

# **MINUTES**

# **GOVERNING BOARD**

# **MEETING**

# **21 NOVEMBER 2014**



## 1. Introduction

The ETF Governing Board meeting was held in Turin on 21 November 2014 and chaired by António SILVA MENDES, Director at the Directorate General for Education and Culture, European Commission (EC) designated to act as a Chair by the ETF Governing Board Chairperson Xavier PRATS-MONNÉ, Director General for Education and Culture in his absence.

New members of the Board were welcomed: Tamara HUDOLIN, alternate member, for Croatia; Peter VAN IJSSELMUIDEN, member for the Netherlands; Liga LEJINA, member for Latvia; Lars MORTENSEN, member for Denmark; Carina CRONSIOE, member for Sweden; Karin MEYER, alternate member for Luxembourg; and Gabriela CIOBANU, alternate member for Romania. From the EC, Luis RIERA FIGUERAS, Director DG DEVCO; Detlef ECKERT, Director, DG EMPL; Morten JUNG, Head of Unit, DG ELARG; Joaõ DA GRACA SANTOS, Deputy Head of Unit, DG EAC; Christiane WESTPHAL, Policy Officer, DG EMPL; and Maria TODOROVA, Policy Officer, DG EAC were present. Representatives of Cedefop and Eurofound were also present. The ETF staff committee was represented by Mircea COPOT.

Representatives from Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Slovakia, Poland and UK did not attend. Jan ANDERSSON, Jean Fraçoise MÉZIERES independent expert nominated by the European Parliament and Salih ÇELIK, observer from Turkey were not present either.

## 2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted by the Board with the no changes proposed.

## 3. Follow-up to previous meeting

### i. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 June 2014 were adopted.

### ii. Follow up on action points and written procedures

**Xavier MATHEU**, ETF, presented the actions carried out as a follow up to the June 2014 meeting:

- ETF addressed the proposals and observations on the draft ETF 2015 work programme. The updated version was discussed under point 4 of the agenda;
- The ETF will present its Performance Based Management system at an upcoming meeting of the Board;
- The Chair sent a letter to all Governing Board members asking them to present the proposals of the working group on governance costs and communication policy to the relevant national authorities in order to reach a decision at the next meeting. The issue was discussed under point 12 of the agenda;
- By 3 November 2014, the Board members were asked to provide the ETF Secretariat with their CVs and declarations of interest for publication on the ETF website. These have been uploaded on the web.

The following written procedures were carried out:

- Written procedure on a proposal to transfer 2014 ETF budget appropriations (ETF-GB-14-032) took place between 08 August 2014 and 27 August 2014 and was successfully concluded;

- Urgent written procedure on the Implementing Rules of the revised Staff Regulations took place between 26 September 2014 and 03 October 2014 and was successfully concluded.

## 4. Draft 2015 ETF Work Programme

**Madlen SERBAN** and **Xavier MATHEU** presented the draft 2015 ETF Work Programme and thanked the members of the Governing Board and EC structured dialogue groups for their contributions to the finalisation of the document.

The following issues were highlighted:

- This Work Programme is the second of the 2014-17 Mid-term Perspective. The ETF is committed to achieving its mandate and the strategic objectives set out in it with high quality and cost-effectiveness in order to satisfy the expectations of its institutional governance and ensure maximum benefits to its partner countries and stakeholders;
- The 2015 objectives, activities, actions and results have been identified from different sources: i) the country and regional progress monitoring produced through the Torino Process in 2014 combined with other analyses of developments in the countries that concluded with a number of policy needs; ii) EU policy developments; iii) EU external assistance to the partner countries; and iv) the work done in the partner countries by donors, and the complementarity among them in terms of the added-value they can bring;
- The logic of intervention in each country is differentiated according to specific policy needs and internal criteria for prioritisation in the distribution of resources - both financial and human, and the principles of focus and impact-orientation.
- The impact of the ETF work in the countries is defined by strategic goals and objectives and is measured through country progress indicators looking at partner country developments, taking into consideration the cumulative impact, achieved by all relevant donor interventions, including those of the ETF.
- The objectives for 2015 are: i) to reinforce partner country policy analysis capacity in the field of human capital development through the Torino Process and in other policy analyses (SBA, employability, NQF); ii) to support partner countries in modernising their VET systems in a lifelong learning perspective; and iii) to increase the relevance of VET provision through innovative approaches.
- The first objective is covered by the following activities: (i) VET system analysis to monitor progress in targeted capacity building actions - the Torino Process, (ii) specific policy analyses like the inventory of qualifications frameworks, fiches on country employability and assessments of the human capital dimension of the Small Business Act for Europe in South Eastern Europe, Turkey and Eastern Europe), and (iii) support for programming and project design for the EU external instruments, as well as the EU policy dialogue with partner countries.
- As of 2014, the Torino Process builds capacity to support countries to bridge the gap between analysis and defining options for policy action through the use of ex ante impact assessment methodologies. This initiative known as Projecting Reform Impact in Vocational Education and Training (Prime) will continue in 2015. It was launched in 2014 in three countries.
- The second objective comprises four activities: (i) Skills and VET governance; (ii) VET system quality assurance reform; (iii) learning and teaching in VET with an emphasis on networking, knowledge sharing and support for work-based learning, vocational teachers and trainers as well

as career guidance; and (iv) contributing to EU interventions in the partner countries to implement and monitor relevant EU projects.

- For the third objective, activities cover the areas of (i) qualifications and qualifications systems, (ii) employment, skills and employability, (iii) skills and migration, and (iv) entrepreneurial learning and enterprise skills.
- These activities are clustered into seven strategic projects to ensure efficient implementation, transformative impact and clear EU and ETF added value in the partner countries. These are: 1) support to EU policy and external assistance; 2) Torino Process; 3) Qualifications and qualifications systems; 4) VET governance; 5) VET provision and quality; 6) employment and employability; 7) entrepreneurial learning and enterprise skills.
- The work programme also includes the annual work programme with Cedefop defining the activities that will be jointly developed in 2015 as well as the annual action plan with Eurofound.
- The GEMM project financed through a contract with the European Commission will continue in 2015;
- The budget and human resources assumptions to implement the activities contained in this programme are: €20.144 million from the EU budget (of which €4.443 million for Title III) and 133 staff (92 TA, 39 CA, 1 SNE and 2 LA).

The Board made the following comments.

