023 to 69 in 2024. The education system, including IVET and CVET, is widely regarded as conservative and slow to adapt to rapid changes in the labour market and shifting demographic and socio-economic conditions. In the previous edition of this monitoring report, national authorities indicated that this sluggishness is partly due to the bureaucratic processes involved in updating VET curricula. For instance, the lists of IVET trades and SVE and HVE special fields are approved by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, and incorporating new trades or fields in response to labour market developments is a lengthy process. It involves multiple governmental bodies and can take over a year, leading institutions to experiment with new trades or special fields unofficially.

In 2023, a slate of reforms sought to address these issues by reducing the proportion of the curriculum mandated by the government to about 10%, allowing educational institutions more autonomy to adapt their programs. Despite this increased flexibility, there is no new evidence to indicate that in 2024, these institutions have fully overcome the challenges of meeting labour market demands and adapting to demographic and socio-economic changes. Without adequate regulatory mechanisms, such as professional standards, the responsiveness of VET programs to market needs is bound to remain limited.

Updates to IVET program content also lag behind market needs, a situation noted both in the preceding year and in 2024. For example, courses on 'Business and entrepreneurship fundamentals' and 'Legal fundamentals of professional activity' have only recently been updated to address current demands, such as digitalisation and migration laws. Similarly, new topics on environmental protection and media literacy are being incorporated slowly. Decisions to streamline the training period for certain IVET programs reflect an attempt to align more closely with market conditions, where there is a demand for quicker pathways into the workforce. However, the rigid control over curriculum content by the government limits the ability of vocational schools to rapidly adapt to new industry trends.

Based on information collected through the self-assessment questionnaire for Kyrgyzstan in 2023, the assessment and accreditation processes for training programs and providers do not take sufficiently into account the labour market needs or demographic and socio-economic changes, although there is an acknowledgment within the accreditation framework to evaluate how VET institutions respond to these external pressures.

As noted in the previous edition of this report, the Torino Process monitoring framework assesses the relevance of learning content from a longer-term perspective by examining the extent to which curricula incorporate forward-looking, emerging themes such as digital and green transitions. The emphasis on the digital transition remains moderate (Outcome B.4.2, SPI of 50), although Kyrgyzstan's performance in 2024 is slightly above the international average, which declined from an SPI of 57 in 2023 to 49 in 2024. In contrast, the green transition themes continue to be better integrated, achieving a stronger SPI of 69 in 2024 (Outcome B.4.1), slightly above the international average of 66.s

According to information provided in the course of monitoring in 2023, engagement with green transition themes within IVET programmes includes a structured 34-hour subject on 'Occupational protection and industrial ecology,' focused on environmental education. This is supplemented by practical activities, such as the annual 'Plant your tree' event, where around 20,000 seedlings were planted in 2022, reflecting a hands-on approach to embedding green skills.

The findings of this year reaffirm most of the conclusions reached in the 2023 report: while developments in both green and digital education within the VET system reflect significant efforts to align curricula with evolving labour market needs and sustainability goals, the variability in how these skills are implemented and the depth of training suggest room for further enhancement. Strengthening the integration of these themes could further improve the effectiveness and relevance of VET programmes in Kyrgyzstan.

### 2.2.3 Area B (2). Lifelong learning outcomes: excellence and innovation

In the second part of Area B (Excellence and innovation in support of lifelong learning), the Torino Process monitors two performance dimensions – excellence and innovation, which accommodate a total of eight system outcomes. These outcomes include excellence in pedagogy, learning content, governance, and inclusion into learning, as well as systemic innovation supporting access, participation, quality, and relevance of learning and training. The outcomes included under Area B (2) are defined in Table 5.

**TABLE 5. POLICY AND SYSTEM OUTCOMES INCLUDED UNDER MONITORING AREA B (2): EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION**

Code	Deliverable (outcome)	Description
B.2.1	<b>Excellence in pedagogy and professional development</b>	This outcome captures the extent to which excellence in teaching and training is an acknowledged policy priority, as well as the extent to which its implementation is bearing fruit across the education and training system, including in the domain of professional development of teachers
B.2.2	<b>Excellence in programme content and implementation</b>	This outcome captures the results of efforts to promote excellence in the content and implementation of VET programmes, with a specific focus on bringing them closer to the world of work (i.e. through work-based learning), on prioritising greening in curricula and teaching, as well as on promoting excellence in learning.
B.2.3	<b>Excellence in governance and provider management</b>	This outcome captures the results of efforts to promote excellence in the domains of financing, leadership, and governance, as well as the extent to which these examples are systemic or not
B.2.4	<b>Excellence in social inclusion and equity</b>	This outcome captures the results of efforts to promote excellence in the domain of equity and social inclusion in education and training, as well as the extent to which these examples are systemic or not
B.3.1	<b>Systemic innovation: access to opportunities for LLL</b>	This outcome captures the presence of innovative practices and policy solutions in the domain of access to opportunities for lifelong learning.
B.3.2	<b>Systemic innovation: participation and graduation</b>	This outcome captures the presence of innovative practices and policy solutions in the provision of support for participation in (and graduation from) opportunities for lifelong learning, and the extent to which they are systemic (or not)
B.3.3	<b>Systemic innovation: quality of learning and training outcomes</b>	This outcome captures the presence of innovative practices and policy solutions for raising the quality of learning and training in terms of the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired by learners
B.3.4	<b>Systemic innovation: relevance of learning and training</b>	This outcome captures the presence of innovative practices and policy solutions for raising the labour market relevance of knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired by learners

Figure 5a provides a snapshot of how the relative performance of VET in Kyrgyzstan has changed since 2023 against the international average in prioritising excellence and openness to innovation in a selection of key domains. The Torino Process defines excellence as the presence of system-wide policies and measures that promote the highest quality practices and results across key domains of VET policy and delivery. These include excellence in pedagogy and professional development, programme content and implementation, governance and provider management, and social inclusion

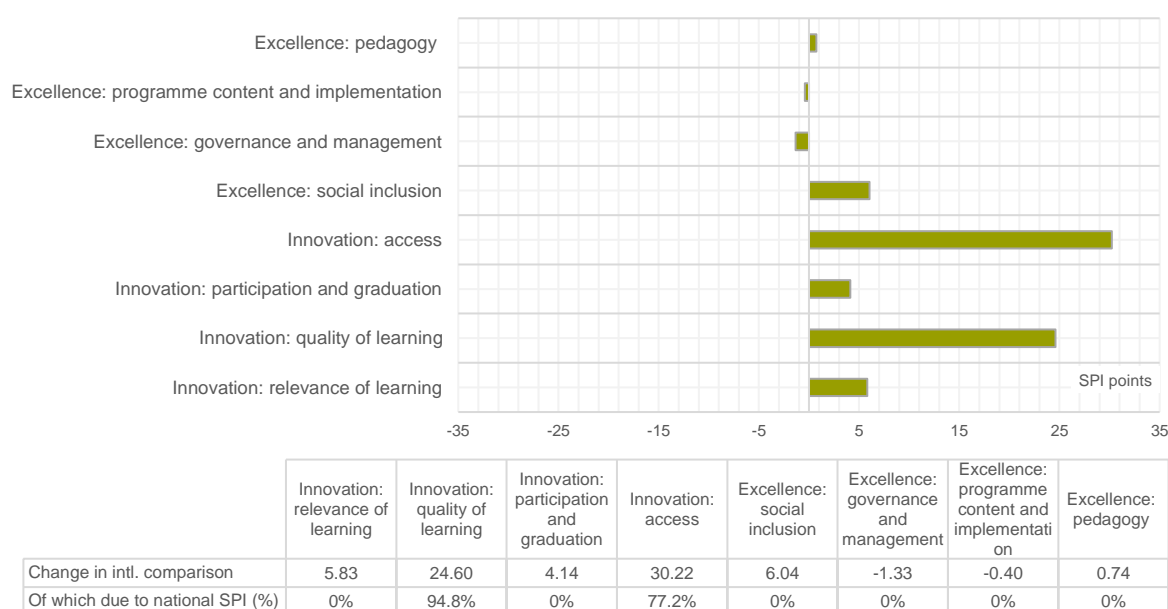
and equity. Innovation, on the other hand, serves as a measure of the adaptability, creativity, and forward-thinking approach of the VET system in responding to evolving labour market and learner needs.

