



ETF STRATEGY 2014-20

Draft 04.10.2012

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the European Training Foundation's (ETF) strategic planning for the next financial period 2014-20.

The first section introduces the ETF's mandate, role, geographical and thematic remit. It also sets out the ETF's position in relation to European policy and partner country contexts.

The second section describes the vision and mission statements, together with the guiding principles, which respond to the European and partner country challenges and needs.

The next sections (3 to 5) present four goals for the whole period: two goals linked to the ETF's core mission -- human capital development; one goal for partnership and communication and one for organisational development. Each section provides a short explanation, the strategic objectives and planned actions for achieving them.

Section 6 explains the impact that the ETF plans to achieve by implementing the seven work programmes of the period, which will be based on these goals and objectives.

Section 7 presents the working methods and approaches the ETF will use.

A visual summary of the strategy and targeted results concludes the document.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	BACKGROUND	5
	ETF partner countries	5
	The ETF's stakeholders	6
	The ETF and the EU policy context	6
	The ETF and the partner country context	8
2.	ETF VISION, MISSION AND PRINCIPLES OF ACTION	11
	Vision	11
	Mission	11
	Principles of action	11
3.	HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT	13
	Evidence-informed policy making	13
	European Union policy support	15
4.	PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION	17
5.	ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT	19
6.	TARGETED RESULTS BY 2020	21
7.	METHODS OF INTERVENTION	23
8.	INTERVENTION LOGIC	25

1. BACKGROUND

The European Training Foundation (ETF) is an agency of the European Union (EU) which aims to contribute, in the context of EU external relations policies, to improving human capital development (HCD) in neighbouring countries. This is achieved through work which supports the lifelong development of individuals' skills and competences by reforming vocational education and training (VET) systems.

By supporting human capital development, the ETF contributes to social and economic development, and long-term stability in the neighbouring countries of the EU. The agency helps partner countries to provide the skills necessary to foster productivity and employment and support social cohesion by promoting civic participation. The ETF believes that a holistic approach to learning – one that encompasses every aspect of education and training throughout an individual's lifetime – is the best way of helping transition and developing economies to increase their prosperity, create sustainable growth and encourage social inclusion.

The added value of the ETF's interventions derives from its understanding of the policy environment, its network of experts, and its prompt, flexible response to requests. The ETF is a neutral and non-commercial organisation with unique expertise in developing human capital and its links to employment. In the context of its external relations policies, the ETF contributes to the EU added value in development cooperation through its work on policy development, dissemination of good practice, cooperation and coordination with international actors and support to EU Delegations.

The ETF works on:

- advancing access to VET in a lifelong learning perspective, based on quality assured, transparent qualifications;
- enhancing the employability of individuals through inter-alia entrepreneurial learning, VET-business cooperation and smoother school-to-work transitions;
- developing multi-level and inclusive governance in education and training;
- upgrading VET providers and teachers/trainers; and
- boosting capacity for innovation in vocational education and training.

On a broader level, the ETF offers information and analysis on human capital development in the partner countries through the policy reviews of the Torino Process. This is the basis for its support to the partner countries as well as for its contribution to the design and delivery of EU assistance. The ETF supports institutions in partner countries to manage human capital development themselves and encourages networking and the sharing of information, experience and good practice, both between the EU and partner countries, and among partner countries.

ETF partner countries

- In the context of the EU's external relations policies, the ETF works with three groups of countries¹:
- Those in the Enlargement region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo², the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey, as well as Iceland.

¹ Iceland does not receive assistance from the ETF. However, representatives from Iceland participate in regional activities in the Enlargement region. Israel and Russia do not receive assistance from the ETF but cooperate in some activities, according to the partnership agreement between these two countries and the EU. Croatia is expected to become an EU Member State by July 2013.

² This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence - hereinafter 'Kosovo'.

- Those covered by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Republic of Moldova, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine, as well as Israel and Russia.
- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, in the framework of EU development cooperation in Central Asia.

ETF support may also be extended to other countries, at the request of the EU and with the approval of the Governing Board.

The ETF's stakeholders

As a centre of expertise, the ETF works closely with various actors to facilitate cooperation, knowledge development and exchanges of experience in education and training. These include:

- policymakers, practitioners, and civil society representatives, in particular social partners in the EU, its Member States and partner countries and territories;
- EU agencies such as the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound);
- other European bodies and stakeholders such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB) as well as the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the Committee of Regions (CoR); and
- international organisations such as the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Asian, African and Islamic Development Banks.