**Daniele RAMPAZZO (Italy)** on behalf of the members of the Board thanked the ETF for the high quality document which was unanimously appreciated as being well structured and in line with the objectives set in the 2014-17 Mid Term perspective. The members of the Board appreciated the way in which the seven strategic projects were described and considered that they are consistent and coherent with the needs of the partner countries and with the objectives of the EU instruments programming process.

**The Chair** also appreciated the document, which describes the activities the ETF intends to implement in 2015 to support the partner countries. The document demonstrates an integrated approach between the policy measures and the actors involved.

**Ossi LINDQVIST (Finland)** congratulated the ETF for the multi-annual approach which ensures continuation, progress and impact of the measures proposed.

**György SZENT-LÉLEKY (Hungary)** expressed his satisfaction with the text and underlined that it fully meets the expectations of the Board members. He also requested clarification on the country progress indicators. **Madlen SERBAN (ETF)** informed the Board that impact is defined by strategic goals and objectives and is measured through country progress indicators looking at the development of the partner countries, taking into consideration the cumulative impact achieved by all relevant donor interventions, including the ETF. The indicators are clustered according to the building blocks used in the Torino Process analytical framework: vision, external efficiency, internal efficiency and governance. Together with the partner countries, the ETF identifies the necessary interventions and agrees on the indicators for them. They are applied and used by both the country and the ETF to measure progress.

**Luis RIERA FIGUERAS (DG DEVCO)** joined the general consensus on congratulating the ETF on the quality of the work programme. He highlighted the importance of migration indicating that it is a topic likely to be high on the EC's 2015 agenda and could link VET and informality. **Madlen SERBAN (ETF)** explained that the ETF's work on migration is strictly linked to the skills dimension. In 2014, the ETF

concluded an important inventory of policy measures supporting the skills dimension of migration. Previously the ETF analysed how migrants' skills are used in destination countries. The ETF pays attention to ensuring the transparency of qualifications in the country of origin as well as to the recognition of informal and non-formal learning among returnees. In 2015, the ETF will continue to work with the EC under the framework of the Mobility partnership.

**The Governing Board adopted the 2015 ETF Work Programme.**

## 5. ETF Draft Budget 2015

**Alastair MACPHAIL (ETF)** presented the ETF 2015 draft budget and informed the Board that the 2015 draft budget is based on the 2015 provisional draft estimate of revenue and expenditure approved by the Governing Board on 22 November 2013, and modified during the budgetary procedure. It is consistent with the EC financial programming for the ETF and follows the evolution of EU external relations activities.

### Revenue

This 2015 draft budget is based on an overall contribution of €20,144,000 for both commitment and payment appropriations, composed of €19,945,000 contribution from the EU budget and €199,000 from the recovery of surplus related to 2013 budget execution.

### Expenditure

The ETF's budget for 2015 is at the same level in nominal terms as all the previous budgets since 2011. This represents a real decrease of approximately 8% with respect to the 2011 budget. For Titles 1 and 2 (staff costs and administrative expenditure), the 2015 budget represents a survival budget, while Title 3 (operational expenditure) is reduced by 10.8%.

#### Title 1 for expenditure relating to staff working for the ETF: €14 095 000

This represents 70% of the contribution and an increase of 4.9% compared to the 2014 amended budget. For 2015, the ETF will reduce its statutory staff by two from 94 temporary agents to 92. Any further staff cuts decided by the budget authority will mean a corresponding reduction in the ETF's expertise capacity.

#### Title 2 for expenditure relating to infrastructure and general administration: €1 606 000

Title 2 represents 8% of the contribution, reflecting a decrease of 6.5% compared to the 2014 amended budget. After many years of deferring expenditure on the building owing to the uncertainty about its premises, in 2015 the ETF will continue the improvements initiated in 2013 and 2014, to the fabric and furnishing of its premises. A major focus in 2015 will be on ICT infrastructure improvements and further consolidation of ICT Systems.

#### Title 3 for expenditure related to operational activities: €4 443 000

This corresponds to 22% of the subvention, reflecting a decrease of 10.8% and supports and complements the main inputs provided by ETF experts through Title 1. The operational activities under Title 3 are described in the work programme and will be streamlined through seven projects.

#### Title 4 for cooperation with other organisations

During 2013 the ETF signed two funding agreements which will continue in 2015:

- "Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean" - GEMM. In 2015 ETF expects to receive a last instalment of €402,000.

- "Foresight and Regional Assessment Methods for Employment" - FRAME. While all funds have been received and activities are expected to be finalised in 2014, during early 2015 there will be the last payments, reporting and audit.

Earmarked expenditure will be introduced in the budget at a later stage through an amended budget to integrate all other funds managed by the ETF (such as the Italian Trust Fund, and other projects that the ETF implements on behalf of the EC or Member States).

**The Chair** asked for clarification on the proposed increase of 10% of the expenses under Title 1 with a reduction of two posts. **Alastair MACPHAIL (ETF)** explained that the budget proposed considers that all ETF posts are filled and that all staff is working full time. He also clarified that the 10% increase resulted from a comparison with the budget proposed for 2014 not that executed.

**György SZENT-LÉLEKY (Hungary)** asked about the differences between temporary agents and contract agents. He was informed that the EU Staff regulation establishes three categories of staff: officials, temporary agents and contract agents. The ETF employs only temporary agents and contract agents. Temporary agent staff includes managers, experts, core professional staff, etc. Contract agents provide secretarial support, statistical support etc. In terms of salary and rights there is no difference between officials and temporary agents.

**The Chair** informed the Board that the ETF's 2015 draft budget will enter into force once the Budget Authority adopts the General Budget of the EU.

**The Governing Board adopted the ETF 2015 Draft Budget.**

## 6. Provisional draft estimate of revenue and expenditure and underlying general guidelines 2016

**Alastair MACPHAIL (ETF)** presented the provisional draft estimate of revenue and expenditure and underlying general guidelines for 2016.

He informed the Board that this document sets out the financial framework for ETF activities in 2016. It has been drawn up with reference to the human and financial resources foreseen in the ETF's Mid-Term Perspective (MTP) 2014-17. Once approved, it will be submitted to the EC by 31 January 2015 with no additional written procedure. It will then be used by the EC as a starting point for the 2016 budgetary procedure. The final draft estimate will be forwarded to the Commission by 31 March 2015 in accordance with Article 33.1 of the ETF's founding Regulation.