The performance results for Kyrgyzstan in delivering excellence and innovation have improved in international comparison since 2023, especially in some of the domains in which the Torino Process tracks openness to innovation (Figure 5a).

The most notable shifts in this respect are in support of access to and quality of learning, with increases of 30.22 and 24.60 SPI points respectively. Both changes are driven primarily by positive changes in national system performance in these domains. Relative performance increased also in other areas in which the monitoring tracks innovation, such as in support of participation, graduation, and relevance of learning. However, changes in these domains were smaller and they reflect broader international trends rather than specific improvement in Kyrgyzstan.

The data in Figure 5a also shows changes in all domains related to excellence, but the shifts are entirely due to developments in the international context and not due to specific improvements or setbacks in the VET system of Kyrgyzstan. The biggest shift in the excellence domains is in excellence in support of social inclusion, where the average performance of ETF partner countries has dropped between 2023 and 2024. While the average may mask the results of individual countries that have improved during this period, the decline suggests that other countries are facing significant enough challenge in maintaining or advancing high-quality, inclusive practices in their VET systems.

**FIGURE 5a. EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION - CHANGE IN SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2023-2024)**



Source: ETF Torino Process database

Beyond comparisons with past periods, system performance in the domain of excellence in pedagogy and professional development remains moderate, with an SPI of 50 (Outcome B.2.1, Figure 5b), slightly below the international average, which improved to 55 in 2024 from 50 in 2023. In

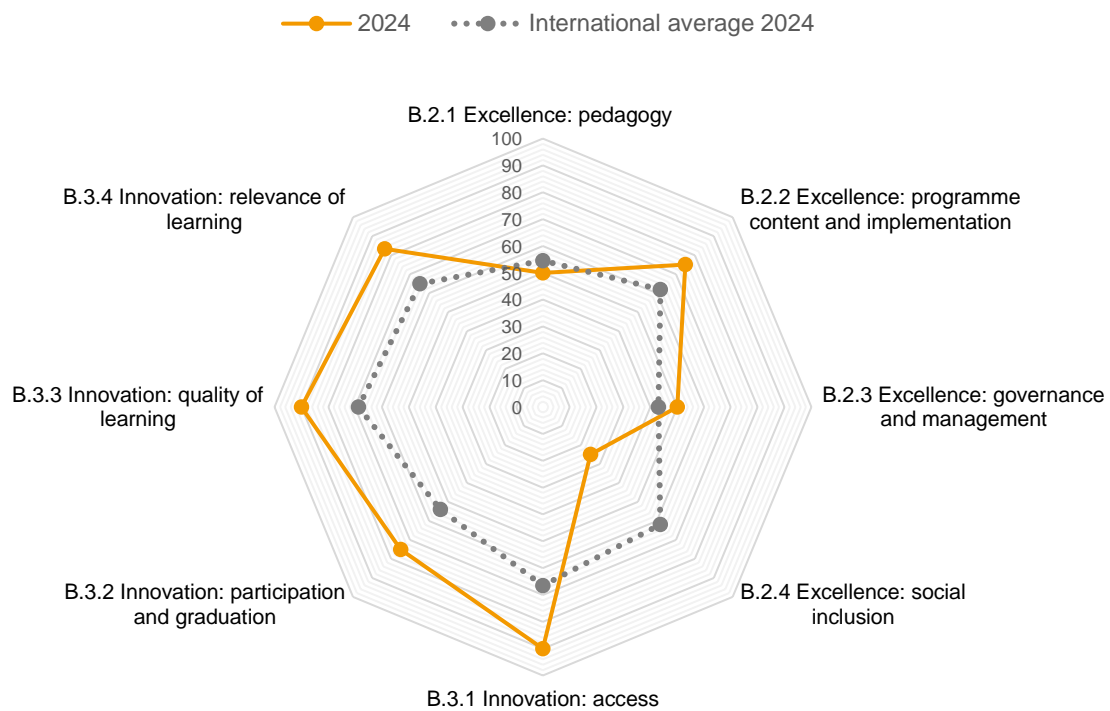
programme content and implementation, performance is stronger, with an SPI of 75 (Outcome B.2.2), well above the international average of 62.

As noted in 2023, these outcomes may reflect ongoing efforts to integrate modern, future-oriented themes such as digitalisation and the green transition, although progress varies across different areas. This integration aligns with broader goals outlined in the Education Development Programme 2040, which aims to enhance VET quality and update its content based on professional standards. However, progress remains slow, with a limited number of professional standards developed under pilot projects funded by international donors like the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The findings on systemic challenges identified in 2023 remain relevant in 2024, particularly regarding the pace and consistency of implementation, which often relies on donor support. While dual training and work-based learning methods have been implemented through partnerships with employer associations, leading to the establishment of four training and production centres and eight centres for pedagogical excellence, these efforts are still limited in scale. These centres, envisioned as hubs to disseminate modern knowledge and best practices, represent important progress, though a broader expansion is necessary to achieve transformative impact.

The monitoring results in 2024 indicate that substantial progress is still needed in social inclusion and equity within the excellence domain (Outcome B.2.4, SPI of 25). The score in this area remains notably below the international average, which rose significantly from 50 in 2023 to 62 in 2024. This suggests ongoing difficulties in adopting and applying best practices to ensure equal access and inclusion for all learners.

**FIGURE 5b. EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION: INDEX OF SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2024)**



*Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100*

Source: Torino Process monitoring database

In 2024, the VET system shows a strong openness to innovative practices, particularly in areas requiring significant improvement. For instance, the adult education sector is advancing towards creating systems for the official recognition of non-formal and informal qualifications. Innovations to improve access to lifelong learning for adults and support learners' engagement and success in VET are ongoing, with high scores in related innovation outcomes (Outcomes B.3.3 and B.3.4, SPIs of 90 and 83, both above the respective international averages of 69 and 65).

Furthermore, the National Qualifications Framework approved in 2020 continues to facilitate alignment with real economy demands, and dual training regulations introduced in 2022, along with independent qualification certification by employers in real working environments, are strengthening the relevance and responsiveness of VET to labour market needs. These efforts, though promising, remain somewhat fragmented and are often project-specific, which limits their systemic impact.

Challenges in implementing inclusive education, highlighted in the 2023 monitoring report, have no new evidence of resolution in 2024. Only 30% of the planned measures under the inclusive education concept have been implemented, primarily due to funding constraints. Although efforts to integrate inclusive education began as early as 1996, with support from international partners, progress continues to be limited.