The ETF and the EU policy context

The EU's external relations policies and internal approaches to education and training and employment shape the ETF's cooperation with partner countries. EU internal approaches to education and training, as well as their external dimension, provide inspiration for partner countries reflecting on the future of their education and training systems.

The ETF will contribute to the EU 2020 Strategy in the external dimension of its three main priorities: smart growth, sustainable growth and inclusive growth, within its geographic and thematic mandate.

The key EU policy priorities for the period 2014-20 in human capital development in an external relations context are:

- investing in human capital;
- the EU as a global player;
- solidarity and investment for sustainable growth and employment; and
- responding to the challenges of migration

EU Member States and the European Commission strengthened co-operation in 2009 with the Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training (ET 2020), a follow-up to the Education and Training 2010 work programme launched in 2001. The approach recognises that high-quality pre-primary, primary, secondary, higher and vocational education and training are fundamental to Europe's success. However, in a rapidly changing world, lifelong learning needs to be a priority – it is the key to employment, economic success and allowing people to participate fully in society.

In this context, the ETF follows the conclusions of the Council priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training (VET) for 2011-20, as well as the flagship initiatives put forward by the European Commission - *Youth on the Move* and *An agenda for new skills and jobs* - to inform its work with partner countries. The Bruges Communiqué and its short-term deliverables are an important reference for the ETF's work, in particular for the conclusions of the country and regional analyses undertaken through the Torino Process. As decided in December 2010 by the representatives of the governments of the EU Member States and the European social partners "Exchanges and cooperation with potential candidate countries, with neighbourhood countries assisted by the ETF and with international organisations, particularly the OECD, the Council of Europe, the International Labour Organisation and UNESCO, should be strengthened"³ in the period 2011-20.

Furthermore, the Communication from the Commission on "A new impetus for European cooperation in vocational education and training to support the Europe 2020 strategy" indicates that the EU policy on VET "should be a subject for further policy dialogue and mutual learning with the international community, including both third countries and relevant international organisations. Structured cooperation could be launched with Neighbourhood countries and further extended with Enlargement countries with the support of ETF which has proven its value-added in supporting the development of VET curricula and quality teaching methodologies in these countries. The European common reference tools and the policy approaches provide an important reference for the modernisation of VET systems in partner countries, including for those involved in accession to the EU. This cooperation has potential to contribute to transnational collaboration, regional development, an improved management of legal mobility and to combat illegal migration."⁴

The candidate countries participate fully in the Copenhagen Process. The ETF, in cooperation with Cedefop, supports them in monitoring and reporting on the deliverables set in the Bruges Communiqué. More generally through the Torino Process, EU VET policy inspires the neighbouring countries, where the ETF supports the assessment of policy development needs and progress in the implementation of reforms.

The EU external relations policies guide the ETF's work. In particular, the Enlargement policy, the European Neighbourhood Policy (both the partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the southern Mediterranean and the Eastern Partnership, with eastern Europe) and the strategy for a new enhanced partnership with Central Asia define the priorities and modalities of EU partnerships with the ETF's partner countries.

- The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) will remain the financial pillar of the Enlargement Strategy, encompassing all aspects of internal policies and thematic issues. The aim is to ensure that candidate countries and potential candidates are fully prepared for possible accession by encouraging their adoption of emerging EU strategies and policies in their national priorities. The coherence between financial support and overall progress made in the implementation of the pre-accession strategy will be strengthened. The ETF supports the countries on their road to EU accession, particularly in terms of their human capital development. Updated regular annual progress reports will be issued in early autumn 2013 to illustrate progress in the countries.
- The joint communications "A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean" and "A response to a changing neighbourhood" set out priorities to revitalise the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and strengthen individual and regional relationships between the EU and its neighbourhood. The new approach is based on the principle of "more for more" or "more funds for more reforms", meaning that more funds will be available for countries engaging in political, democratic and economic reforms.

³ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/vocational/bruges_en.pdf

⁴ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0296:FIN:EN:PDF>

- More generally the EU development policy sets the agenda for change, with the promotion of decent work covering job creation, the guarantee of rights at work, social protection and social dialogue among its key priorities. VET, employment, enterprise, migration and regional development policies inspire the ETF's thematic work in the partner countries.
- The Council conclusions on "Increasing the Impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change" adopted on 14 May 2012 stress the importance of partnership between the EU and its Member States in delivering the support to partners to show how, under the rapidly changing global environment, EU development cooperation delivers clear results and impact on the ground and achieves greater effectiveness and better accountability for public spending. Vocational education and training is one of the key areas of EU development cooperation, and is considered important because it can directly contribute to building "partnerships for democracy and shared prosperity"⁵.

The ETF and the partner country context

Most of the ETF's partner countries are middle-income countries (12 lower-middle and 13 upper-middle) as defined by the World Bank⁶. The remainder are low-income (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) or high-income (Croatia, Iceland, and Israel).

The ETF's partner countries are experiencing rapid technological change, economic interdependence, a move towards free market economies, international migration, increasing calls for public accountability, and aspirations to active citizenship. They generally face structural challenges in education and training that require sustained policy management:

- **Vision for VET:** More than ever, VET systems are expected to fulfil a dual role (economic and social) in supporting sustainable development. VET policies need better anchorage to economic and industrial development policies, which should systematically pay attention to skills needs in their respective fields. The vision in partner countries is generally hampered by a narrow scope of VET (too often initial VET and formal), institutional fragmentation, rigid education and training architecture in some contexts, centralised governance, and uneven budget allocation. There is a need for a more direct articulation with other economic and social policies and multi-level and inclusive governance supported by social partnership and institutional capacity.
- **External efficiency:** Any country's VET system needs to correlate with the external environment within which it operates and respond to related signals or challenges. This involves the economy and the labour market (skills mismatch); social inclusion in the labour market, particularly for the most disadvantaged groups and the 'social demand for education', which means providing attractive learning pathways for all groups. ETF partner countries are faced with a common challenge of employment/employability – especially of youth and women. There is an increased awareness of the need to shift from supply-driven to demand-driven VET systems and the role of social partners for increased relevance, quality and responsiveness is often recognised but not fully operational. There is a lack of data, information systems, methods and instruments to ensure matching. The national qualifications systems/frameworks the countries have opted for as a key reform are expected to improve external efficiency (both economic and social). The skills needs identification, anticipation and matching is becoming a policy priority in all the countries in particular to tackle unemployment, especially of young people, and the informal economy through decent work and enhanced productivity.
- There is a high demand for higher education, while **VET remains an unattractive option** (due to the absence of job prospects, and dead-ends for vocational pathways in some countries). In some

⁵ The Joint Communication to the European Council, the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of regions- A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean COM(2011) 200 final

⁶ The groups are: low-income, USD 995 or less; lower-middle-income, USD 996–3 945; upper-middle-income, USD 3 946–12 195; and high-income, USD 12 196 or more.

of the ETF's partner countries women face unequal opportunities to access the labour market and although reach-out strategies exist for specific vulnerable groups, they are not mainstream.

- Internal quality and efficiency of initial and continuing VET delivery. Adult education (including continuing training) still needs a proper strategy. Quality has to be addressed in a systematic, holistic way. Although quality assurance mechanisms are being developed, they are not truly operational at all levels. Qualifications systems and frameworks and curriculum development are shifting promisingly towards competence-based approaches oriented to better addressing labour market skills needs. The issue of key competences and 'soft' skills as a means of achieving the social objectives of VET also need further consideration. Considering the relation between funds, time and effort used for a specific outcome in the VET systems, there is room for improving internal efficiency in most partner countries
- **Governance and accountability:** policies need to be more efficient and accountable by involving stakeholders at all levels (sectoral, local/regional, national and international) in objective setting, implementation and monitoring. They also need to be more impact-oriented and ensure the visibility of their results.

The diverse demographic, economic, political, cultural, historical, geo-political and social features of the partner countries also create significant challenges for education and training. The ETF therefore needs to offer a differentiated approach to support home-grown solutions that fit these specific contexts.

