

REGIONAL STRATEGY PAPER 2020 UPDATE: CENTRAL ASIA

The **ETF Regional Strategy Central Asia 2017-2020** defines the following mid-term specific objectives for Central Asian countries:

- **Specific objective 1:** enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of European Union (EU) programmes in Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan through the provision of support to EU Delegations in these three countries.
- **Specific objective 2:** support regional cooperation through a regional Torino Process network, continuous professional development (CPD) initiative, the Central Asian Education Platform (CAEP) and its successor programme. Enhanced ownership and stakeholder involvement were defined as an expected result of the Torino Process at country level.

KAZAKHSTAN

A brief summary of key developments in VET and skills and EU and donor cooperation during 2018–19

Political and economic priorities for Kazakhstan have been defined in the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy, announced in 2012. The strategy aims at widespread economic, social and political reforms to position Kazakhstan among the 30 global economies by 2050. Key elements of the strategy are economic diversification and comprehensive support for entrepreneurship, a strong social policy based upon social guarantees and personal responsibility, and a recognition of the importance of knowledge and professional skills. The 2050 strategy is being implemented via all sectoral strategies and programmes, including education. The state programme of education development 2011–20 is the key policy document for education and VET, implemented via action programmes that are adjusted annually.

Kazakhstan continues to pursue its key development areas in VET. These include improvements to the dual approach, stronger cooperation between VET colleges and enterprises, implementation of new financing mechanisms and greater private sector involvement, including through strengthened roles in the management of the qualification system. The review and further development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as well as sectoral frameworks have been ongoing since 2018. Key developments in this respect are the setting up of certification centres under the responsibility of sectoral associations. It is expected that during 2020, NQF-related developments will support lifelong learning in general (including through the validation of informal and non-formal learning) as well as improved development opportunities for persons that are in employment.

In 2017, the VET for All programme was introduced to fund training in the working professions, the lowest level of VET qualification. For many years, Kazakhstan expected a high percentage of students to fund their own studies. However, since 2016 state-funded VET training and higher education has been increasing. For VET, an increase of state-funded training from 49.9% of students (in 2016, the year when the programme was introduced) to 56.4% of students (in 2018) can be observed.

Efforts have also been undertaken to ease the transition between VET and higher education, through a revision of admissions procedures for VET graduates and the development of a European Credit

System for VET (known as ECVET). Furthermore, in 2018, Kazakhstan introduced an Applied Bachelor (Level 5) qualification which is categorised as a VET qualification and delivered by VET colleges. By 2019, 48 VET colleges were involved in piloting this new type of qualification.

A more recent development is the specialisation of colleges. The Industry 4:0 programme promotes digitalisation of college administration and digital skills development. The Zhas Maman programme, which became operational in early 2019 and is expected to run until 2021, will provide a stimulus for the development of 180 colleges (at least ten per region/oblast) and ten higher education institutions. As part of the programme, 100 professions that are in high demand in the labour market have been identified, and participating colleges and higher education institutions will receive funding to improve their teaching equipment and workshops required for the teaching of the identified professions and to develop improved teaching approaches.

Kazakhstan introduced independent accreditation many years ago but is aware that its approach is best suited to higher education. It is therefore interested in European Quality Assurance in VET.

Due to its economic development status, Kazakhstan is not a recipient country and there is no significant donor activity. It has received a World Bank loan for skills development. The associated project is focused on development of a national qualifications system and skills enhancement for improved employment outcomes and productivity. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ, a German development agency) continues to support development of the dual approach.

An assessment of mid-term progress towards the ETF's 2020 objectives

As Kazakhstan is no longer a recipient of EU bilateral aid, specific objective 1 is not relevant.

Kazakhstan has participated fully in Torino Process implementation and demonstrated a high level of ownership. The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) has since 2016 adopted the Torino Process as the tool to be used by the VET subsector for the monitoring of developments and the identification of new areas for development. The Torino Process is mentioned in the education strategy and the education development programme. State funding has been earmarked for the Torino Process up to 2021 and a work plan has been prepared. Since 2017, for each round of the Torino Process (at national and subnational level), the MoES has defined a number of priority themes to be explored as part of the assessment. For the 2019 national round, the MoES has requested the national Torino Process team to explore three themes:

- challenges encountered with the inclusion of students with special needs in VET;
- the extent to which participation in WorldSkills has enhanced the prestige of VET among employers and potential students;
- the extent to which designated VET colleges are able to disseminate good practice.