## 2.2.4 Area C. System organisation

In Area C (System organisation), the monitoring framework accommodates the last two dimensions presented in Section 2.1 – steering/management and resourcing, in which the Torino Process tracks a total of eight system outcomes. These outcomes include the availability and use of data for informed decision-making, the involvement of stakeholders in VET policy, provider management, and resourcing, quality assurance and accountability, the internationalisation of VET providers, as well as the availability and use of human and financial resources in VET. The outcomes included under Area C are defined in Table 6.

**TABLE 6. POLICY AND SYSTEM OUTCOMES INCLUDED UNDER MONITORING AREA C: SYSTEM ORGANISATION**

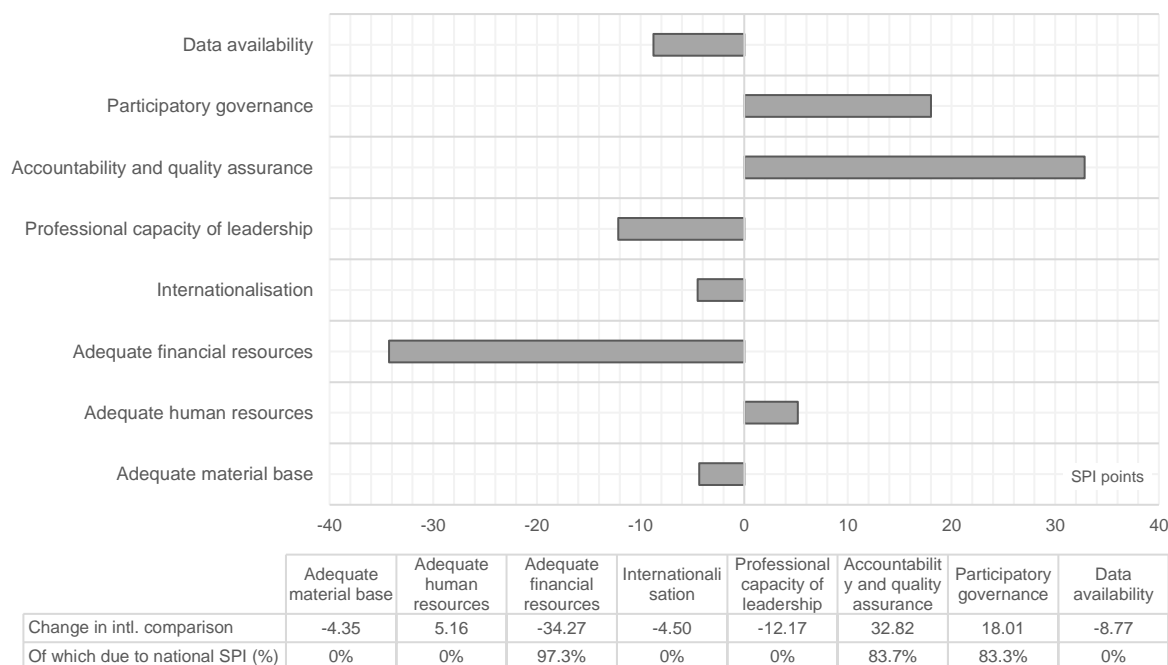
Code	Deliverable (outcome)	Description
C.1.1	Data availability and use	This outcome refers to the availability of administrative and big data as covered by Level 1 of the monitoring framework, participation in large scale international assessments, as well as technical capacity to generate/manage evidence to support monitoring and improvement
C.1.2	Participatory governance	This outcome captures the degree of involvement of the private sector and other external stakeholders in consultations and decisions concerning opportunities for LLL through initial and continuing VET
C.1.3	Public accountability and reliable quality assurance	This outcome tracks the extent to which reliable and trustworthy quality assurance (QA) mechanisms and accountability arrangements are in place which cover learners, teachers, and providers, as well as the extent to which the QA results are publicly available
C.1.4	Professional capacity of staff in leadership positions	This outcome monitors the availability and professional capacity of qualified staff in leadership roles and in other key administrative roles on provider level
C.1.5	Internationalisation	This outcome monitors the degree of internationalisation in IVET and CVET, such as internationalisation of QA arrangements, curricular content, qualifications (i.e. recognition of international credentials, awarding bodies being active beyond their country of origin, etc.)

<b>C.2.1</b>	<b>Adequate financial resource allocations and use</b>	This outcome captures the adequacy of financial resources invested in IVET and CVET in terms of level of investment and allocation, as well as the degree of diversification of funding between public and private sources
<b>C.2.2</b>	<b>Adequate human resource allocation and use</b>	This outcome captures the efficiency of human resource management in terms of availability of teachers and trainers, and the adequacy of their deployment and career management
<b>C.2.3</b>	<b>Adequate material base</b>	This outcome captures the extent to which the material base for learning and training is adequate, including learning and training materials which are supportive of and promote effective teaching, training, and learning

The introductory section of this report observed that the intensity of change in VET system performance in Kyrgyzstan between 2023 and 2024 is quite limited (Table 1). It is also notable that the change is also unevenly distributed across areas of policy and system performance, with most of the shifts concentrated in Area C, on System organisation (Figure 6a).

The data in Figure 6a show that, within this area, the most significant shifts in relative performance between 2023 and 2024 are also those which are largely influenced by changes in the performance of VET in Kyrgyzstan itself. For example, in areas such as participatory governance and accountability and quality assurance, a substantial portion of the positive shift in international comparison is due to increases in the corresponding national SPIs for Kyrgyzstan.

**FIGURE 6a. SYSTEM MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION - CHANGE IN SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2023-2024)**



Source: ETF Torino Process database

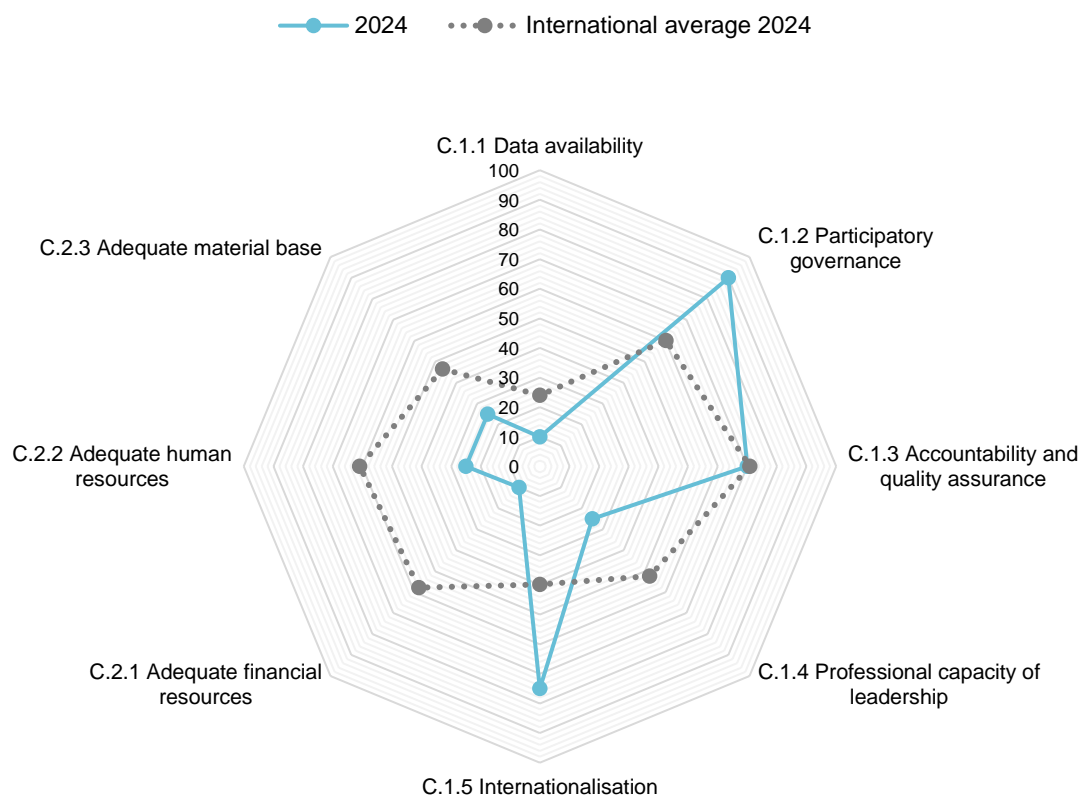
Unfortunately, the same is true for areas in significant decline, such as the availability of adequate financial resources, where most of the downward development is due to a decline in national system performance. Data availability is another area of worsening results in international comparison,