In recent years, as a result of their own efforts but also with the support of various international actors including the ETF, the partner countries have made significant progress in the VET policy area. VET has been progressively embedded in the broader socio-economic development of the countries. The links between VET and other important policies in the human capital development area, such as employment, competitiveness and social inclusion, have been recognised by an increasing number of policymakers and stakeholders. The development of strategies and legislation has been followed by implementation. Initial vocational education and training policy and delivery have been complemented with some developments in continuing vocational education and there is more and more awareness of the lifelong learning principle. More stakeholders have started to participate in VET policy development, from different ministries and state level institutions, to social partners and other civil society organisations, from central to regional to local levels. Experience has been gained and local expertise has been developed. Learning from such experience and examples of good practice within and between partner countries and the EU is an opportunity for further anchoring VET policies to economic and industry development policies, systematically paying attention to skills needs in their respective fields. A comprehensive, integrated vision of a lifelong learning perspective calls for institutional adaptation and greater fluidity, permeability and flexibility in education and training provision. Qualifications and quality assurance, VET and sustainable development, VET and the skills dimension of migration, governance and long term vision, work-based learning, entrepreneurial learning and social inclusion are the themes that will be high on the agenda for the period 2014-20. These will contribute to an improvement of external and internal efficiency as well as promoting innovation and creativity.

The ETF will seek to ensure that even more priority is given to VET and the contribution it can make to sustainable development through lifelong learning.

2. ETF VISION, MISSION AND PRINCIPLES OF ACTION

Vision

To make vocational education and training in the partner countries a driver for lifelong learning and sustainable development, with a special focus on competitiveness and social cohesion.

Mission

The ETF helps transition and developing countries to harness the potential of their human capital through the reform of education, training and labour market systems in the context of the EU's external relations policy.

Principles of action

- The ETF is an EU agency that provides impartial, non-commercial expertise on public policies for human capital development.
- The ETF encourages ownership and broad participation among relevant stakeholders. In this regard, the ETF supports consensus building and mutual learning among actors, thus connecting policy analysis and agreements about policy choices and implementation.
- The ETF believes in a holistic policymaking approach that takes into account the context of each country and is based on evidence. VET is considered in a broad context in terms of its links to employment, social inclusion, enterprise development, competitiveness and sustainable development.
- The ETF's priorities evolve constantly according to changes in its operational environment, EU priorities and specific requests from the European Union. The ETF focuses on priorities that produce high impact with the resources available.
- The ETF as an EU agency ensures consistency between its work in the partner countries and the its support to programming EU development cooperation instruments and projects.

3. HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Evidence-informed policymaking

Goal: To support partner country intelligence and capacities in all stages of the VET policy cycle bringing innovation and sustainable development.

The ETF's field of intervention is policy-driven development, in complementarity with other (local or international) actors working primarily with VET provision at local level. Both bottom-up and top-down solutions to partner country challenges are necessary and they can reinforce one another. Participative approaches and inclusive and effective governance arrangements allow this complementarity and comprehensive approach to policy development.

Policy analysis contributes to the development of partner country intelligence for policy planning, formulation, adoption, implementation, evaluation and review. The ETF's key methods are capacity development, networking and collaborative learning from experience with national stakeholders to develop and implement VET policies while taking into account EU strategies, policies, processes, approaches and instruments (i.e. EU 2020, Education and Training 2020, Small Business Act, Danube Strategy, Migration and Mobility External Policy, etc...).

In the period 2014-20, the ETF will reinforce this core business by continuously enhancing the information and analysis included in the Torino Process reports. The objective is that, over time, all participating countries take ownership of the Torino Process and put collaborative processes in place to design or review their policies. The ETF will assist partner countries in monitoring progress achieved towards the goals set in their own strategies. It will provide tailor made assistance, extend its outreach to cover more stakeholders and implement large scale innovative experiments. The ETF will continue to facilitate knowledge exchange and sharing through collaborative learning processes and it will reinforce the use of electronic communication tools including social media. Through the improvement of vocational education and training it is expected to contribute to the lifelong development of individuals' skills and competences, increasing their employability and the social cohesion of the partner countries.

The ETF will focus on (i) regular country policy analyses in the field of VET through the Torino Process; (ii) supporting the development of comprehensive VET policies and strategies or components of them (iii) implementing activities in the priority policy areas through specific projects (e.g. transition from school to work, migration surveys).

The ETF particularly wants to promote innovation and creativity in the tools, methodologies and approaches to how it works with partner countries and stakeholders, the policy solutions the countries develop as well as their implementation.