Consistent efforts have been made to strengthen the capacity of the national team in charge of Torino Process analysis. In 2017, Kasipkor took over the task of Torino Process implementation and received initial training and coaching from the ETF from 2017 to 2019. Since 2019, emphasis has been put on stronger involvement of other key stakeholder organisations (such as the Ministry of Labour, the Workforce Development Centre under the Ministry of Labour, the Information Analytical Centre under the MoES and the Graduate School of Education of Nazarbayev University) in the drafting of the National Reporting Framework (NRF) in order to strengthen the lifelong learning outlook of the NRF. It is also hoped that stronger involvement of the Ministry of Labour and the Workforce Development Centre will support the implementation of recommendations resulting from the Torino Process and will lead to closer interaction between the MoES and the Ministry of Labour on skills-related aspects, which are covered by both ministries.

Because regions play an important role in the management and financing of VET and in line with national decentralisation reforms, Kazakhstan piloted Torino Process assessment at subnational level in four regions in 2017. In 2018 the approach was expanded to other twelve regions. It is expected that following the completion of the national Torino Process round by the end of 2019, another round of subnational assessments will be launched in 2020, covering eight regions and then completed in 2021 by other seven regions. While the national Torino Process assessment results in recommendations at national level, the subnational assessment results in recommendations for each participating region.

Kazakhstan can showcase impressive developments on stakeholder involvement. A wide range of regional stakeholders took part in the subnational assessment in 2017–18. Systematic focus groups in each region enabled hundreds of VET staff and students to participate directly in the discussion. For the 2019 national round, Kasipkor has maintained the focus group approach (though at national level). In view of the priority themes outlined by the MoES, special efforts have been undertaken during 2019 to involve more sector associations and employers and civil society organisations in focus groups.

Kazakhstan continued to participate in work-based learning exchanges through the ETF annual forum on work-based learning. Work-based learning is a priority for Kazakhstan, which is continuing to develop its dual approach system. By 2018, around 60% of VET colleges had introduced the dual approach in at least one profession, while a total of 39 000 students were enrolled in dual courses. It is expected that the percentage of colleges offering at least one dual course will increase to 80% for the 2019 academic year. A key challenge for dual system sustainability is employer involvement, including through the provision of qualified in-company trainers. The development of financial and non-financial incentives that encourage employers to take on a strong role represents a priority for Kazakhstan.

In 2018 to spring 2019, Kazakhstan engaged in the ETF public/private partnership study, as part of an attempt to diversify VET financing mechanisms. The country is exploring how to increase private sector involvement in VET. One method is delegated management of VET colleges by the private sector, which was first introduced in late 2017 and early 2018.



Actions planned for 2020

The first objective for ETF actions will be to support the national Torino Process team via coaching and by encouraging stronger interaction with key stakeholders (Ministry of Labour, Workforce Development Centre, National Chamber of Entrepreneurs 'Atameken', the Information Analytical Centre under the MoES) in order to support a holistic view of VET and skills in a lifelong learning perspective. In addition, in the course of 2020, peer exchanges and learning among Torino Process team members from different partner countries will be supported during the Eastern Partnership regional Torino Process meeting, to which representatives from Central Asian countries will be invited, and the Central Asian regional meeting, to which representatives of Eastern Partnership teams will be invited.

As has been the case in previous years, the ETF will host a training mission for Torino Process team members to ETF premises, to share updates on the latest EU-level developments in VET as well as EU and ETF partner country good practice. As far as possible, such a visit will be coordinated with a similar visit planned for Torino Process team members from Uzbekistan, so that representatives of both teams can compare Torino Process implementation practices at national and subnational level.

As a follow-up to the multi-country public/private partnership study conducted in 2018–19, the ETF will organise in 2020 a dissemination event in Kazakhstan. During 2020, the ETF will also contribute to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report for Kazakhstan.

The ETF will continue to provide opportunities for key stakeholders from Kazakhstan to take part in the work-based learning forum.

In early 2020, Kazakhstan will participate in a pilot scheme for the implementation of a differentiation approach to ETF country work, aiming to foster international cooperation in education and training.

The ETF will also continue to provide regular webinars on the development of qualification systems in Central Asia. At the request of active participating countries, the ETF will take part in national workshops organised by national stakeholder organisations.