This provisional draft estimate is based on the following assumptions:

- The proposed staffing for 2016 is in line with the ETF Mid-Term Perspective 2014-17. Additional ancillary staff (contract agents) may be financed from earmarked revenue corresponding to the new activities undertaken by the ETF.
- The budget for staffing and infrastructure (Titles 1 and 2) accommodates expected increases in staff expenditure due to backdated salary adjustments, promotions, step increases and a higher post-occupancy rate. Title 2, in particular, will have to be adapted to answer the increased costs of the premises for 2016 linked to consolidation of the infrastructure and possible changes to the contract.

In addition, any earmarked expenditure will be added to the budget at a later stage to integrate other funds managed by the ETF (such as the Italian Trust Fund, and other projects that the ETF could implement in the name of the EC or Member States).

**Carina CRONSIOE (Sweden)** requested clarification on the seconded national experts envisaged by the ETF and was informed about the ETF's past experience in this area. However, in recent years the European institutions have faced difficulties in recruiting national experts due to restructuring of the public administration in the member states.

At the request of the Chair, **Daniele RAMPAZZO (Italy)** re-confirmed the Italian authorities' commitment both at regional and local level to keep the ETF at Villa Gualino. A meeting will be organised on 28 November to discuss the necessary steps for the contract. **Madlen SERBAN (ETF)** thanked the Italian representatives and the Italian authorities for their support and stressed the fact that the ETF has to submit the Multi-annual staffing plan and information on the premises to the EC by the end of January 2015. In the 28 November discussions, the ETF will also raise the issue of working conditions.

The Governing Board adopted the **Provisional draft estimate of revenue and expenditure and underlying general guidelines for 2016**.

## 7. 2014 amending budget

**Alastair MACPHAIL** presented the 2014 amending budget and informed the Board that the main objective was to incorporate the new revenue, to reflect the budget transfers performed until now in 2014 and propose a new transfer.

### Revenue

- There are no modifications to the subvention the ETF received from the EC.
- An amount of €150 200 as the last instalment for the FRAME project is integrated. The activities are planned to be finalised in December 2014, while last payments, reporting and audit will be ready during 2015.
- From 2014 the ETF can incorporate the interest generated by its subvention received from the Commission (Art. 58 ETF Financial regulation). The amount accumulated as interest for the first three quarters of 2014 amounts to €14,552.88, and is proposed to be allocated to the replacement of office furniture.

### Expenditure

Since the previous amending budget, the ETF performed three transfers in order to maximise the use of the ETF budget in line with the priorities in the partner countries. The redistribution of expenditure integrates these transfers and proposes (referred to in the assumption as "new transfer"):

- an additional reallocation of appropriations to Title 3 operational activities (commitment and payment appropriation) from Title 1 salary-related savings mainly (retroactive decrease of the Italian weighting factor confirmed on 18 November to decrease by 4%, staff annual travel and (re)installation allowance) in order to ensure timely booking of the logistics for the "Torino Process 2015 – Moving skills forward together" conference planned for June 2015 and production of an ETF video presentation;
- an internal re-shuffle in Title 1 linked to actual salary costs, revised requests for interim support and removal costs to anticipated needs for education allowances and other salary related retroactive modification;
- an internal reassignment in Title 2, directing the saved amounts on maintenance, water, gas, electricity and other building costs to replacement of obsolete office furniture. Additional funds



from the amount made available on title 1 and the €14 552.88 interest gained will also be allocated to this activity.

**The Governing Board adopted the ETF 2014 amending budget.**

## 8. Making the ETF more strategic: revision of the ETF organisational structure

**Madlen SERBAN (ETF)** referred to Performance Based Management applied by the ETF since 2012; the ETF 2014-20 strategy, the ETF Mid-term Perspective 2014-17 and the financial framework for the next seven years in her intervention. At the same time, she indicated that the general financial situation in Europe and the inter-institutional agreement on agencies (Common Approach on Decentralised Agencies) require the ETF to improve its efficiency and, where appropriate, redeploy its workforce from coordination and support to operational functions.

In response, the ETF has carried out an extensive and comprehensive assessment of its internal organisation and processes based on a functional analysis carried out in the first half of 2014 with the help of external experts and a series of internal analyses and consultations, supported by the self-assessment exercise conducted as part of the ETF's Performance-based Management Framework.

She stressed that this new delivery approach is intended to enhance the ETF's capacity to monitor and report on system-wide progress in the development of HCD systems in the partner countries. It will also reinforce capacity to deliver support to the countries by combining consistent policy approaches inspired by EU internal policy frameworks with the specific context and needs of its partner countries and exploiting economies of scale.

From 2015, in order to improve the added-value and cost-effectiveness of its interventions, the ETF will consolidate its work across its 30 partner countries into seven strategic projects, each focused on one of the themes or functions in the MTP. The Multi-annual Country Strategic Perspectives will provide the rationale for, and the modality of, the interventions in each country and will be updated based on the results of the country progress monitoring rounds of the Torino Process.

The ETF will continue to tailor each action and intervention within a Strategic Project to the context of each participating country. Depending on the policy needs and opportunities for policy learning among the countries, the ETF will adapt the geographical scope of each strategic project.

Each strategic project will have its own budget and be managed by a strategic project leader empowered to coordinate the staff and financial resources assigned. Most staff will be assigned full-time to one project and their project leader and line manager will be in the same reporting line.

The thematic orientation is a driver of strategic and programming planning, in line with the guidelines of the EC's Secretariat General within the Common Approach on a single programming document. It also leads to a consistent approach on how the ETF organises its interventions, while at the same time ensuring that all the operations respond to country specific needs.

The ETF will continue to report on progress in the countries, requested by the EC or the EEAS.

The ETF organisational structure will be revised as follows:

- Geographical Operations, Evidence-Based Policy Making, Thematic Expertise Development Departments are abolished;
- An Operations Department divided into a System Policy/Country Analysis Unit and a Thematic Policy Unit is established;



- The Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Unit becomes the Corporate Performance and stakeholder cooperation is embedded within it;
- The Accounting Officer reports to the Governing Board, whilst the line management remains with the Head of Administration;
- Human Resources and Facilities becomes Human Resources;
- A Strategic advisor role is established.