To achieve these three aims, the ETF will promote a policy learning approach and seek to engage stakeholders' networks at country level as essential vehicles for the development of comprehensive and integrated VET policies and strategies. Embedded in these activities, the ETF will implement its capacity development actions learning from EU VET policies and approaches, and sharing good practice from the EU and other partner countries.

The ETF will provide its capacity development actions both by fostering transnational/regional cooperation in specific areas of lifelong learning as well as working at national and local levels within specific countries.

Strategic objectives	Actions
1.1. Reinforce the provision of coherent, continuous, specific and well-informed assistance and capacity building in the area of policy analysis and advice	Strengthen the holistic approach of the contribution of VET in a lifelong learning perspective to sustainable development, focusing on competitiveness and social inclusion.
	Support policy development based on evidence and participation of all relevant stakeholders and shared vision
	Keep abreast of wider international development in human capital development and focus on areas in which more added-value can be brought to the partner countries
	Create learning opportunities for networks of stakeholders in the area of policy analysis
1.2. Build capacity in VET policy development	Improve policy co-ordination processes among stakeholders and across levels of government in the formulation of policies
	Create learning opportunities networks of stakeholders in implementation of the policy cycle
	Develop methodologies and tools to increase capacity within partner country institutions and in networks in implementation of the policy cycle
	Contribute to VET policy adoption and related regulatory frameworks in partner countries
1.3 Build capacity in VET policy implementation	Promote stocktaking analysis and policy initiatives in a selected number of topics in each country
	Create policy learning opportunities through experimental actions to inform large scale policy implementation
	Disseminate good practice in policy implementation from partner countries and the EU
1.4. Strengthen support to monitoring and evaluation within the countries	Assess the effectiveness of the implementation of policy measures in partner countries
	Build capacity to review policies based on lessons learnt from assessments, monitoring and evaluation practices

2. European Union policy support

Goal: To support the external dimension of EU policies in human capital development

The ETF is the EU's centre of expertise in the external dimension of internal EU policies in the field of human capital development.

Support to the European institutions and bodies is provided on request in the different phases of the EU project-programme cycle. This includes: (i) participation and provision of expertise input to programming, identification, formulation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of EU interventions; (ii) monitoring and/or assessments of VET system developments in countries where the EU is supporting the sector.

Support to EU institutions on assessing progress in the implementation of EU policies with an external dimension, i.e. VET, employment, enterprise, or migration.

The ETF also supports the EU institutions and bodies in their policy dialogue with the partner countries or in the international fora and working groups (i.e. G20 Development Working Group (DWG) in the Human Resource Development Pillar, through the Inter-Agency Group. This includes: (i) preparation of background reports and direct expert support to policy dialogue meetings between the EU and the partner countries; and, (ii) annual reporting, for example as an input to EU progress reports in pre-accession or neighbourhood countries.

The ETF will continue to provide this support to the EU institutions and bodies with a focus on flexibility, quality and responsiveness, while ensuring that the EU macro-level priorities at regional or thematic levels are covered.

Strategic objectives	Actions
2.1 Strengthen EU assistance in VET in the partner countries	Support programming, identification and formulation of EU assistance through the different instruments
	Accompany and advise partner countries and the Commission on the implementation of EU funded projects and programmes (e.g. by participating in steering committees).
	Foster the links between EU funded projects and programmes and national reform agendas
2.2 Strengthen the external dimension of EU HCD policies	Contribute to EU policy developments in the field of human capital development by highlighting its external dimension
	Promote the adaptability of EU policies to the partner country contexts and needs as inspiration for policy development
2.3 Provide a platform for information and good practice exchange between the EU institutions and bodies and the partner countries at national and regional levels	Provide thematic input to regional policy dialogue organised by EU institutions and bodies in the field of VET
	Provide regular information and analysis on human capital development in the partner countries to the EU institutions and bodies
	Disseminate information and encourage networking and exchange of experience and good practice between the EU and partner countries in human capital development issues
	Build the capacity of partner countries to effectively participate in policy dialogue with the EU

4. PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION

Goal: To strengthen co-operation and communication with key stakeholders playing an active role in human capital development

As a centre of expertise and in line with the EU policy orientation as presented in the EU policy context section above, the ETF works closely with various institutions to promote and facilitate cooperation, knowledge development and exchanges of experience in education and training. To maximise its potential, the ETF supports the coordinated action of multiple actors.