KYRGYZSTAN

A brief summary of key developments in VET and skills and EU and donor cooperation during 2018–19

In 2018, Kyrgyzstan adopted the Sustainable Development Strategy 2018–40, in which digitalisation, including e-governance and digital skills, is a key development area. In the same year, the 2018–20 Action Plan was approved under the Education Development Strategy 2020. This is the first action plan in which initial and secondary VET and higher education are presented in a coordinated way. The objectives are implementation of the NQF, improvement of the Ministry of Education’s education management information system, more development opportunities for VET staff and management, the introduction of entrepreneurship learning in secondary vocational education and training (SVET) and the introduction of a tracer study approach to SVET.

In 2018, the education management information system was launched for initial vocational education and training (IVET), supported by an Asian Development Bank project. Per capita funding was introduced for IVET, but excludes schools in border and remote areas and those providing teaching for language minorities. The first pilot projects are underway to better integrate initial and secondary VET. A pilot project initiated by the VET Agency on a dual approach in IVET has been expanded to two further sectors in 2019.

Reflections have been ongoing since 2014 on possible approaches to rationalising the VET system. While initial actions focused on the merger of a number of IVET schools, the focus of attention as of 2018 changed towards a better interaction between initial and secondary VET provision. This development coincided with a stronger focus on the roles regions play in socio-economic development. As a result, in all regions of Kyrgyzstan, working groups have been set up involving IVET and SVET providers, regional administration and central government representatives to develop objectives and indicators for the regional VET systems. In two pilot regions (Chui and Jalal-Abad), regional plans up to 2021 have been developed and are being implemented. Furthermore, pilots are under way to better align IVET and SVET curricula.

The main donors working on VET and labour market issues are the Asian Development Bank, with a project on skills development, which provides support for the development of the NQF, secondary VET and the skills development fund; the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the G20, working on results-oriented VET strategy, indicators and standards; and GIZ and the EU through budget support, which also covers initial and secondary VET as well as NQF-related developments.

An assessment of mid-term progress towards the ETF’s 2020 objectives

Specific objective 1 is not relevant to Kyrgyzstan during this period.

Regarding specific objective 2, the VET Agency has played an active role in the Torino Process since the first round in 2010. The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for coordinating the fifth round of the process and the vice-minister for VET and higher education is the national coordinator. In 2019 Kyrgyzstan established for the first time an author group, fully responsible for drafting the NRF.

Due to the as yet limited experience of the group, the ETF has provided continuous coaching support to group members.

Kyrgyzstan has a strong tradition of stakeholder involvement. Key ministries, employers and VET provider representatives have participated in the Torino Process from the outset and have been involved in the 2019 Torino Process launch (which also included the first joint assessment), a number of focus groups as well as discussions on the draft NRF and its conclusions. In line with the increasing importance of regions, stakeholder meetings were organised in the two pilot regions for VET rationalisation, Jalal-Abad and Chui.

It is difficult to assess to what extent Torino Process recommendations of the first four rounds have been used to support VET developments, as Kyrgyzstan relies heavily on donor support to initiate and pilot new initiatives. However, key Torino Process recommendations have been implemented in the last few years. With the participation of the Ministry of Education and VET Agency staff in the preparation of the NRF, it can be expected that a more systematic use of recommendations will be made in the future.

Actions planned for 2020

During the first half of 2020, the ETF will maintain close contact with the Torino Process national team that has drafted the NRF (due to be finalised by December 2019) regarding the preparation of the ETF assessment as well as the ETF regional report.

During 2020, the ETF will continue to provide regular webinars on the development of qualification systems in Central Asia. At the request of active participating countries, the ETF will take part in national workshops organised by national stakeholder organisations.



TAJIKISTAN

A brief summary of key developments in VET and skills and EU and donor cooperation during 2018–19

Tajikistan has established a National Development Strategy 2030 and a National Education Development Strategy (NSED) for the period 2012 to 2020. The NSED is currently under revision with support from the EU, United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The government views IVET as an education priority and a concept for IVET governance has been developed within the EU support programme. With the support of the EU programme, the IVET law is under revision. The EU project organised a study visit to Bulgaria for Tajik officials to get to know the Bulgarian VET system in preparation for changes to the Tajik IVET law. The MoES, in cooperation with other national institutions and donors, has prepared a new education code and its approval is expected in 2020.

