

FLASH REPORT

Event name

Torino Process 2018-2020 – Discussion event on ETF Torino process assessment: progress, findings and the way forward – Minsk, 3 December 2019.

Main objectives of the event

- To share with participants the state of progress and key findings of the Torino process national report
- To discuss the key issues and recommendations of the ETF Torino process assessment
- To identify specific actions to address the recommendations (both short quick-wins and long-term actions)

Background

The event was organised in the context of the fifth round of implementation of the Torino Process, under the leadership of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus, and with the support of the Republican Institute for Vocational Education (RIPO), Torino process coordinating institution in the country.

The Republic of Belarus has participated in the Torino Process since 2010, with high ownership and commitment. The fifth round was launched at the beginning of March. On that occasion, the new features of the Torino process were presented, in terms of its broader scope (human capital development) and the preparation of a final output consisting on an ETF independent country assessment on human capital development key challenges and the way forward. The revised analytical framework with a broaden set of questions and issues covering VET in a lifelong perspective was thoroughly discussed as well as the proposed quantitative indicators to be used. During the [launching event](#), the policy relevance of the Torino process for the upcoming EU 2020 programming and for the country's national policy cycle was confirmed.

Furthermore and in line with Belarus policy towards regional development and the upcoming EU support to specific focal regions, it was agreed to implement for the first time Torino process consultations in three pilot regions, namely Brest, Grodno and Vitebsk.

Between March and November, several consultations and focus groups took place with different stakeholder groups and in the three regions. RIPO consolidated inputs into a national report. ETF, based on the national report and additional evidence collected from different sources, prepared a draft assessment. Both reports were presented for discussion in the December event.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT

The one day event gathered more than 60 participants, including representatives of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour; Technical and Technological State Universities, Republican Union of Employers, Trade Union of Education and Science Workers, delegates from Regional Executive Committees and centres in the three pilot regions, as well as National Statistical Office and Institutes. Representatives from the EU Delegation and the EU VET project team also attended. A quick survey showed that 50% of participants were new to the Torino process, proving the efforts made to enlarge the consultations to new relevant organisations.

The event included:

- An Opening session where Ministry of Education and EU Delegation put the current Torino process in the context of the national policy cycle and EU bilateral policy dialogue and cooperation
- A presentation by RIPO and discussion on the Torino process national report, focusing on qualitative aspects and progress on VET system developments since the last edition. A summary of the regional consultations was presented, in terms of priority issues identified in each region
- A presentation by the ETF and discussion on ETF assessment, in terms of overall socio-economic situation, key human capital development challenges and proposed recommendations/opportunities.
- A working group discussion on the analysis and proposals made by ETF, with the aim to identify gaps in the assessment, reach agreement (or not) on the key issues presented and further thinking on the proposed recommendations, including concrete actions for its implementation.

The event coincided with the launching of the PISA results (see attached), in which Belarus participated for the first time. A spontaneous sharing session took place on the good performance of Belarus, performing second best (after Russia) among ETF partner countries.

KEY OUTCOMES/CONCLUSIONS

- Ministry of education confirmed the importance of the analysis for identification of trends and improvements for VET in a lifelong learning perspective. Importance of Adult learning was emphasised. RIPO also underlined the timeliness of the Torino process to take stock of the progress under the current five year strategy and to prepare the next five year cycle. The added value of exchanges with other countries was recognised. Finally, the increasing cooperation and participation of employers and business sector was emphasised.
- The EU Delegation also confirmed the added value of Torino process for the next programming cycle, in particular for the soon to start project on Regional Investment and Competitiveness and for the new project in the area of VET and employment. Torino process will also feed into the ongoing evaluation of the current project on modernisation of VET.
- The national report prepared by RIPO was discussed and accepted without major changes. The report was considered very comprehensive on VET system developments. It summarised qualitative aspects of the modernisation of VET, as follows: i) efficiency gains via the optimisation of VET network, the development of resource centres and the upcoming introduction of the single model of colleges (horizon 2030) ii) enhanced relevance via the increased cooperation with employers, review of occupational standards, review of national classifier, the set up of national and selected sectoral qualification committees iii) increased flexibility via implementation of the new qualifications framework, competence based approach and modularisation iv) quality improvements with focus on continuous development of teachers v) continuous focus on inclusiveness (even if with declined participation) via provision of training targeted to groups with special needs and vi) on going digital transformation.
- The findings of the regional consultations showed high convergence on the key issues identified (cooperation with employers, development of teachers skills, attractiveness of VET, importance of practice/work based training, higher autonomy of providers and need for career and professional guidance) although with different priority considerations.
- ETF assessment was presented around five key issues i) country's demography and ageing population: the imperative of adult learning ii) boosting MSMEs in high value added sectors to underpin employment creation and economic growth iii) the emerging labour market shortages and skills gaps iv) moving regionalisation forward based on smart economic specialisation v) the

imperative of increasing quality and efficiency of human capital development to support the above. Participants confirmed the relevance of the assessment, the satisfaction with the wealth of new evidence and information behind the assessment and confirmed the pertinence of the recommendations presented. The need for increased cooperation and information exchange between Ministries was stressed in order to develop holistic policies on human capital development that can support economic growth and smart specialisation in regions. The use of online tools for training and development was stressed as an opportunity for increased outreach of training measures, information sharing, discussion platforms etc.

In terms of next steps, it was agreed that

- The ETF (via RIPO) will provide all documentation and presentations made during the event;
- Participants are encouraged to sign up to the new ETF Open Space on line community;
- Participants will provide comments, additional information or evidence to RIPO for both national report and ETF assessment by mid-January;
- The ETF will complete ETF assessment by end of January and send it to all participants via RIPO as national coordinator of Torino process, following its translation into Russian;
- A regional Torino process event will take place in Minks on 11-12 March under the coordination of the European Commission – DG NEAR as part of the Eastern Partnership cooperation Platform IV. The event will include delegations from the six EaP countries and representatives from Central Asia. It will be the occasion to present regional trends, discuss priorities for the future regional cooperation and exchange relevant practices.
- A regional event will be organised in Georgia to present the findings of the Small Business Act Assessment. The ETF will aim to share the results of the Torino Process assessment, recognising the importance of holistic approaches to SME development, including the key role that human capital and skills development issues have to boost enterprise creation and growth.
- Participants are encouraged to identify further opportunities to share and disseminate the results of the Torino process assessment for national policy dialogue.

For further information: [ETF Country Coordinator](#)

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