



European Training Foundation

COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER 2020 UPDATE: MOLDOVA



A BRIEF SUMMARY OF KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN VET AND SKILLS AND EU AND DONOR COOPERATION DURING 2018–19

In 2018, the Centre for VET Policy Implementation was reorganised. VET policy reform is guided by the VET Development Strategy 2013–20, which aims to modernise vocational and technical education to increase economic competitiveness. Some VET schools merged and 12 new training centres of excellence were created.

In 2017, the government passed education and training legislation, including laws on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and sectoral skills committees' activities. Work continued on updating the classifier of occupations based on international standards, new nomenclature for professions and specialisations, quality assurance mechanisms for qualifications and recognition of qualification procedures. The new Employment Promotion Law (June 2018) promotes active policies to increase employability through training.

EU budget support (EUR 25 million) ended in 2017, with the last disbursement blocked due to the critical state of democracy in the country. A new EU twinning project on VET is planned for 2019–21.

GIZ, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Austrian Development Agency and the Liechtenstein Development Service established an international donor committee that supports dual education. The ETF contributed by developing a quality assurance methodology for work-based learning (WBL). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) assisted the youth skills observatory, while the International Labour Organization (ILO) supported the National Employment Agency (NEA).

In July 2018, the World Bank approved an Economic Governance Development Policy Operation for Moldova (USD 30 million) to support structural reform, higher education development and the NEA.

The new EU-funded Twinning project was launched in 2019. The main aims of the project are:

- to strengthen the institutional and operational capacities and staff competences of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research (ANACEC)
- to continue the implementation of the NQF in Moldova
- to build capacities for effective cooperation between VET providers and the private sector
- to encourage VET teachers in centres of excellence to become multipliers through pedagogical training

The new World Bank intervention in the area of education (Skills for Jobs) is still under negotiation.



AN ASSESSMENT OF MID-TERM PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ETF'S 2020 OBJECTIVES

In 2019, the ETF focused its support on the areas of qualifications and sector committees. The overall idea is to engage all the key stakeholders that have responsibility for these areas: the NQF unit in the Ministry of Education, the sector committees and the Ministry of Labour. The ETF provides capacity building support to show these institutions how they should cooperate in the areas of occupational standards development and skills needs identification.

In addition to this main area of work, the ETF has provided ad hoc capacity building support to the various stakeholders. The NQF unit benefited from a peer learning visit to Slovenia that covered the topic of the register of qualifications. The ETF conducted an analysis of the sector committees to determine main obstacles to their effective operation. The analysis was shared with the main stakeholders (Ministry of Labour, sector committees, Ministry of Education) and led to a decision to set up a technical secretariat that would help sector committees to implement the functions foreseen by the new law.

In 2019, the ETF continued to support the Labour Market Observatory (LMO). Following an analysis of the responsibilities of the LMO, the ETF agreed to support the LMO in the development of one specific report (an analysis of job vacancies in the last five years). This ended the multiannual capacity building support provided by the ETF to the LMO. The ETF will remain a reference institution for the LMO and the Ministry of Labour, but ETF support will take different forms other than capacity building support to develop technical deliverables.

All the above actions were in line with EU and Moldovan policy and considered the main needs of local institutions to enhance policy development and implementation.

During 2018, the ETF helped the EU Delegation to design a new VET twinning project scheduled for mid-2019. To complement national policy development and avoid overlaps, the twinning project was designed in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education's VET department and the EU's high-level adviser on education.

New members of the stakeholders' network were contacted immediately and involved in ETF activities. The ETF aims to establish synergies among stakeholders through common activities for sector committees, ministries and other relevant actors.

The priority of the ETF's mid-term intervention strategy 2017–20 is to provide policy advice, establish synergies within qualifications, skills anticipation and VET policy development to help Moldova implement its VET strategy. The ETF's strategic orientation in Moldova has been fully confirmed.



ACTIONS PLANNED FOR 2020

All ETF actions will be in line with the 2017–20 strategic orientation and based on previous results. ETF support for the EU Delegation will focus on VET reform implementation, in cooperation with ministries and EU education and employment advisers.

The ETF will provide input for the EU Delegation during implementation of the VET twinning project (2019–21). It will support the EU-Moldova policy dialogue by producing annual Country Fiches for the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL), assisting bilateral subcommittees and following up on the Mobility Partnership.

In 2020, the ETF will facilitate a sectoral dialogue on how to use Torino Process recommendations in the context of the overall reform of skills development in Moldova.

Specific objective 1: Support implementation of the NQF and sectoral skills committees

In 2020, the ETF will continue to support the NQF unit in the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, and the sector committees in establishing coordination mechanisms to ensure that qualifications are developed in line with labour market needs and structured around occupational profiles developed by the sector committees.

Specific objective 2: Support development of a systematic and coordinated approach to skills anticipation

The ETF will finalise the technical support for the LMO in 2019. In 2020, the ETF will facilitate the discussion among the key stakeholders involved – the LMO, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education – on improving mechanisms to turn the recommendations of the labour market studies developed by the LMO and other donors into policy decisions.

Specific objective 3: Advise on VET innovation and integrated regional development

The ETF is not actively working on supporting WBL. Following discussions with the Ministry of Education and GIZ it has been agreed that the latter would take the lead in supporting the ministry in relation to this topic.

NEW Specific objective 4: Support a review of overall VET governance by using the ETF multilevel governance methodology

At the request of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, the ETF will facilitate a revision of the overall VET system using the multilevel governance toolkit in order to inform the development of operational plans for the new Education Strategy 2020–2027.