The EU Delegation has started a process of consultations with the EU Member States, international organisations and local stakeholders. On the basis of these consultations, the EU will prepare a country assessment, which will be used for the selection of priority sectors the EU Delegation will be working on during the next multiannual financial framework. EU interventions are ongoing in the education and VET sectors, mainly through the Quality Education Support Programme I, which has progressed in several areas, such as the Teachers Competency Framework, Staff Appraisal System, and linking initial vocation education and training (IVET) and business. The EU Delegation, with the support of the ETF, is preparing the second phase of its Quality Education Support Programme II.

Current VET developments include an Asian Development Bank programme to strengthen technical VET. UNICEF is exploring skills and employment in relation to adolescents and will pilot its own activities in Tajikistan shortly.

The ILO and G20 work in the VET sector on skills needs and labour market issues related to the following elements: strengthening tripartite capacity and social dialogue; elimination of child labour; formalisation of the informal economy; and increasing decent employment opportunities for men and women, including young people and returning labour migrants. A second phase of the Applying the G20 Training Strategy: A Partnership of the ILO and the Russian Federation (G20TS) concludes in 2019. This deals with skills development policies in relation to the ILO’s human resources development and sustainable development goals; sectoral bodies’ use of occupational standards, vocational qualifications and competency-based training programmes; predicting future skills requirements; and upgrading, approving and applying the TVET institution manager training programmes in selected countries.

DVV International (the German Adult Education Association) is working on adult training and rural development, and improving the quality of VET for disadvantaged groups. It supports the development networks of organisations in formal and non-formal adult education and improving the legal framework for adult education.

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) supports the University of Central Asia (UCA) in Tajikistan, which offers vocational training. The AKDN views continuing education as a key driver to advancing the professional and vocational skills in the country. It seeks to improve the capacity and

status of critical professions, such as teachers, nurses, engineers, and entrepreneurs, through professional short courses, certificate programmes, mentoring and communities of practice. The UCA School of Professional and Continuing Education provides formal, university-based, non-degree educational programmes.

The project of the Islamic Development Bank, financed by the Global Partnership for Education, is being developed. The World Bank is currently also preparing an Early Child Development programme, which will have an education component.

An assessment of mid-term progress towards the ETF's 2020 objectives

The EU Delegation asked the ETF to help identify and formulate the VET component of the Quality in Education Support Programme (QESP II). The ETF has supported the successful preparation of the concept note and is expected to support the development of the action document before the end of 2019. Implementation is expected in the second half of 2020 depending upon the chosen modality of implementation. The ETF also participates in the project steering committee of QESP I, which will also conclude in 2020. The aim is now to scale up reforms in education and VET. The ETF has been working on the specification since the end of 2018. The current planning leans towards an investment programme, to be managed by KfW, using the services of the Tajik NSIF. This will be focused on the refurbishment and equipping of teacher training centres, as well as schools in the regions. A technical assistance component will focus on competence-based education, teachers' CPD and assessment. One component with UNICEF will use schools for non-formal training. UNICEF will coordinate a grant component.

The ETF supports regional cooperation through the Torino Process and its contribution to the now completed CAEP II. Enhanced ownership and stakeholder involvement is expected in the fifth round of the Torino Process up to 2021. The Tajik Torino Process coordinator participated in the ETF evaluation and subnational workshop in Turin in 2018. Tajikistan aims to expand participation and promote the use of evidence and analysis in the current Torino Process round. The national report is planned to be completed by December 2019.

The international community is encouraging Tajik VET stakeholders, including the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Population (MoLME) and the MoES, to strengthen coordination and cooperation. The ETF and the Torino Process will foster these developments.

Within the regional CAEP, the ETF has maintained high levels of participation in workshops on CPD and the use of evidence in the VET policy life cycle. Workshop participants developed administrative data tools that have been used by the MoLME.

The Tajik stakeholders have been active in proposing actions and modalities for the future phases of EU–Central Asian regional cooperation. The ETF has been charged by the European Commission to



develop the concept for this work. This concept, including modality of implementation, is expected to be decided in 2019 to commence in 2020. Tajikistan will need to be a key player in this.

Actions planned for 2020

The ETF is supporting the EU Delegation in the design and operationalisation of the QESP II, a larger-scale EU intervention in education, VET and employment policies. It assisted, first, in the preparation of a concept note in 2018–19 and is now working on the design and formulation of the Action Document. The programme will create an opportunity to help Tajikistan strengthen capacity in areas related to policy life cycle, implementation and public service delivery. The programme will provide an opportunity to reinforce coordination among international organisations, with a facilitator and knowledge broker role for the ETF.