primarily due to more limited progress in this area in Kyrgyzstan compared to 2023 and to other countries in the Torino Process sample. In many ETF partner countries in 2024, internationally comparable data was, on average, more readily available than in Kyrgyzstan (see also Figure 1).

System performance in the domain of governance and stakeholder involvement in VET remains robust in 2024, particularly in participatory governance (Outcome C.1.2), with an SPI of 90, well above the international average of 60. This strong performance reflects active stakeholder involvement through initiatives like the dual training system and the development of work-based learning methods, bolstered by partnerships with employer associations. However, the reliance on external funding, particularly from donor projects, reveals a vulnerability in sustaining these practices over the long term.

Like many countries in the Torino Process, Kyrgyzstan continues to face challenges in data availability, particularly with respect to internationally comparable data (Outcome C.1.1, SPI of 10, Figure 6b). In contrast, many other countries saw considerable improvement in this area in 2024, as reflected in the international SPI score. It rose significantly from 15 in 2023 to 24 in 2024, which is due in part to the availability of new data from the 2022 round of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) of the OECD for many ETF partner countries. Although some data—such as internationally comparable data and operational data from the Ministry of Education and Science—are available, they remain underutilised in policymaking and monitoring. This underuse illustrates a gap between data collection efforts and their application in enhancing VET governance and effectiveness, a gap that appears more pronounced as other countries advance.

**FIGURE 6b. SYSTEM MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION: INDEX OF SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2024)**



*Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100*

Source: Torino Process monitoring database

The area of quality assurance shows a marked improvement in Kyrgyzstan. The SPI for accountability and quality assurance (Outcome C.1.3) has risen to 70 in 2024, now close to the international average of 71. Developing professional standards remains integral to strengthening quality assurance, but progress has been slow. As of the latest monitoring, only 29 professional standards have been developed through pilot projects supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), covering select sectors like construction, catering, metalwork, agriculture, and energy. The limited scope of these standards highlights gaps in covering the diverse range of VET programmes. Additionally, reliance on donor-funded projects raises concerns about sustainability, with sporadic progress making it challenging for institutions to adhere to a unified quality framework.

Efforts to strengthen the VET quality assurance system include enhanced engagement with employer associations to align educational content with labour market needs. This also provides students with practical experience through internships and practice platforms. These measures have been implemented effectively in IVET and SVE through the dual training system and work-based learning methods, yet much remains to be done to ensure comprehensive quality assurance across the VET sector.

The professional capacity of leadership within VET institutions remains a concern, with no improvement since 2023 (Outcome C.1.4, SPI of 25). This score is below the international average of 52. Issues such as low salaries, reputational challenges, and potential politicisation may be deterring qualified candidates from taking on leadership roles in VET. Consequently, the availability and effectiveness of leaders vary significantly across the system.

In Higher Vocational Education (HVE), institutions generally exhibit greater autonomy and innovation. This allows leaders to conduct reforms independently and engage in international collaborations. Roughly 80% of universities fund their operations through training contracts, demonstrating a self-sustaining model that demands qualified leadership. Secondary Vocational Education (SVE) has also adapted rapidly to market conditions, with about 60% of colleges transitioning to self-funding. However, the qualifications of leaders in SVE, while sufficient for national operations, may limit their capacity to pursue international cooperation.

In contrast, IVET providers operate with less autonomy and adaptability. Although recent changes allow these institutions to admit contract students, making up approximately 15% of enrolments, they remain predominantly state funded. IVET administrators and principals are seen as competent in managing internal operations and developing new programmes, but further development is needed to align leadership capacities with broader VET goals.

Kyrgyzstan has shown significant progress in the area of internationalisation (Outcome C.1.5, SPI of 75, well above the international average of 40). Initiatives supporting international collaboration have enhanced VET provider engagement in international projects, reflecting an openness to global experience and peer collaboration. Although internationalisation in IVET remains limited, modular and credit-based learning reforms have prepared these institutions to meet international standards if opportunities for exchange arise. Notable achievements include IVET providers participating in the "Championship of Professions" in Moscow and hosting the Digital Skills Competition in Bishkek, marking significant milestones in international exposure.

Higher VET institutions, especially universities, have a more advanced level of internationalisation, with longstanding partnerships that influence curriculum reforms and facilitate the exchange of

students and faculty. Participation in programmes like Erasmus Mundus enables Kyrgyz universities to engage dynamically with European institutions, some of which offer joint diplomas. International universities in Kyrgyzstan, such as the Aga Khan University of Central Asia and the Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University, further exemplify this trend by implementing curricula and learning technologies from global partners.

Looking forward, the Education Development Programme in the Kyrgyz Republic until 2040 prioritises further internationalisation in tertiary VET. Key goals include increasing the number of foreign students and visiting faculty, expanding master's programmes in foreign languages, and enhancing professional development for faculty through international training and internships.

Resource challenges in the VET system remain significant. In 2024, the availability of adequate financial resources is an ongoing concern (Outcome C.2.1, SPI of 10, well below the international average of 58). In 2022, IVET received only 3.9% of the total education budget, with SVE and HVE receiving even smaller shares. This limited funding primarily covers salaries, leaving scant resources for infrastructure development and programme enhancement. To address this, universities and colleges are diversifying their income sources by increasing contract student numbers and offering fee-based services to local communities.

In IVET, 20-30% of funding is generated from fee-based courses and community services, though 96% of the budget still goes toward salaries, limiting funds available for improvements. This reliance on state funding and donor support underlines a dependency that could hinder long-term sustainability. The Education Development Programme 2040 encourages VET institutions to explore additional funding sources, including local government support, private donations, and income from consultancy and research activities.

Human resources also present a challenge, with the SPI for adequate human resources remaining static at 25, well below the international average of 61. Approximately 25% of tertiary educators hold multiple teaching positions, not due to a shortage of teachers but rather because they need extra roles to earn a sustainable income. In IVET, about 10% of staff combine jobs, with some roles filled by industry-specific training foremen. Although a licensing system ensures adequate staffing levels, variability in teacher qualifications and inconsistent career development practices indicate a need for more cohesive workforce strategies.

The material base for VET, which encompasses educational and training resources, remains limited, with the SPI unchanged at 25, below the international average of 47. While IVET institutions receive state and donor support to update materials, these resources do not cover all trades. Colleges and universities largely rely on extra-budgetary funds to update their materials, and modern textbooks are infrequently updated due to funding constraints. Some state VET institutions benefit from extensive library collections, and private institutions, such as Kyrgyz-Russian and Kyrgyz-Turkish universities, provide high-quality educational resources, ensuring students have access to contemporary learning materials.