In the period 2014-20 the ETF will strengthen its links with European institutions, bodies and agencies including the European Commission, The European Council, the European Parliament, the External Action Service, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the European Investment Bank (EIB).

The ETF will also continue to enhance the participation of the Member State representatives in its Governing Board in the ETF's activities with a particular focus on the content of Governing Board meetings and consultation on planning and reporting documents; disseminating information and encouraging networking and the exchange of experience and good practice in human capital development issues in the ETF's partner countries.

The ETF will also enhance its relations with international organisations to promote partnership and cooperation, and to exchange experience and information in its operational field. These include the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Council of Europe and the Asian, African and Islamic Development Banks.

In this context, in the period 2014-20, the ETF will create the conditions for effective aid development that others such as EU institutions and Member States can later build upon, including national authorities and other donors, following the principles agreed in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation⁷ (December 2011).

At the same time, the ETF will seek to coordinate its activities with the diversity of development co-operation actors active in the partner countries. Through its stakeholder cooperation approaches it will contribute to effective human capital development

In the ETF partner countries the focus will be on different partner country stakeholders such as policymakers, practitioners, universities as well as other higher education and civil society representatives with a special focus on social partners, national and regional networks and platforms.

In its overall communication in 2014-20 the ETF will strategically develop the quality and use of on-line tools and will encourage the same in the partner countries. The ETF aims to become a "hub" for innovative approaches, best practice collection and social media as an instrument for communication.

⁷ <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/54/15/49650173.pdf>

Strategic objectives	Actions
3.1 Enhance co-operation and communication with EU institutions, bodies, agencies and other EU stakeholders in an area of human capital development	Actively participate in structured dialogue and regular information sharing with the European Commission on the ETF work programmes and their implementation
	Support the Council structures (Education Committee) in the field of human capital development on request
	Support the European Parliament committees in the field of human capital development on request
	Cooperate and implement joint activities with Cedefop and Eurofound, and eventually other EU agencies, through annual joint action plans
3.2. Enhance collaboration with EU Member States	Promote the active participation of the Governing Board representatives in the governance of the ETF and in the implementation of its activities.
	Identify and mobilise relevant experiences and practices in the EU Member States in view of dissemination to the partner countries
3.3 Strengthen co-operation with international organisations and international development banks	Facilitate the exchange of information and experience and enhance the ETF's added value in the framework of the complementarity among donors engaged in human capital development reform in partner countries
	Forge fruitful and reliable partnerships, co-operation and harmonisation for the development of the partner countries
3.4 Improve the quality of communication with partner country stakeholders and networks	Improve differentiated communication with key stakeholders in and amongst partner countries, focussing on priority topics and clarifying the ETF's mandate and role.
	Move to on-line tools for communicating with stakeholders, networks and communities of practice, develop webinars for policy advice and capacity building and move from print to online
	Practice the CARE communication model and develop clear communication to make the ETF more visible ⁸

⁸ CARE: Communication>Action>Results>Excellence

5. ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To be a reliable and efficient EU organization by maximising results and increasing efficiency

The organisational context for the 2014-20 period is expected to be characterised by static or declining financial resources, in real terms, and reduced human resources. At the same time, expectations as to what ETF can deliver in terms of results and compliance with standards of accountability and control are expected to rise. In this context, the ETF must become more effective and efficient as an organisation and enhance its reputation and recognition among stakeholders as a leading centre of expertise on human capital development and a soundly run organisation deploying public funds in a transparent way to achieve measureable results.

As an EU agency, the ETF has to report on performance for ensuring accountability and transparency together with compliance and sound financial management. Between 2014 and 2020 the ETF will develop and deploy its performance-based management framework to promote results-oriented management and the efficiency of the organisation and to further improve internal organisational capacity.

Performance-based management will allow the ETF to take informed decisions to respond on time to address evolving needs in the EU or the partner countries, based on an assessment of priorities and risk management.

The ETF will focus particularly on its human resources which are its most valuable organisational asset. The ETF will invest in staff professional development, skills, competencies, motivation and will foster in-house dialogue and knowledge sharing.

In the period 2014-20 the administrative focus will be on further simplifying and harmonising internal processes and on quality and risk management.