The Torino Process can be used as a strategic tool. Through strong support from the Ministry of Labour and synergy with the EU Delegation and EU actions, it can help develop inter-ministerial cooperation and coordination, engagement with stakeholders and better use of available evidence. With a new coordinator and a relatively low level of capacity within the Ministry of Labour, the ETF will support implementation. Key areas will be stakeholder and working group establishment, evidence collection and use, and analytical development. The Torino Process should provide relevant insights into the reform progress. A wider working group and inclusion of international organisations will be important in this cycle of the Torino Process. The launch event in mid 2019, with focus groups and stakeholder discussions in the summer and autumn, should conclude with the national report being agreed in December 2019. The ETF assessment should be completed in spring 2020 and a regional event held in the same year to present national and ETF regional analysis, possibly within the frame of the CAEP successor programme.



TURKMENISTAN

A brief summary of key developments in VET and skills and EU and donor cooperation during 2018–19

There have been no major changes in VET policies or institutional settings although recent presidential instructions have addressed the need to develop the vocational training system, provide young people with improved pathways to work, and develop the link between school and the world of work. Current EU activities are limited to a programme which has provided labour market system training, study tours to Germany, Belgium and Poland, English teacher seminars and some mini projects on technology-enabled learning. No new EU VET projects have been confirmed, with the current ones set to conclude by the end of 2020.

The VET activities of EU Member States and international organisations are limited in Turkmenistan. The EU projects in Turkmenistan, the CAEP and UNESCO organised an International Forum within the education conference in November 2018. Donors such as GIZ expect some regional projects to involve Turkmenistan. UNESCO has previously proposed TVET policy reviews and other system analysis but this has never proceeded to action with the authorities. UNICEF maintains activities more focused on early learning, school resilience and children.

An assessment of mid-term progress towards the ETF's 2020 objectives

The overall ETF objectives in Turkmenistan are to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of EU programmes by responding to European Commission requests. Currently, there are no requests for EU support. The ETF has not been involved in the EU VET project steering committee since its inception in 2017.

Although VET projects in Turkmenistan will conclude in 2020, it is hoped that the establishment of a full EU delegation in Ashgabat will stimulate more interaction and ETF support for human capital development actions in the country and region and generate more EU support requests to the ETF.

Regional cooperation was supported through a Torino Process network and CAEP in 2018, but stakeholder engagement has been limited. Through the CAEP, the ETF maintained some Turkmen participation in workshops on CPD and the use of evidence in the VET policy cycle.

The Turkmen stakeholders have been engaged in proposing actions and modalities for the future phases of EU–Central Asian regional cooperation. The ETF has been charged by the European Commission to develop the concept for this work. This concept, including modality of implementation, is expected to be decided in 2019 to commence in 2020.

Actions planned for 2020

The ETF seeks synergies with the current EU VET project to develop the content of the work and raise visibility. At the annual education conference in 2018, the ETF joined EU and Turkmen experts to present Turkmen–EU cooperation projects in education and VET. The Torino Process was also

presented on this occasion. This regional policy dialogue, together with plans for the CAEP successor programme, will be updated in the 2019 conference in November. This would also provide another opportunity for UNESCO and the ETF to consider their bilateral cooperation in the country.

Turkmenistan has only ever participated as an observer in the Torino Process. Through cooperation with all EU projects and CAEP, a joint section of the conference was organised to share EU and international experience in education and VET. The ETF presented the Torino Process 2018–20. This did not result in the country joining the project.

The ETF maintains a level of responsiveness and flexibility. The environment is very fluid and can change rapidly. The ETF's ability to respond is valuable to the Turkmen authorities in their reform efforts. Opportunities for synergy and cooperation with EU actions will increase with the agreed establishment of an EU Delegation in 2020. Likewise, the recently re-established Erasmus+ National Office may provide cooperation opportunities for the ETF in education, training and learning. Good communication and joint actions with the limited EU and international community, such as Germany, Italy, the UK and Romania, the British Council, GIZ, UN bodies (such as UNESCO, UNICEF and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) and the ILO, are very beneficial to the country.



