

COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER 2020 UPDATE: RUSSIA

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

The European Training Foundation (ETF) support in the Russia Federation is framed in the context of European Union (EU) - Russia cooperation. The European Council supports projects in Russia that facilitate people-to-people contacts, mainly in the fields of scientific research, education and cross-border cooperation.

The EU and Russia recognise each other as key partners on the international scene and cooperate on a number of issues of mutual interest.

Both the EU and Russia have a long record of cooperation on issues of bilateral and international concern including climate change, migration, drugs trafficking, trafficking of human beings, organised crime, counter-terrorism, non-proliferation, the Middle East peace process, and protection of human rights.

Ongoing EU–Russia cooperation covers four policy areas, referred to as common spaces:

- economy and the environment
- freedom, security and justice (all negotiations and high-level dialogues are currently suspended, except technical-level meetings)
- external security
- research and education, including cultural aspects.

After the March 2018 presidential elections, the EU reconfirmed its policy on Russia. This is centred on five guiding principles: full implementation of the Minsk agreement, which is a precondition for lifting sanctions and strengthening relations with the EU's Eastern Partners including Ukraine and Central Asia; strengthening the EU's resilience; selective engagement with Russia; increasing support of civil society; and promoting people-to-people contacts.

EU–Russia cooperation in education and training is covered by the EU–Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (Article 63).

In May 2018, the new government reorganised public institutions and the Ministry of Education and Science was divided into the Ministry of Education, for general and vocational education, and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.



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

The ETF's mid-term intervention strategy in Russia was confirmed and promotes people-to-people contacts through implementation of the Torino Process: a system-wide policy analysis and progress monitoring exercise implemented by the ETF periodically.

In Russia, policy uptake of the Torino Process is high and has been increasing over recent rounds. The process is seen as a tool for improving the efficiency of vocational education and training (VET) policy development and as a monitoring and policy-learning exercise, mainly at subnational level.

The fifth round of the Torino Process has been implemented in 2019, and was supported by the national authority with the nomination of the Federal Institute for Education Development as being responsible of the national report. In particular at subnational level, it provided higher added value for policy development, since it had a broader scope including human development issues and VET policy responses. The regions involved in the implementation are Moscow, Tver, Samara, Kazan and Ufa.

ACTIONS PLANNED FOR 2020

During the implementation of the Torino Process in 2019, two main policy areas were identified as the most critical: qualifications and digitalisation. For this reason, the ETF has been requested to organise two events to share EU experience and practice in these areas. Therefore, Russia will be one of the participants in the pilot action organised by the ETF to work on a differentiation approach towards country work in early 2020.

Close involvement of the EU Delegation will be ensured in all ETF actions.