The physical infrastructure across VET institutions varies by region and financial capacity. Some institutions benefit from donor-funded repairs and modern equipment, though regional institutions often lack technical resources. Colleges generally have sufficient infrastructure but outdated training equipment, while universities, especially private and international ones, maintain modern facilities, though standards vary widely.

## 2.3 How did policies and systems benefit specific groups of learners?

In this 2024 update, the Torino Process monitoring continues to track not only the deliverables of national VET policies and systems in general but also into the degree to which they address the needs and expectations of present and prospective lifelong learners. The monitoring framework traces how well and equitably system outcomes are distributed to these learners depending on their age and gender, and by features which can be influenced by policy, such as socio-economic disadvantage, labour market status, migration status and learning setting/pathway.

The next sections provide an overview of how the IVET and CVET subsystems in Kyrgyzstan perform in a key selection of monitoring dimensions – access and participation, and quality and relevance – for the following key selection of learner groups: youth and adults, female learners, socioeconomically disadvantaged youth, adults at risk of exclusion, and first-generation migrants.

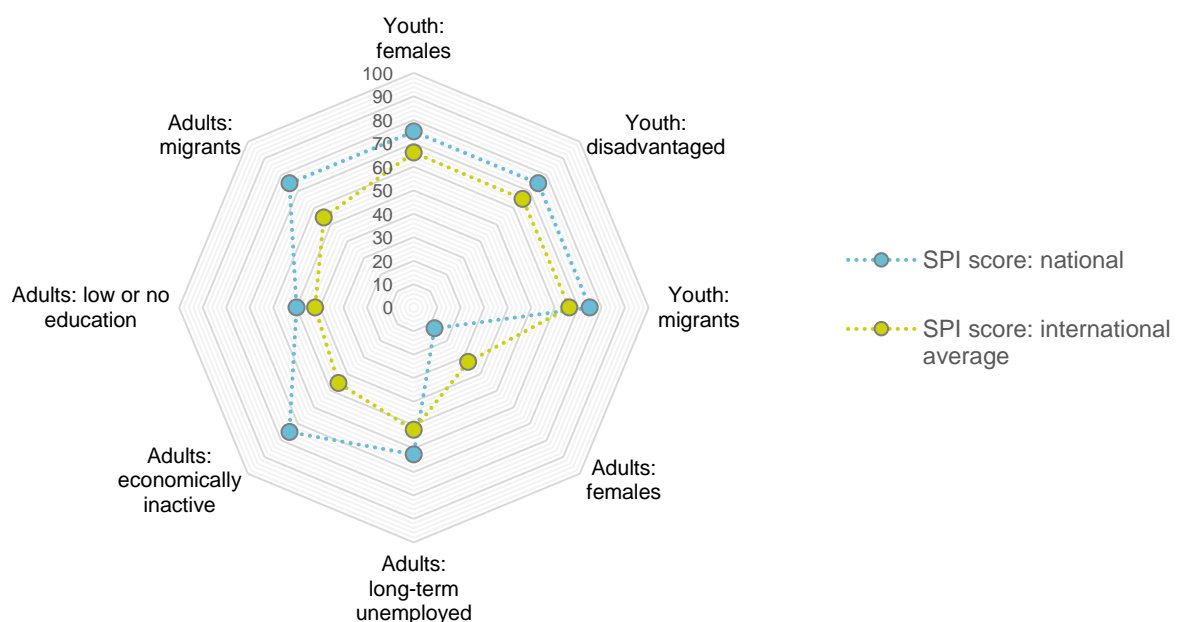
### 2.3.1 Access and participation

#### Overall results

The data presented in Figure 7 shows an overview of system performance in 2024 in support of access to opportunities for learning for various vulnerable populations in Kyrgyzstan and internationally.

The Figure suggests that access to learning for young learners of strategic interest (female learners, socioeconomically disadvantaged youth, and first-generation migrants) is an area of stable results with an SPI of 75 in 2024 for all groups, the same as the year before and higher than performance in support of young learners on average. Internationally, system performance in support of access to educational opportunities for young learners at risk, including female learners, has declined by 2.17 SPI points since 2023 and is lower than in Kyrgyzstan.

**FIGURE 7. SYSTEM PERFORMANCE IN SUPPORT OF ACCESS FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS OF LEARNERS, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2024)**



Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100

Source: Torino Process monitoring database

For adult learners in these categories of special interest, the data in Figure 7 reveals a more nuanced picture. The SPI scores – unchanged from 2023 – vary significantly among the different groups, which is indicative of gaps in system performance that may be contingent on gender and on the educational and socioeconomic background of adult learners. For instance, access to learning for adult females is an area of particularly low results, much lower than in other countries participating in the Torino Process, on average. In contrast, adults who are at risk because of long-term unemployment are much more likely to benefit from access to learning (SPI of 63) than their peers in other countries, on average, just like those with migrant background. National authorities also report of strong performance in support of economically inactive adults in this domain of monitoring.

Table 7 shows the evolution of monitoring results between 2023 and 2024 for Kyrgyzstan and for the international average, by broad age group (youth and adults), by gender, and by socioeconomic background of learners.

The data suggests a decline in the international benchmark of system performance regarding access across all groups of youth learners. The most concerning result in the domain of access to learning, however, lies in the national data for Kyrgyzstan and concerns adult females, who appear to be at particular disadvantage in terms of opportunities for learning. This is in strong contrast with the overall increase in performance between 2023 and 2024 in support of access for adults across the board of countries participating in the Torino Process.

**TABLE 7. ACCESS - CHANGE IN SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, SPECIFIC GROUPS OF LEARNERS, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2023 – 2024)**

Population of learners	SPI score: national	Change from 2023 to 2024: national	SPI score: international average	Change from 2023 to 2024: international average
Youth: females	75	0	66	-1.04
Youth: disadvantaged	75	0	66	-0.29
Youth: migrants	75	0	66	-0.91
<b>Youth: average</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>-2.17</b>
Adults: females	13	0	33	0.73
Adults: long-term unemployed	63	0	52	0.15
Adults: economically inactive	75	0	45	2.00
Adults: low or no education	50	0	42	4.91
Adults: migrants	75	0	54	1.00
<b>Adults: average</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>6.19</b>

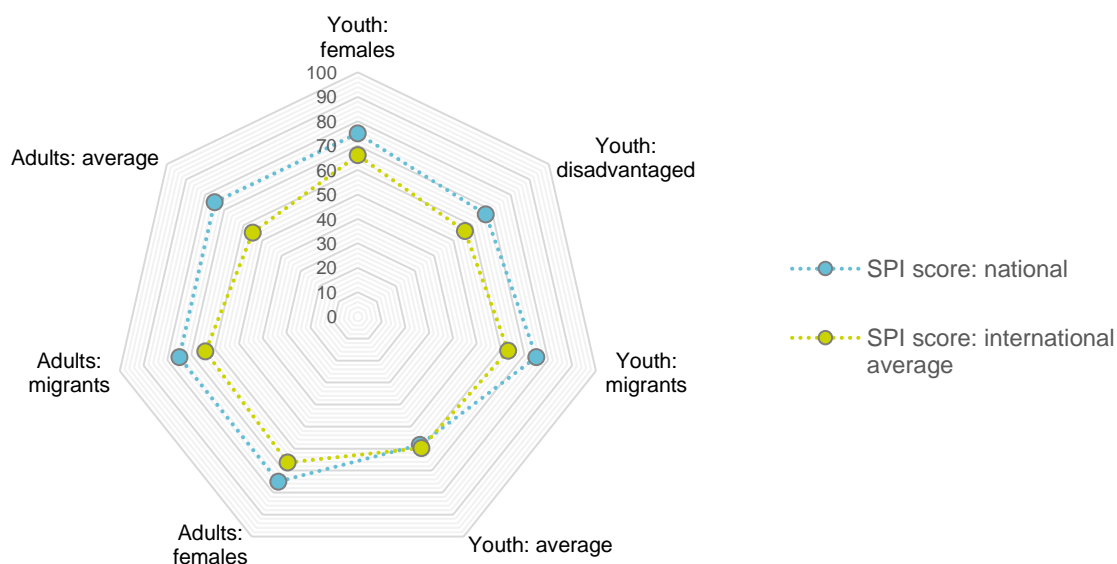
Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100