Strategic objectives	Actions
4.1 Enhance capacity to deliver more and better results	Make the ETF an efficient results-oriented organisation by fully implementing the performance-based management framework and its continuing improvement cycle, with particular attention to planning, evaluation and monitoring based on risk management
	Identify and prioritise high value-added results in terms of impact and quality of expertise content
	Simplify, harmonise and rationalise internal processes and procedures by increasing the automation of routine tasks
4.2 Quality assurance and Risk management	Improve the management of projects and activities as well as internal systems and processes through risk assessment and audits and the implementation of action plans to address their findings
4.3 Enhance accountability, transparency and capacity to demonstrate added-value and impact	Set up mechanisms for receiving feedback during activities and processes for managing stakeholders' expectations and satisfaction on the results of ETF work
	Improve the communication of results by focusing on and ensuring quality
	Reinforce the stakeholders' trust by demonstrating results, added-value and impact of interventions through its performance-based management framework
4.4 Enhance professional capacity and recognition as a centre of expertise and sound organisation	Invest in staff professional development, skills, competencies and motivation
	Develop and implement plans for strengthening professional capacity and institutional memory through knowledge management, in-house dialogue and sharing
	Improve the working environment and culture to attract and retain high-quality staff

6. TARGETED RESULTS BY 2020:

In the partner countries, the ETF will contribute to:

1. More effective VET policymaking with better governance
2. Increased employability and enhanced social and territorial cohesion

This will be done by:

1. Increased accountability and trust
2. The development and consolidation of expertise to benefit partner countries

7. METHODS OF INTERVENTION

The ETF's strategic planning 2014-20 sets the agency's direction in light of EU and partner country challenges as presented above. It identifies four strategic goals:

- To support partner country intelligence and capacities in all stages of the VET policy cycle bringing innovation and sustainable development
- To support the external dimension of EU policies in human capital development
- To strengthen co-operation and communication with key stakeholders playing an active role in human capital development
- To be a reliable and efficient EU organisation, maximising results and increasing efficiency
- These goals will be achieved over the next seven years by implementing multi-annual strategic objectives. These objectives will be further detailed in four-year multi-annual work programmes as well as annual work programmes, which will detail the specific projects, the distribution of resources and the results expected in the form of corporate outputs and outcomes and the indicators to measure the level of achievement⁹. The ETF defines different levels in the value chain of results: outputs (products or deliverables stemming from projects), outcomes (the effects of the outputs on their intended beneficiaries, assessed either by use or satisfaction level) and impact (the long-term effect, measured in terms of the contribution to human capital development).

Every two years between 2014-20, the ETF will continue to implement country and regional analyses in the framework of the Torino Process.

The Torino Process is a participatory process leading to an evidence-based analysis of vocational education and training (VET) policies in a given country. It is designed to build consensus on the possible ways forward in VET policy and system development. This includes determining the state of the art and the vision for VET in each country and, after a given period, assessing the progress that countries are making in achieving the desired results.

The added value of the Torino Process lies in the fact that it embeds VET within the socio-economic context, and ensures that the analysis is informed by relevant evidence and takes place through structured dialogue. In this respect, the ETF helps countries to gather information from different sources of evidence and fosters policy dialogue. In addition, the Torino Process informs the ETF's recommendations to the EU's external assistance instruments and serves as a basis for the design of the ETF's support strategy to partner countries. Country and regional reports are also worth sharing with the different international actors in the field working in the partner countries. On the basis of the needs identified in the reports, they can contribute to the complementarity, harmonisation and division of labour of international actors, and therefore to more efficient cooperation for partner country development.

In each country, based on the needs identified by the Torino Process, the ETF will decide on its actions on the basis of mutual dialogue with the EU institutions and bodies and the countries themselves. Annual country implementation plans describe the actions selected.