**Reinhard NÖBAUER (Austria)** asked what will happen to country managers and if the staff committee was involved in the revision of the organisational structure. In response, **Madlen SERBAN (ETF)** explained that country managers will become known as “*country desk specialists*” and will continue their activities under the System Policy/Country Analysis Unit which will address policy analysis, support to the EU institutions and governance. A road map for implementation of the new structure has been prepared and all staff has been informed about it. The next step is to appoint the managers, since the team leaders of the seven strategic projects have been appointed on 1<sup>st</sup> November. **Mircea COPOT (ETF Staff Committee)** informed the Board that in June the Staff Committee organised four meetings with the staff and input was provided for the process of making the ETF more strategic. The Staff Committee has no comments on the new organisational structure proposed for adoption.

**Madlen SERBAN (ETF)** informed the Board about the selection procedure for the deputy director and thanked the Portuguese Board member for acting as observer during the interviews of the six short-listed candidates. The Selection Board submitted a report on their findings. The director informed that having carefully read and assessed the report for the above mentioned selection procedure, she decided that the results of the procedure does not allow for a confident, unconditional and fully satisfactory appointment to the post. She therefore closed the procedure and will inform the candidates accordingly.

**Edel CASSAR (Malta)** and **Sara Parkin (independent expert nominated by the European Parliament)** asked for details on the difficulties faced during the selection procedure that led to the closure of the process to be closed without an appointment. **Madlen SERBAN (ETF)** explained that for reasons of confidentiality she could not provide additional information. **The Chair** added that the selection process in various agencies had proved to be difficult in the last years and all the recruitments had to follow carefully to avoid legal proceedings.

**György SZENT-LÉLEKY (Hungary)** asked who would take the responsibilities of the deputy director and he was informed that the current procedure of rotating acting directors would continue as it functions well.

**The Board approved the new organisational structure of the ETF.**

## 9. Proposal for a Memorandum to extend the cooperation agreement between the ETF and IIAS/EGPA by three years to 2017

**Madlen SERBAN (ETF)** informed the Board on the following aspects:

The cooperation agreement was signed on 21 January 2013, establishing a framework for co-operation in the field of public policies management between the ETF and the IIAS/EGPA.

In accordance with the art.9.2 of this agreement, “this Cooperation Agreement will remain in effect until December 2014 and may be extended by agreement of both sides”. Having analysed and

assessed the cooperation the ETF proposed to extend the cooperation agreement by three years to 2017, following the positive opinion of the EC.

**The Governing Board adopted the Memorandum to extend the cooperation agreement between the ETF and IIAS/EGPA by three years to 2017.**

## 10. Proposal for a Memorandum to extend the cooperation agreement between the ETF and RCC by three years to 2017

**Madlen SERBAN (ETF)** informed the Board on the following aspects:

The cooperation agreement between the ETF and the RCC Secretariat was signed in Brussels on 24 January 2013. The document ensured the framework for cooperation between the two institutions and covers the period 2013-14. The main areas of cooperation over the last two years were the South East Europe (SEE) 2020 Strategy, the ETF FRAME project, Entrepreneurial learning and social inclusion.

In accordance with art.9.3, “this cooperation agreement shall remain in effect for two years following which it may be extended.” The cooperation agreement will expire on 25 January 2015. Having analysed and assessed the cooperation, the ETF proposed to extend the cooperation agreement by three years to 2017, following the positive opinion of the EC.

**The Governing Board adopted the Memorandum to extend the cooperation agreement between the ETF and RCC by three years to 2017.**

## 11. Draft cooperation agreement between the ETF and the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures (ALF)

**Madlen SERBAN (ETF)** informed the Board on the following aspects:

This cooperation agreement establishes a framework for co-operation in the fields of human capital and economic and social development in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean between the ETF and ALF.

The general objectives of this cooperation will be to promote the participation of civil society organisations in activities and actions to promote coordination aimed at fostering and supporting the development of human capital and intercultural dialogue and to share knowledge in the field of human capital development.

The specific areas of cooperation are linked to the specific components of the ALF Dawrak programme, relevant ETF country projects and the EU-funded GEMM project implemented by the ETF.

**The Governing Board adopted the cooperation agreement between the ETF and the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures (ALF).**

## 12. ETF governance costs and communication policy

Since consensus had not been reached on the issue of Governing Board translations, **the Chair** proposed not to reopen the discussion and to maintain the status quo in this area.

**Daniele RAMPAZZO (Italy)** on behalf of the Presidency stated that although member states had not reached a consensus on the language regime, they did propose to reduce the number of pages of ETF strategic documents in order to reduce translation costs.

**György SZENT-LÉLEKY (Hungary)** asked about the ETF's position on translating documents for partner countries. **Madlen SERBAN (ETF)** explained that the proposals under discussion are exclusively related to documents for the Governing Board, while different rules applied to the translation of documents for partner countries.

**Sara PARKIN (independent expert nominated by the European Parliament)** suggested changing the title *Executive summary* in documents for something more palatable to ministries in member states such as *Key points for discussion*.

**The Chair declared the debate closed with no change to the current practice on the translation of Governing Board documents.**

### 13. Any other business

The Chair informed the Board on the forthcoming External Evaluation of the ETF which will be conducted by the Commission in consultation with the Governing Board, as referred to in Article 24.2 of the ETF Recast regulation No. 1339/2008. In line with the ETF regulation, every four years the Commission carries out an external evaluation of the ETF to evaluate its working methods and results against its mandate, objectives and functions.

A Steering Group for the ETF external evaluation is established and will include a representative of the Governing Board. The Board members indicated two options: Micheline SCHEYS (Belgium) or should she not be available, Saulius ZYBARTAS (Lithuania) will take the responsibility.

The Chair also reminded the Board members who have not yet provided their CV and declaration of interest to do so as soon as possible since the European Parliament asked for the publication of the Board members' declarations of interests and curriculum vitae by 1 December 2014.

### 15. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Governing Board will be held in Turin on 5 June 2015.

#### Follow up actions:

- Following the adoption of the 2015 EU general budget, if the case, the ETF will launch a written procedure to approve the changes that may occur in the 2015 Work Programme and 2015 budget;
- The ETF may request an amendment to the 2015 budget to incorporate the new revenue related to the GEMM project;
- The ETF will reduce the length of planning documents taking into consideration the templates and instructions to be provided by the EC also with a view to reducing translation costs;
- The Governing Board will be asked to approve an amendment to the implementing rules of the ETF Financial Regulation (by 15 December) and to adopt a series of additional Implementing Rules for the new Staff Regulations (by June 2015).
- The ETF will inform the Board members about the contract and working condition at Villa Gualino.