Source: Torino Process monitoring database

Several of the SPIs in the Torino Process monitoring framework are dedicated to assessing the effectiveness of policies and systems in fostering the progression and graduation of learners. Once enrolled, are learners – in particular learners at risk – given the support they need to move forward and achieve their educational goals?

The data on VET system performance in support of participation and graduation in Kyrgyzstan provides a more balanced picture between learner groups than performance in the domain of access (Figure 8). In 2023, national authorities reported of results that are consistently above the international average. This pattern of self-reported relative strength holds even though in 2024 the international averages for youth and adults have increased in this domain across all groups of learners of special interest (Table 8).

**FIGURE 8. SYSTEM PERFORMANCE IN SUPPORT OF PARTICIPATION OF SPECIFIC GROUPS OF LEARNERS, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2024)**



Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100

Source: Torino Process monitoring database

**TABLE 8. PARTICIPATION - CHANGE IN SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, SPECIFIC GROUPS OF LEARNERS, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2023 – 2024)**

Population of learners	SPI score: national	Change from 2023 to 2024: national	SPI score: international average	Change from 2023 to 2024: international average
Youth: females	75	0	66	1.24
Youth: disadvantaged	67	0	56	0.84

Youth: migrants	75	0	63	0.89
<b>Youth: average</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>-1.44</b>
Adults: females	75	0	66	0.39
Adults: migrants	75	0	64	-0.35
<b>Adults: average</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>-1.19</b>

*Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100*

Source: Torino Process monitoring database

For youth, it is notable that system performance in support of the successful participation of female learners (SPI of 75), socioeconomically disadvantaged youth (SPI of 67), and learners with a migrant background (SPI of 75) is reported as being much stronger than for the average learner in Kyrgyzstan (SPI of 58). VET performance is similarly strong for adults irrespective of the learner group. At the same time there was a decline of 1.19 points in the international average for participation of adult learners in education and training, which may indicate that at least some countries in the Torino Process sample may be experiencing difficulties in retaining adult participants in education.

### **Female learners**

The legal framework in Kyrgyzstan ensures that access to IVET programmes is not restricted by gender, aligning with national laws that mandate non-discriminatory access to education. On the surface, this translates into high female participation: female learners, both young and adult, show a higher rate of opting for VET than other learners, on average (Figure 7).

According to information provided in 2023 by national authorities, these results mask important nuances. Despite solid system performance, societal stereotypes persist, influencing the choice of trades among male and female students. Over the past decade, the IVET system has seen a consistent gender distribution, with female students typically underrepresented in trades that do not align with traditional gender roles. This underrepresentation may be attributed to the perceived attractiveness of certain trades based on societal norms rather than the actual opportunities they may present. Traditionally gendered trades such as cooking and sewing attract predominantly female students, while mechanical and construction trades attract male students.

However, these stereotypes are beginning to shift, evidenced by a growing number of male students entering traditionally female-dominated fields and vice versa. Efforts to diversify the trade options and update career guidance systems are ongoing, aiming to challenge these stereotypes and encourage more gender-balanced participation across different trades. Furthermore, the updated Career guidance for IVET and SVE emphasizes gender-inclusive principles, obligating educational providers to combat gender stereotypes and promote equal opportunities. Despite these measures, the number of female students in technical and heavy-industry sectors remains low, reflecting broader cultural influences that shape educational and career choices.

Once enrolled in a training programme, female learners can also expect an environment which is conducive to engagement and progression (Figure 8), which highlights a strong performance for a learner group with which many countries in the Torino Process struggle – retaining female learners and helping them to progress. And yet, while the VET system supports gender equality in access and educational opportunities, in practice student retention and completion rates reveals a more complex situation influenced by gender, socio-economic factors, and cultural norms.

Despite legal guarantees of equal access to education for all genders, practical challenges persist. Female learners, in particular, face unique risks that can interrupt their education, such as the societal expectations around marriage and childbirth. These life events significantly impact their ability to continue and complete their studies unless education remains a prioritized value within their family structures. Even when such interruptions occur, some female students manage to resume their education and successfully complete their programs with substantial family support.

Conversely, male students often face pressure to prematurely end their education due to the economic need to support their families, which is a common expectation for young men in many communities. This economic pressure sometimes leads to dropout, similar to the challenges faced by their female counterparts from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

The complexities of the dropout phenomenon are further highlighted by the lack of gender-differentiated data for expulsion or repeated studies in VET settings. This lack of detailed data masks the nuanced experiences of students and the differential impact of various dropout causes on different genders.

In general, the overall participation of women in the labour market and their engagement in lifelong learning opportunities is reported to reflect a relatively balanced gender distribution, suggesting that structural barriers in VET do not significantly hinder female participation. However, cultural stereotypes and personal circumstances, such as marriage or family obligations, continue to impact educational trajectories for female students, potentially influencing their ability to complete their studies.

### ***Disadvantaged learners: youth***

In Kyrgyzstan, the VET system has developed a range of supportive measures specifically targeted at disadvantaged youth, which aligns with the national policy to ensure broader access to vocational education and support for socio-economically vulnerable groups (Figure 7). According to national authorities, this approach is informed by the historical context where vocational education is often seen as a viable path for those from challenging backgrounds, including children from multiple-children and low-income families, orphans, and those with disabilities.

State policies facilitate the inclusion of these groups by offering scholarships, meals, and dormitory accommodations, making VET an economically viable option for families that otherwise might not afford to educate their children. This has positioned IVET as a socially oriented choice that alleviates family burdens and prepares students for quick entry into the labour market, contributing positively to the income of their families.

Furthermore, VET institutions, particularly those located in rural and remote areas, are strategically placed to reduce transportation and accommodation expenses, which is a significant factor in enabling access for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This geographical accessibility of IVET programs underscores the system's alignment with the needs of its most economically vulnerable learners.

The VET system also provides a conducive environment for the participation and progression of most learners who are at a disadvantage (Figure 8). Once disadvantaged youth enrol in a VET course, they are even more likely to find opportunities to engage, advance, and graduate than other groups of learners in VET, on average. This emphasis on accessibility and progression seems indicative of a concerted effort to remove barriers for disadvantaged youth and support them towards graduation.

### *Learners at risk: adults*

The monitoring evidence suggests that VET in Kyrgyzstan is on a positive trajectory in terms of providing access and maintaining quality and relevance for adults at risk of disadvantage, yet it also highlights opportunities for policy improvement, as some of these groups of learners are more likely to benefit from adequate support and opportunity for learning than others.