UZBEKISTAN

A brief summary of key developments in VET and skills and EU and donor cooperation during 2018–19

Uzbekistan's Development Strategy 2017–21 includes an action strategy on five priority development areas, drawn up as a five-year plan by the government. Several reform areas are relevant to the VET activities of the EU and the ETF, including the development of a VET vision and strategy and a roadmap for qualifications development; improvement of labour market and labour force data and work-based learning; and a focus on governance issues related to central coordination, subnational and sectoral development and quality assurance. The country seeks an open international model of cooperation, with opportunities to gain experience of good practices in other countries.

The EU and international organisations support VET and labour-related issues in Uzbekistan. These include the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, GIZ, the British Council, the Korea International Cooperation Agency, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, and DVV International. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development began activities involving business development in 2018–19. Activities include skills for employability, occupational standards, qualifications, training in the food sector and a situational analysis of the education system. The EU delegation, with ETF expert support, developed a rural development programme for 2020+.

An assessment of mid-term progress towards the ETF's 2020 objectives

At the request of the EU Delegation, in 2018 the ETF drafted a concept note for the forthcoming EU VET and rural development programme. It successfully supported the development of the action document, which was approved in mid 2019, and will now proceed to implementation in 2020.

The current Uzbek Torino Process development has advanced considerably from the previous cycle. The First Deputy Minister (previous Torino Process coordinator) has built a multidisciplinary team for the next cycle and endorsed the value and impact of the project, especially for its positive contribution to the Presidential National Development Strategy and Action Plan. Country reforms will promote even greater participation and use of evidence, and will increase the visibility of the Torino Process nationally and subnationally. Two pilot regions are included in this new round in order to gain insight into how to use the Torino Process in all Uzbek regions: Andijan and Sirdarya. The Ministry of Secondary Specialised Education has also agreed a work plan with the ETF for 2020.

Due to the many ongoing reforms, broader cross-institutional cooperation will be needed in the VET stakeholder network. The ETF has been asked to support this process along with the EU delegation. As new bodies and agencies are created, coordination becomes more critical. The Torino Process is a valuable tool for this type of cooperation and coordination and to develop policy dialogue.

VET stakeholders are well organised at national to subnational level, although the current decentralisation reforms will create the need for new actors. This is also true at state level, where new VET responsibilities are being assigned to other ministries such as employment and agriculture. New state agencies for quality, innovation and young people generate a stronger need for coordination,

cooperation and information sharing. There is an awareness of this and a desire to ensure adequate governance structures.

In the regional CAEP project, the ETF maintained high levels of Uzbek participation in workshops on CPD and the use of evidence in the VET policy life cycle.

Uzbek stakeholders have been very active in proposing actions and modalities for the future phases of EU–Central Asian regional cooperation, including proposals to take leadership of some topics and common themes as well as host events and activities. The ETF has been charged by the European Commission to develop the concept for this work. This concept, including modality of implementation, is expected to be decided in 2019 to commence in 2020.

Actions planned for 2020

The ETF will continue to support the EU delegation in the implementation of the EU VET and rural development project, with the approval of the Action Document in mid-2019. The ETF is waiting to see the nature of future cooperation with the EU delegation and the implementing agency of the UNESCO programme. It is expected that further EU programmes will be developed in the fields of education, training and human capital development.

The new round of the Torino Process was very well received during the launch in mid-2019 and appropriate levels of resources from the Centre for Specialised Secondary Education have been assigned. The process is becoming a strategic tool within the VET system and strongly linked to the Presidential National Development Strategy and Action Plan, in particular due to the contribution the Torino Process lends to policy dialogue, international cooperation, education/business cooperation and economic development. Willingness to pilot the Torino Process in two subnational regions is a strong sign of ownership and indicates that the analysis could be extended to all regions in the future. Strong endorsement of the EU delegation of the Torino Process adds to this success.

The ETF support to the continuous vocational education facilitates better inter-ministerial cooperation and coordination, engagement with stakeholders and a more effective use of available evidence. The launch event in mid-2019 was considered very successful, and with focus groups and stakeholder discussions in the summer and autumn, the national report is expected to conclude and be approved in December 2019. The ETF assessment should be completed in spring 2020 and a regional event held in the same year to present national and ETF regional analysis, possibly within the frame of the CAEP successor programme.

During 2020, a structured study visit to the ETF would be of high value to the Centre for Specialised Secondary Education and would provide opportunity to explore the policy dialogue development as well as key priority thematic and reform areas for the country, including qualifications and quality assurance. The ETF could add value to this by combining this visit with the planned Kazakhstan visit. A local programme could also be developed to see providers, businesses and schools in action.