## ANNEX

### 9. Oral reports

#### Progress on Commission policies and programmes that have an impact on ETF

*João DA GRACA SANTOS (DG EAC) presented the latest EU policies and programmes. He focused on the following issues:*

##### **Policy and organisational developments**

In the new Commission, VET and adult learning fall under the portfolio of DG EMPL. As a result, the ETF and Cedefop as agencies that support work in the field of VET and related policies on skills development, entrepreneurship, and employment will also fall under the portfolio of DG EMPL.

Commissioner Thyssen and Director General Michel Servoz confirmed that VET and adult learning will be at the heart of their work in boosting employment. Skills development, monitoring and forecasting, skills mismatch and feedback from the labour market to education and training providers and better links between VET and adult learning policies and labour market provision are highly valued aspects of social policies for jobs and growth. VET and adult learning are at the same time lifelong learning areas. Consequently synergies will be ensured with the developments in education policy with DG EAC.

##### **Updates on the Education and Training 2020 stocktaking**

In updating the ET 2020, inputs have come from national reports, the youth employment forum, social partners and the ET 2020 evaluation. Further input will be provided during the December 2014 meetings of ACVT and High Level Group in Latvia. It is foreseen that in March 2015 under the Latvian Presidency, the Joint Report on ET 2020 will be approved.

##### **European semester - Country specific recommendations 2014**

The European Semester process confirmed that delivering on the objectives of a Youth Guarantee requires strategic reforms to achieve more successful transitions from school to the labour market.

The country specific recommendations for 19 member states covered issues related to VET, for 14 member states they referred to apprenticeships/work-based learning and eight member states have been asked to take more decisive actions to implement the Youth Guarantee.

##### **Bruges review - new areas for short-term deliverables**

This topic is relevant for the ETF, as the Torino Process is informed by developments in the EU and the ETF also supports the participation of the candidate countries in the Bruges review.

The aim of the Bruges review is to define a new set of short-term deliverables for 2015-17 as part of ET 2020 review. The process is based on consultations with ACVT and DGVT, the Cedefop stocktaking of progress 2011-14 and the analysis of ET 2020 national reports.

After comprehensive consultations with the member states, the social partners and VET providers, the current proposal put forward by the EU is to focus at national level on: 1) work-based learning; 2) quality assurance and the feed-back loop to VET systems; 3) access to training and qualifications for groups at risk; 4) key competences in both initial and continuing training and 5) Professional development of vocational teachers and trainers.

At European level it has been proposed to ensure more expertise to 1) provide assistance to countries in implementing reforms; 2) intensify support to the EAfA / Youth Guarantee; 3) implement EQAVET

and ECVET in the context of the European Area for Skills and Qualifications (EASQ); 4) continue monitoring and analysing progress; 5) provide support through ERASMUS+ by ensuring the mobility of vocational students and staff, and developing excellence and innovation.

The proposals were discussed at the Rome DGVT meeting (10/2014) and the document will be finalised at the meeting of ACVT (12/2014). It represents an important input to the EC Communication on the ET 2020 Joint Report and for its adoption by the Council. The adoption of the Communiqué is foreseen for June 2015 under the Latvian Presidency.

### **European Alliance for Apprenticeship**

The EC will continue to support the European Alliance for Apprenticeship. A working group on VET has been established at European level and they met on 17 November in Brussels. Their activities focus on four objectives: 1) helping the SME's to engage in apprenticeship; 2) attractiveness of VET for families and learners; 3) governance and 4) quality assurance.

### **EQAVET and ECVET**

The Commission carried out external evaluation to stake stock of the developments on both instruments and the two reports were made available in 2014. Action plans have been put in practice following the evaluation reports, while EC recommendations are foreseen for 2015.

### **International cooperation in VET**

The mapping study "Building knowledge on international cooperation in VET" presents the existing VET internationalisation initiatives and strategies across EU member states and international organisations. These were analysed in order to collect evidence for existing practice and potential strategic activities at EU level. The study available in December 2014 presents an analysis of the success factors and challenges in VET internationalisation and may propose where and how the EU could add-value to member state VET internationalisation initiatives.

### **European agenda for adult learning**

The Commission is intensifying its work with national coordinators and a new call has been launched under Erasmus + on continuing education, in addition to the already existing EPALE.

*Christiane WESTPHAL (DG EMPL) and Detlef ECKERT (DG EMPL) presented the latest developments in the area of employment*

In the enlargement countries, the main focus of DG EMPL work is on acquis alignment, policy reform and IPA II funding. As regards the acquis alignment, the chapters on employment and social policy and on free movement of workers have not been opened with the candidate countries. The countries closest to this process are Serbia and Montenegro, currently finishing the screening process. For Turkey the opening benchmark on trade union rights has not yet been met.

On policy reform, in accordance with the Enlargement strategy the focus of the EU support is on economic governance and public administration reform. The dialogue for employment and social reform programmes was launched with Turkey (2013), Serbia and Montenegro (2014). The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia may follow shortly. As regards IPA II funding, DG EMPL continues to cooperate with DG ELARG, EU Delegations and the ETF to provide necessary support to the countries in the area of human capital. In this respect, an Employment and Social Platform is in the making and is part of the Enlargement multi-country strategy to assist countries in the areas of employment, labour market, social dialogue and working conditions. The project will be managed by DG EMPL with the support of the RCC on employment, social reform, and support to public

employment services, and with the support of the ILO on social dialogue and working conditions. There is scope for the ETF to enlarge its cooperation with the RCC on these areas.

DG EMPL mainly contributed to the overall framework of the EU Neighbourhood Policy and to its two regional initiatives: Union for Mediterranean and Eastern Partnership, providing inputs to the Annual Neighbourhood Package, the country and regional reports with the excellent support from the ETF, which helps in collecting information about countries. At present, a review and redefinition of the Neighbourhood policy is taking place.

In the area of Neighbourhood East, there is no bilateral or multilateral cooperation at present but bilateral engagement will begin with the countries that have concluded Association Agreements with the EU, namely Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. DG EMPL's main task is to contribute to the monitoring of the EU legal acquis in the areas of labour law and work safety. DG EMPL is also contributing to the multilateral track through participation in the platforms, when needed.

