

FLASH REPORT

Event name

Seminar: “Development and maintenance of occupational standards in Azerbaijan – A practical handbook for stakeholders”, 14 March 2019, Baku, Azerbaijan (Hyatt Regency Hotel, 1033 Izmir Street)

Main objective/s

To discuss, amend and validate new guidelines for developing and maintaining occupational standards in Azerbaijan with all the potential users. Participants are introduced with the Guidelines, elaborated by the Ministry of Labour and Social protection, and can put in practice the information provided in it.

Background

Occupational standards are the starting point for many processes setting the minimal requirements for performing an occupation. They can be used by companies in developing job descriptions, recruitment, staff performance and training as well as HR management systems. They can be the basis of relevant competency based curricula for vocational and higher education and for training programmes for job seekers or for the upgrading of staff. These standards can also support for skills recognition. Currently, 1.000.000 workers in the in Azerbaijan are without qualifications.

With the support of World Bank project and in consultation with representatives of sectors and public organisations, Azerbaijan developed close to 300 standards until 2014. After 2014, the development process slowed down as it depended on a small section of experts for occupational standards in the Ministry of Labour and voluntary contributions of sectors.

In 2017 ETF evaluated the development and use of standards. The fact that occupational standards were not regulated hindered systematic use of the standards. The evaluation showed that standards were used by companies but in the education sector only 25% of the standards had been used, exclusively for vocational education. Curricula developed from standards frequently lacked assessment approaches. Part of them could not be implemented.

The NQF Decree of July 2018 mentioned that qualifications for the labour market from level 3 to 7 needed to be based on occupational standards. EU projects are now developing and testing new qualification setting and curriculum development processes. Parliament allocated also a substantial budget for the development of standards. The Ministry of Labour drafted regulations for a more participative development process of occupational standards. This is the basis for the seminar organized with support of ETF for all relevant stakeholder groups.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT

The event was dedicated to a new way of developing occupational standards and included 65 stakeholders from companies, sectoral organisations, professional bodies, universities, line ministries, Ministries of Education, VET Agency, State Employment Service, and Ministry of Labour and Social Protection to explore their roles in the development of occupational standards based on a new procedure, that gives more importance to sectoral committees for skills development and to experts.

Any legal entity can come with the initiative requesting new standards but will have to justify their request. Sector Committees will prioritise the development of new standards and the review of existing standards. Experts in the occupation will be recruited by the Ministry of Labour to develop and validate the standards, before they are submitted for approval by sector committees. Approved standards are submitted for confirmation by the Collegium of the Ministry of Labour and published on the website.

Sector Committees will exist of representatives from the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, line ministries, social partners, sectoral organisations and where needed additional experts from the world of work and/ or education providers.

Examples of the occupational standards development processes and the role of sectors in the development of standards and in the assessment of competences from Turkey and Estonia were presented and discussed extensively with the stakeholders asking numerous questions to the Turkish and Estonian colleagues. Stakeholders then analysed their own roles in the process in WGs and checked these against the guidelines, coming up with suggestions for clarifications.

KEY OUTCOMES/CONCLUSIONS

Stakeholders are convinced of the importance of the new process and ready to engage. Some amendments were made to the guidelines that will be updated and submitted for approval to the Cabinet of Ministers.

The guidelines will be submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers in April 2019. Once adopted and entered into force, the new process will be launched as per guidelines. The target is to develop new occupational standards during 2019.

ETF contact person/s

Arjen Deij, Arjen.Deij@etf.europa.eu

Galyna Terzi, gte@etf.europa.eu

ETF Country Coordinator

Margareta Nikolovska, Margareta.Nikolovska@etf.europa.eu