While the VET system is highly accessible for adults at risk of disadvantage, including the long-term unemployed and those with low or no educational attainment (Dimension A.1), there are nuances in how these groups access and benefit from the system that could be improved through more tailored strategies. The evidence suggests that the long-term unemployed often enter VET to switch careers or enhance their skills, a pathway supported by short-term courses offered in high-demand trades. These courses, which focus on practical skills like cooking, construction, and ICT, are crucial as they align with immediate employment opportunities in the labour market.

Although innovative solutions targeting access and participation are equally focused on all three groups of at-risk adults, the success of innovation aimed at economically inactive adults has been relatively subdued. There is a need for more tailored strategies that better facilitate the engagement of this difficult-to-reach group in learning. While VET is instrumental in supporting active labour market policies overall, this segment of the population requires additional effort to fully benefit from the available opportunities. It must also be noted that overall, this is an area of notable challenge for most countries in the Torino Process.

According to national authorities, the economic participation of these adults post-training is influenced by various factors, including the actual job availability and the match between the skills acquired and those demanded by employers. For those with low or no educational attainment, access to higher levels of vocational training remains a challenge unless they complete secondary education equivalency, which is available through IVET systems integrated with general education curricula. This integration helps address the educational barriers faced by disadvantaged adults, providing them with the necessary qualifications to progress in VET or enter the workforce with a better skill set.

### *Learners by country of origin*

Youth with migrant background have access to learning at a level that exceeds the broader learner average, indicating that the VET system is providing effective entry points for this group (Figure 7). System support for the participation and progression of first-generation migrants is high as well, suggesting that once enrolled, first-generation migrants are likely to continue and succeed within the VET pathway (Figure 8).

According to official information, the legal framework in Kyrgyzstan provides comprehensive support for immigrants' access to education across all stages of vocational education and training (VET), including initial, secondary, and higher vocational education. According to the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic 'On external migration' and 'On the legal status of foreign citizens in the Kyrgyz Republic,' immigrants, both foreign citizens and stateless persons, are entitled to education and training services on a contractual basis, with fees for migrants at vocational schools (VSs) being the same as for Kyrgyzstan citizens.

Despite the openness of laws, the actual participation of migrant students in VET programs, particularly in short-term courses, is not distinctly recorded, blending into the general statistics of foreign students. For example, in 2022, a total of 301 ethnic Kyrgyz from other countries, including 162 females, benefited from state-funded quotas, demonstrating the state's support for this group.

Additionally, 89 foreign citizens attended short-term courses at vocational schools, illustrating a moderate level of attractiveness of VET programs to migrants.

For CVET, migrants can also enrol based on contractual terms. The accessibility of these programs is further evidenced by the significant increase in the number of foreign students at universities, suggesting an attractive and open educational environment.

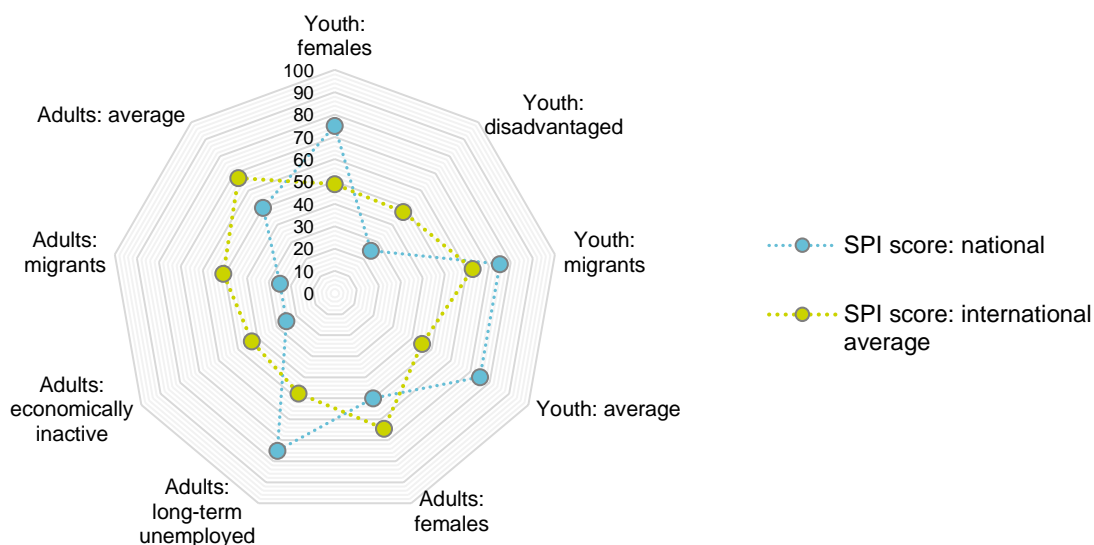
### 2.3.2 Quality and relevance

#### Overall results

The success of VET in Kyrgyzstan in delivering foundational skills and competences varies across learner groups, depending to a large extent on their socio-economic background. For some learners, such as youth, it exceeds the average performance of other countries in the Torino Process; for others, particularly adults, it falls well behind (Figure 9).

System performance is above average for all young learners in the categories covered in this section, except for youth at a socioeconomic disadvantage. Female and migrant youth who have opted for VET both have steady prospects of receiving foundational skills and competences, at a level comparable to those of youth in general. In contrast, the SPI results suggest that disadvantaged youth in VET continue to experience significant challenges in terms of quality and relevance of learning.

**FIGURE 9. SYSTEM PERFORMANCE IN SUPPORT OF QUALITY AND RELEVANCE FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS OF LEARNERS, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2024)**



Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100

Source: Torino Process monitoring database

The quality of skills and competences of adults at risk, on the other hand, is uneven. The data suggest that Kyrgyzstan may be facing challenges in ensuring high-quality skills and competences among certain adult groups, including economically inactive adults, those with migrant backgrounds, and particularly female learners. Unlike these groups at risk, the group of long-term unemployed

individuals seem to receive relatively effective support in developing skills and competences (Figure 9). This may reflect successful targeted interventions or support mechanisms aimed at reintegrating long-term unemployed adults into the workforce.

Adults overall have a lower-than-average performance score, which suggests that the adult population as a whole is not achieving strong performance in skills and competences. It is also indicative that current efforts to provide good quality skills and competences do not extend uniformly to the wider adult population.

The analysis of changes from 2023 to 2024 reveals a shifting international landscape that reframes the interpretation of Kyrgyzstan's national performance relative to other countries (Table 9), despite the static scores in Kyrgyzstan across all groups in that period.

System performance in support of quality of learning for youth females (national SPI of 75 vs. international average of 49, with a -6.54-point decline internationally) and adults overall (national SPI of 50 vs. international average of 67, with a -4.72-point decline internationally) now appears stronger in relative terms due to notable declines in the international averages for these groups. While the outcomes of Kyrgyzstan for these populations remain unchanged between 2023 and 2024, they are now closer to or even exceed the declining international benchmark. Despite positive changes in the international averages, the same holds for youth with a migrant background (national SPI of 75 vs. international average of 63, with a 2.29-point increase internationally) as well as for long-term unemployed adults (national SPI of 75 vs. international average of 48, with a 1.94-point increase internationally).