In the area of Neighbourhood South, there is no bilateral cooperation, the focus of DG EMPL contribution being on the regional cooperation under the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean. Two working groups are active under this framework: the high level group on employment and labour and the Social Dialogue Forum. This Forum met last time a year ago and discussed capacity building for the social partners and transition from informal to formal economy. The next meeting will be organised in January 2015.

Detlef ECKERT, director in DG EMPL informed about the upcoming adoption by the Commission of the Annual Growth Survey, Alert Mechanism Report and the Joint Employment Report. The adoption of these three documents marks the beginning of the European semester that will end May/June 2015. In this way, the Commission sets out the critical points of the macro-economic situation, with member states part of an in-depth review to identify macro-economic imbalances. The European semester ends with country specific recommendations proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Council.

The Commission is looking to increase ownership for this process, noting for example that in some country specific recommendations, VET issues are often mentioned by the stakeholders in VET policy making.

Detlef ECKERT also informed about the intention of the European Commission to come up with a Growth Strategy that will focus on three elements: 1) need for more investment; 2) need to continue the reforms in all sectors; and 3) continue growth friendly consolidation.

*Luis RIERA FIGUERAS (DG DEVCO) presented the latest developments in the area of development policy.* He mentioned that the units dealing with the Neighbourhood policy have been moved together with Enlargement. DG DEVCO will continue to provide thematic expertise.

### **Programming**

The bilateral programming process is almost at an end, 30 countries world wide have chosen VET as a sector for intervention. These projects or programmes are not exclusively VET but they have a strong VET component. At the moment DG DEVCO does not have a final list of projects since the screening process for the VET component continues but the increase in the number is a good indication on the interest to work with the ETF beyond the countries where we are working together already.

This does not mean that there is an intention to enlarge the geographical scope of the ETF but a flexible way of working together to be able to pass ETF experience to other countries is envisaged. This goes for Latin America, Honduras, El Salvador, Pakistan, Bangladesh, South Sudan and Uganda.



This list shows the existing potential to use the experience gathered to inform what can be done in these countries.

It is important to point out that programming is moving towards sector wide approach which could also strengthen cooperation with the ETF.

An important element mentioned was related to the seminar on “Financing VET: main issues for an effective policy in development cooperation”, to be organised on 27 November with the active support of the ETF.

### ***Post 2015 agenda***

Mr RIERA FIGUERAS talked about the review of the MDG's and that a report of the open working group under the direct responsibility of the UN Secretary General was produced in July 2014 leading hopefully to the setting up of the post-MDG framework by the end of 2015 during the UN General Assembly.

On 12 December the EU Council of Ministers will discuss the Council Conclusions and the Commission is in the process of preparing a communication to be discussed in spring 2015 during the Addis Ababa meeting on the means for implementing the whole package.

The new process will try to solve some of the major shortcomings of the past one, specifically the lack of ownership, since the partner countries always took the MDG process to be donor driven, while under the new one, they have been included from the very beginning. The process focusses on reducing the number of objectives and covering additional issues that have not yet been tackled like growth, employment, energy, urban considerations, governance and equity. This has led to 17 goals compared to nine at present. Each goal has approximately 10 targets but the countries are not asked to apply them. This approach will ensure a richer goal on education, which at present has two specific targets addressing VET.

*Morten JUNG (DG ELARG) presented the latest developments in the area of enlargement.*

DG ELARG will be reorganised under the new Commission, and merged with the part of DG DEVCO dealing with the European Neighbourhood policy, creating a new Directorate General "Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations" – DG NEAR – as from 1 January 2015. It should have a positive impact on working relations with ETF since there will be a single Commission service dealing with the financial cooperation with the majority of ETF partner countries.

The Commission will focus its work on reviewing the EU Neighborhood policy and consolidating the Enlargement policy.

The Enlargement strategy adopted on 8 October 2014 puts a third inter-linked pillar to the "fundamentals first" approach, namely public administration reform in addition to the rule of law and economic governance. The public administration reform process will thus be a focal part of the enlargement process. Six key issues for public administration reform have been identified, around which the Commission will structure its work with the enlargement countries and where the OECD SIGMA will in particular provide support.

At the same time, attention will be given to the so called 'European semester light', supporting the enlargement countries to prepare for the European semester. They will be asked to prepare reform programmes, which cover macro-financial issues, structural reforms for competitiveness and growth as well as human resources.

The progress reports released in October 2014 present the performance progress of the countries of the region. The opening of accession negotiations with Serbia is a turning point in EU's relations with



Serbia. It now needs to deliver on its reform priorities to sustain the negotiation pace, notably on the rule of law and the normalisation with Kosovo<sup>1</sup>. Montenegro is progressing well but tangible results of the rule of law reform process will influence the overall pace of the accession negotiations. Albania also shows positive progress as it has been granted candidate status and is expected to build and consolidate on its ongoing reform process. Kosovo signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement in July as a milestone in its relations with the EU but key reforms are still to be delivered, in particular the rule of law. The situation is at a standstill in both the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey registered some progress in the 2013 democratisation package and settling the Kurdish situation, but there are a series of issues related to the judicial independence and protecting fundamental freedoms still to be dealt with.

On the IPA II the country strategies and the multi-country strategy have been adopted setting out the indicative breakdown of overall total €11.7 billion allocation for the 2014-20 period by country, type of intervention and sector. From this total, €900 million have indicatively been allocated to education, employment and social policy. In addition, close to €250 have been allocated for Erasmus+. The challenge is now to prepare sector programmes and identify activities. DG ELARG/NEAR is counting on the ETF to support both the Commission services as well as the partner countries.

Mr JUNG also expressed his appreciation for the successful finalisation of the FRAME project that covered key issues related to identifying the future skills needs. A follow up to the FRAME project is under consideration.