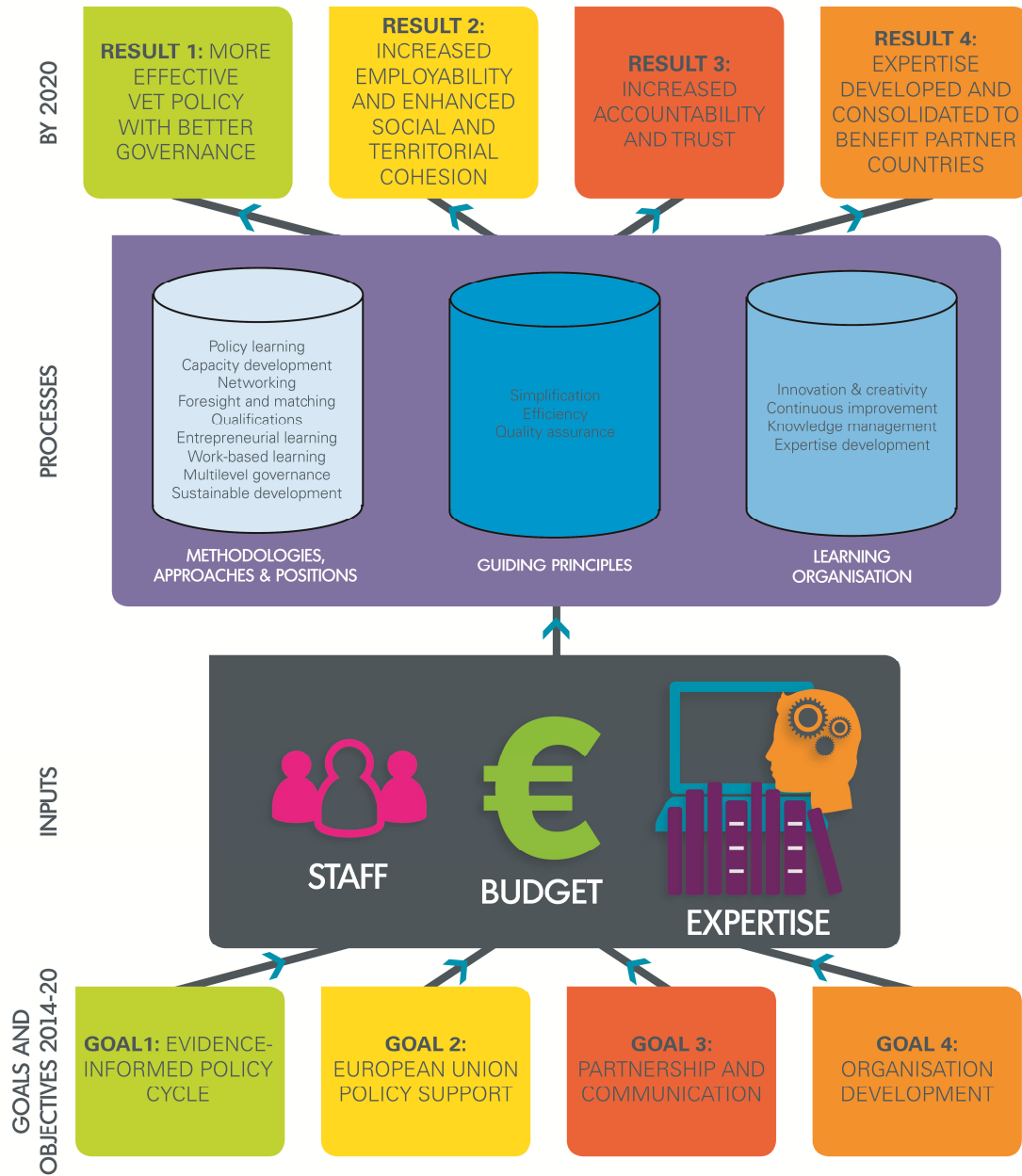
The ETF will implement regional or multi-country projects addressing a selection of policy areas identified in the Torino Process as common needs, which can benefit from the learning opportunity of working together at regional or multi-country level.

The ETF will promote the design and implementation of multi-annual projects, particularly for large-scale interventions, in terms of the number of countries, budget or complexity of the objectives. Within its strategic framework the ETF will keep its flexibility and adaptability to respond in a timely fashion to requests that address evolving needs in the EU or in the partner country policy environments.

⁹ The ETF will use indicators and targets such as those in EU policy processes or agreed with other international organisations and donors as much as possible.

Strategic focus and flexibility will be possible by strictly managing priorities. Annually agreed criteria for establishing priorities make it possible to decide how new requests are dealt with during the on-going implementation of the work programme. The criteria determine whether or not a request is taken on board and if it is, how other activities are de-prioritised in order to make the best use of resources to achieve results in line with the levels of quality expected by the ETF's stakeholders.

8. INTERVENTION LOGIC



The ETF's mandate is to contribute to improving human capital development in the partner countries, in the context of the EU external relations programmes.