**TABLE 9. QUALITY AND RELEVANCE - CHANGE IN SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, SPECIFIC GROUPS OF LEARNERS, KYRGYZSTAN AND INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE (2023 – 2024)**

Population of learners	SPI score: national	Change from 2023 to 2024: national	SPI score: international average	Change from 2023 to 2024: international average
Youth: females	75	0	49	-6.54
Youth: disadvantaged	25	0	48	-1.24
Youth: migrants	75	0	63	2.29
<b>Youth: average</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>0.15</b>
Adults: females	50	0	64	-1.37
Adults: long-term unemployed	75	0	48	1.94
Adults: economically inactive	25	0	43	0.40
Adults: migrants	25	0	51	-0.78
<b>Adults: average</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>-4.72</b>

*Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100*

Source: Torino Process monitoring database

For disadvantaged youth (national SPI of 25 vs. international average of 48, with a -1.24 point decline internationally), Kyrgyzstan's position has improved slightly in relative terms due to the decline

in the international average. However, for economically inactive adults (national SPI of 25 vs. international average of 43, with a 0.40-point increase internationally), Kyrgyzstan's already low score now appears even weaker by comparison. This observation reinforces the conclusion from 2023 that there are persistent challenges in delivering skills and competences for economically inactive adults in particular, as other countries in the Torino Process sample seem to be making gradual progress.

### **Female learners**

The quality and relevance of skills and competences which prospective female learners can expect to receive does not depend on their age (Figure 9). Both young and adult female learners can expect to benefit from higher quality skills than other learners, on average. The statistical data shared by national authorities so far indicates that female students tend to perform well academically; they represent a smaller proportion of total dropouts compared to male students. However, the dropout rates due to academic failure are equally distributed between genders, reflecting that academic challenges are a universal issue rather than gender specific.

To address these challenges, there is a clear need for targeted strategies within the VET system to improve not only the accessibility of education for women as they transition from youth to adulthood but also to enhance support mechanisms for all students facing significant life changes or economic pressures. Implementing comprehensive support systems and maintaining flexible re-admission policies could mitigate the impact of these challenges, promoting higher completion rates across all demographics.

### **Disadvantaged learners: youth**

According to official information provided in 2023, the VET system in Kyrgyzstan is structured to support not just the acquisition of vocational skills but also the development of key competences necessary for successful participation in society. This includes offering courses in foreign languages, business, entrepreneurship, and law within the VET curricula, which are crucial for building a well-rounded skill set. Innovation in facilitating access and encouraging participation for disadvantaged youth seems to be very much in place as well (Figure 9).

Additionally, specific attention is given to individuals who may lack basic educational achievements, such as graduates from specialised schools for children with intellectual challenges and individuals from detention facilities. Efforts to integrate these groups involve not only vocational training but also basic education and socialization activities, aimed at enhancing their team-working capabilities and societal integration.

However, while VET appeals broadly to disadvantaged students by offering rapid routes to employment through in-demand trades like construction, cooking, and seamstress work, the socio-economic background of students still significantly impacts their educational outcomes, despite seemingly good results (Figure 9). Students from wealthier families generally have access to better primary and secondary education and additional resources, which often translates into higher motivation and better outcomes in VET as well. These students are also more likely to pursue higher education at universities immediately after school.

In contrast, socio-economically disadvantaged students, while they have access to VET, often face greater challenges in completing their education. According to official information, the academic preparation of these students is frequently inadequate for transitioning to higher levels of education, such as universities or colleges, which leads to a higher risk of academic failure in VET programs. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that there are successful exceptions, demonstrating that with adequate

support, even those from the most challenging backgrounds can achieve significant educational outcomes in VET.

### ***Learners at risk: adults***

The weaker participation in learning of economically inactive individuals which was described in the previous section, is not likely to be because of lack of quality and relevance on offer. In fact, the learning opportunities at the disposal of this group of prospective learners are reported to provide better than average quality of skills (Figure 9). For many prospective learners, especially those in rural areas, economic inactivity might stem from household duties or subsistence farming, rather than a straightforward disengagement from the labour market. Training programs for economically inactive adults are thus more effective when they include flexible learning options that consider the learners' schedules and responsibilities. Additionally, enhancing the attractiveness of VET for this group involves promoting courses that are relevant to their daily lives and future employment opportunities, such as courses in entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and specific trades that offer quick returns through self-employment or local industry engagement.

The participation of these groups in VET is also significantly influenced by the availability of funding and support measures such as scholarships, stipends, or subsidized training, which reduce the financial barriers to accessing education. Encouraging greater participation from economically inactive adults in VET could be achieved by extending these financial support mechanisms and through targeted outreach that communicates the potential personal and economic benefits of acquiring new skills.

### ***Learners by country of origin***

The monitoring results suggest that the quality and relevance of learning for students with migrant background (Figure 9) is a domain in which the VET system in Kyrgyzstan performs well, which implies that the skills and knowledge provided are closely aligned with the needs and expectations of this group of learners.

Despite these provisions, there are no specific records regarding the performance of migrant students or their integration into the workforce post-training, nor are there distinct statistics on their proficiency in basic skills and key competences. The approach to education for migrants is inclusive, offering equal opportunities without formal restrictions. However, certain groups, like the Pamir Kyrgyz, may face challenges due to lower levels of basic skills and language proficiency, highlighting the need for tailored support measures.

## **3. SUPPLEMENTARY SOURCES AND INFORMATION**

### **3.1 Links to background information and data**

The full collection of quantitative indicators collected for Kyrgyzstan for this 2024 round of monitoring can be found here:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1\\_MLc2HMvGfvrcDcQhC4PuF5a9tV\\_it5V/edit?usp=sharing&oid=110154518834912853011&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_MLc2HMvGfvrcDcQhC4PuF5a9tV_it5V/edit?usp=sharing&oid=110154518834912853011&rtpof=true&sd=true)

The full collection of qualitative responses to the country-specific questionnaire for Kyrgyzstan can be found here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XPtrfvzhy-AN1ux6GbAmF6RdfA9xfJRw/edit?usp=sharing&oid=110154518834912853011&rtpof=true&sd=true>

General information for the Torino Process as well as the reports and data of other participating countries, can be found here: <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/what-we-do/torino-process-policy-analysis-and-progress-monitoring>.<sup>6</sup>

## 3.2 Definitions, terminological clarifications, methodological limitations

This section provides an overview and definition of key terms in the Torino Process monitoring framework.

- **Youth:** Population in the official age of entrance and participation in initial VET programmes.
- **Adults:** Population of working age (15+ years of age) not enrolled in initial VET programmes.
- **Disadvantaged youth:** This refers to socio-economic disadvantage and describes youth with access to below-average levels of financial, social, cultural, and human capital resources.
- **Long-term unemployed:** Long-term unemployment refers to the number of people who are out of work and have been actively seeking employment for at least one year.
- **Inactive populations:** Adults of working age who are outside of the labour force, meaning that they are neither employed nor registered as unemployed (that is, seeking employment)
- **Lifelong learning:** any learning activity undertaken throughout life, to improve knowledge, skills/competences and/or qualifications for personal, social and/or professional reasons.
- **System performance:** describes the extent to which the VET system delivers against a targeted selection of national and international obligations (commitments) to learners and other stakeholders in support of learning through life (lifelong learning - LLL).
- **Initial VET:** Vocational education and training carried out in the formal system of initial education (usually upper or post-secondary) before entering working life.
- **Continuing VET:** Formal or non-formal vocational education and training carried out after initial VET and usually after the beginning of working life.
- **Adult education:** Adult education or learning may refer to any formal, non-formal, or informal learning activity, both general and vocational, undertaken by adults after leaving initial education and training.

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<sup>6</sup> The Torino Process monitoring reports and data will be released gradually in the period January-February 2024 in the order in which countries submit their evidence and the reports are being finalised with them.