## Trends and developments at the ETF

Madlen SERBAN (ETF) presented the latest developments at the ETF:

- **Progress in implementing the 2014 Work Programme:** 95.5% of the 2014 ETF general budget is committed with an overall payment execution rate of 70.5 %, 93.6 % of Title 3 has been committed (including missions) and 68.4% of Title 3 payment budget consumed. Since the last meeting of the Board, the ETF has worked on 50 EC requests, of which 8% were not already included in the ETF Work Programme. Projects are progressing according to plans with the exception of minor delays and cancellations of activities in Morocco, Lebanon, Palestine<sup>2</sup> and Egypt. No corporate results or project results were cancelled. To date 35 activities (from a total of 582) have been cancelled and 29 postponed.
- **Qualifications:** The ETF supported partner countries in the reform of their qualifications systems through targeted capacity building actions and by sharing the latest intelligence on NQF developments via its Qualifications Platform. The ETF contributed to EQF AG meetings and published the country chapters for the joint ETF-Cedefop-UNESCO Global Inventory on NQFs.
- **Governance:** The ETF identified seven Entrepreneurial Communities in Algeria, Belarus, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Moldova and Serbia, analysed their elements of success and extracted policy lessons. The results were discussed with partner country representatives in the corporate event on “Local skills matter- Multilevel governance and entrepreneurial communities” conference organised in Turin on 19-20 November.

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<sup>1</sup> 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’.

<sup>2</sup> This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual position of the Member States on this issue.

- **Skills and migration:** A global inventory on policy measures and good practice on measures to support migrants and returnees from a skills and employment perspective was compiled and in depth studies in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Morocco and Tunisia undertaken to learn from experience. The results will be disseminated to the Neighbourhood countries in 2015 to support policy development. The ETF also provided support to EU-Jordan and EU-Morocco mobility dialogues.
- **Learning and Teaching:** Work on work-based learning has been intensified and the ETF handbook on work-based learning to support VET policymakers and social partners was disseminated in ETF partner countries. A policy learning event for the Eastern Partnership took place on 10-11 November to disseminate good practice and identify challenges.
- **Employment:** To respond to increasing demand on skills anticipation mechanisms the ETF, Cedefop and the ILO worked on the publication of six methodological guides. The guides will be used in the Skills Matching project in the Eastern Partnership as well as relevant activities in other partner countries. Intensive analysis on NEETs in the ETF partner countries was undertaken and it will be used to raise awareness among the ETF partner countries. The ETF presented the results of its work on the effectiveness of Active Labour Market measures at a DG DEVCO training session in June and disseminated it in ETF partner countries.
- **Entrepreneurship and enterprise skills:** The good practice methodology was finalised setting the framework for a fully operational mechanism to be launched in 2015. Good practice identified on (i) youth entrepreneurship, (ii) women entrepreneurship, and (iii) skills for SMEs is to be disseminated in 2015 to inspire policy development.
- **Evidence based policy making:** The Torino Process has actively participating 26 countries, 10 validated reports and 14 countries engaged in the use of benchmarking. As regards regional meetings, for the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean, the Policy leaders Forum (PLF) was organised on 20 November in Turin, for Eastern Europe, the regional meeting will be organised in Georgia on the occasion of the Eastern Platform in December, for Central Asia, the meeting will be organised in Kyrgyzstan with the Central Asia Education Initiative in December. The Torino Process conference is scheduled for 3-4 June 2015, and the South Eastern Europe and Turkey regional meeting will be held in parallel.
- **The PRIME Initiative** was launched in 2014 in three countries, in Jordan on female participation in labour market, in Ukraine on rationalising the school network in regions and in Montenegro on the policy options impact assessment of the Bruges process.
- **South Eastern Europe and Turkey:** Under the FRAME project, a high-level regional conference was organised in Tirana, on 6 October. The second ACVT-DGVT preparatory meeting with the candidate countries was held in Tirana on 5 October. The ETF provided Cedefop with the chapter on the candidate countries as part of the Bruges VET monitoring report 2010-14. At the same time, the ETF provided support to a number of new strategies, concept papers and studies including the draft Strategy for Lifelong Entrepreneurship Learning 2015-19 (Montenegro), draft concept paper on non-formal learning (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), baseline study on quality in VET and mapping quality assurance (Bosnia and Herzegovina). In 2014, the ETF continued to work on implementation mechanisms for school-based continuing professional development of vocational teachers in Montenegro and conducted a sector skills councils capacity building for implementing NQFs in the region.
- **Southern and Eastern Mediterranean:** Algeria joined the project 'Qualifications for the Mediterranean'. Under this project methodological tools and new common profiles were developed, four capacity building actions at national level and two cross country actions were

completed. Under the EU GEMM project, the cross country mapping was finalised, all country actions to test multilevel governance approaches at local level were identified and they are ongoing with the exception of Libya. Two cross country capacity building actions for policy makers and social partners were carried out. As regards support to EU Delegations, the ETF identified an EU intervention in Lebanon, and is currently working in Tunisia. The support to the Jordanian EU Delegation on policy dialogue on qualifications was completed.

- **Eastern Europe:** For Eastern Partnership Platform 2, the ETF launched a network on skills matching 'Make it Match' and the second SBA assessment in the region. The final CVT conference was organised with CORLEAP and represented an opportunity to present the results of national actions on sector skills councils and the validation of non-formal and informal learning. In Ukraine, the ETF launched the PRIME project on options for optimising the vocational school network and supported the establishment of an NQF. In Georgia the ETF supported the Ministry of Labour in drafting a concept for establishing a labour market information system and in Moldova, the ETF supported the final draft of "Progressing towards a Moldovan NQF".
- **Central Asia:** At the School Development project dissemination conference 14 communities of practice of vocational schools in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan presented successes in social partner engagement and practical training arrangements, and improvements in teaching methodologies and teacher and trainer training. The regional policy dialogue identified education and business cooperation, teacher training and quality assurance as priorities for future dialogue. The ETF in cooperation with the Asian Development Bank and G20/ILO launched the mainstream use of tracer studies in VET in Kyrgyzstan.
- **ETF and the European Commission:** The EU Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou visited the ETF on 26 September. She addressed all staff. The EU Commissioner Laszlo Andor, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, and his Head of Cabinet, visited the ETF on 17 October and met with ETF management. Information on the ETF's contribution to various initiatives of the European Commission are presented in detail in the Spotlights report available on the ETF website.
- **Cooperation with Cedefop and Eurofound:** Cedefop and the ETF organised a Knowledge Sharing seminar on capacity building and communication strategy - how the ETF does it on 16 June 2014 in Thessaloniki. The ETF presented the key principles and scope of capacity building as a method of work in combination with policy analysis, support to the EC and dissemination and networking. The approach was accompanied by case studies. With Eurofound the ETF has exchanged studies, research and publications on entrepreneurship, migration, NEETS, representativeness of the social partners.
- **Cooperation with EU member states:** A joint event ETF-AFD event was organised in Lebanon, "Youth employability in Lebanon: the role of vocational education and training and entrepreneurship", 22-23 September 2014, Beirut. Spain, Italy and France are providing expertise and knowledge sharing to the ETF regional project on qualifications frameworks in SEMED; with the British Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the ETF organised a joint ETF - British Council "21st century skills in education" conference, Sarajevo, 10 September 2014. The Italian and Romanian authorities hosted peer learning events for Turkish stakeholders and representatives of the participating countries in FRAME and GEMM projects. She thanked the Austrian Board members for organising a study visit to Austria for Israeli stakeholders, with all expenses covered by the Austrian federal Ministry of Education.
- **Court of Auditors:** Two visits were made in 2014 and the last audit was very positive as it led to no findings. She also informed the Board members that starting from this Financial Audit onwards, new audit arrangements for the annual Agency Audit will apply. The second Audit on the Accounts

will be carried out by private audit companies. The contracting procedure has just been completed on the basis of technical specifications agreed between the Court and DG BUDG. The ETF will use an existing framework contract between DG BUDG and eight audit firms.

- The IAS did not perform any audit in 2014.
- **Establishment plan:** In 2014 up to end October, two new Temporary Agents joined and none left the ETF. Another Temporary Agent will start on 1/12/2014, while one is leaving on 30/11/2014. So as of 31/12/2014, 93 out of the 94 posts available for 2014 are expected to be occupied.
- **2014 revised Staff Regulation:** The revised Staff Regulations entered into force on 1/1/2014. The ETF will apply Commission Implementing Rules or may ask to derogate from some which are not applicable or have to be adapted to the ETF context. By October 2014, the ETF Governing Board adopted 18 by analogy. Derogation has been requested to DG HR on 25/9/2014 for five Commission Implementing Rules. The Governing Board will be asked in the coming months to adopt a series of Implementing Rules by written procedure in the following main areas: recruitment, appraisal, promotions and unpaid leave.
- **Villa Gualino in 2014:** After the signature of the contract in March 2013, the ETF has assumed direct control and management of the maintenance of the internal systems (water, gas, electricity), while the common systems remain under the overall management and maintenance of the Region. The contract runs until 31 December 2015. Extraordinary maintenance works in sectors C and D should be concluded by the end of November. The ETF has made contact with the regional authorities to start negotiations for renewing the building service contract from 2015. A meeting will take place with President of the Region, Sergio Chiamparino and Turin Mayor, Piero Fassino on 28 November.
- **Upcoming requests for written procedures:** The Governing Board will be asked to approve the amendment of the implementing rules to the ETF Financial Regulation (by 15 December) and to adopt a series of additional Implementing Rules for the new Staff Regulations (by June 2015).

### Updates on the Italian Presidency

**Daniele RAMPAZZO** (Italy) presented the main focus of the Italian Presidency, which had as its main objective establishing the new Commission and the new programme. The informal employment ministers meeting was very fruitful particularly as it was organised back to back with an environmental ministers meeting and focused on green jobs.

The High Level Conference on Employment organised in Milan targeted the Youth Guarantees, highlighting the need for more resources and easier access.

The next Education and Employment Councils are to be organised in December and will allow ministers to exchange views and experience on reforming labour markets in Europe and the fundamental role of education in labour market reform.

The European Council will be able to take some decisions on investment plans to focus the political framework on EU growth. The importance of the European semester was also stressed.

### Updates on the upcoming Latvian Presidency

**Liene BRAMANE**, Attaché Education – Conseiller, Permanent representation of the Republic of Latvia to the European Union and the future Chair of the Education Committee under the Latvian Presidency presented the main priorities of the Presidency in the area of education and training.

The three fundamental principles of the programme are: involvement, growth and sustainability. The Latvian presidency has set also three priority directions that embody the principles already mentioned:

- Competitive EU as a base for growth, improving living quality and investment in future development;
- Strengthening the information society for future development of the EU;
- Strengthening the role of the EU on a global scale, creating well-being and security in the EU's neighbouring regions.

As regards education and training, the priorities are linked to:

- Education and Training 2020 Joint Report, assessing progress made with respect to key Education and Training 2020 activities during the work cycle 2012-14 and identifying priority areas for the next Education and Training 2020 work cycle;
- Strengthening the key role of education and training for growth and well-being by promoting creativity, innovation and digital skills in early childhood education and primary education, enhancing cooperation in vocational education and training and exploring the further internationalisation of higher education.

The potential priorities and events in the field of general education and vocational education and training are the following:

- Promote creativity, innovation and digital skills in early childhood education and primary education;
- Access to quality education and financial investment;
- Competitive, accessible and prestigious VET – through strategic partnerships at national, regional and local levels. Linking the world of education with the world of work. Opening up VET for innovation.

In the field of higher education, the main priority is linked to the internationalization of higher education and employability. Under the framework of the Bologna Process, in Bucharest in April 2012, education ministers identified three key priorities for the future: mobility, employability, and quality. In 2015, the progress made in the individual countries will be assessed and agreement on the future course of the Bologna Process development and necessary actions will be reached.

The ministerial conference under ASEM will be also organised under the Latvian Presidency. Early discussions on the priorities of the ASEM ME5 agenda took place to further develop the ASEM education process and deepen cooperation between Asia and Europe in areas of common interest. The guiding principles for setting the priorities and agenda of ASEM ME5 include continuity of the process, consultation and collaboration for results and the commitment for cooperation.

The main events to be organised by the Latvian Presidency in the field of education and training are:

- Meeting of the High Level Group on Education and Training (Riga, 17-18 December, 2014)
- Education Committee meetings (Brussels, January and May, 2015)
- Meeting of the Directors General for Higher Education (Riga, 12-13 March, 2015)
- Meeting of Directors General for Vocational Education and Training (Riga, 20-21 April, 2015)
- 5th ASEM Meeting of Education Ministers (Riga, 27-28 April, 2015)
- Meeting of Directors General for Schools (Riga, 5-6 May, 2015)
- 2015 Bologna Ministerial Conference (Yerevan, 14-15 May, 2015)

- Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council (Brussels, May, 2015)
- ETF Torino Process Conference (Turin, 3-4 June, 2015)
- (tbc) Meeting of Ministers in charge of Vocational Education and Training, the European Social Partners and the European Commission on the short-term deliverables of the Bruges Communique for 2015-17 (Riga, 22 June 2015) preceded by the Meeting of Directors General (21 June 2015).