

Live&Learn

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM ACROSS THE ETF COMMUNITY

ISSUE 37 – OCTOBER 2016

A close-up portrait of Predrag Bošković, a man with short dark hair and green eyes, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie. He has a small yellow microphone clipped to his lapel.

Interview with **Predrag Bošković**

Montenegrin Education Minister



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The European Training Foundation is an EU agency that helps transition and developing countries to harness the potential of their human capital through the reform of education, training and labour market systems, and in the context of the EU's external relations policy. We are based in Turin, Italy, and have been operational since 1994.

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THE BENEFITS OF BETTER VET

Young people around the world aspire to find jobs that match their skills, provide decent wages, good working conditions and career paths. But high youth unemployment rates and sluggish economies continue to make the transition into today's world of work tough. As part of the European Union's continued efforts to tackle this issue, the GEMM initiative was borne. Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean was designed by the ETF to improve the employability of young people, female participation rates and multi-level partnerships across the region. Pilot projects were set up in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine* and Tunisia. While the overall goal was the same, each pilot project was unique, designed locally to ensure maximum impact. The three-year EU-funded GEMM initiative ended in August. The results? A third of participants were women, 100+ local enterprises were involved and hundreds of work placements. These achievements are only set to continue. Find out more in the **Project update**.

Addressing the challenge of youth unemployment requires a range of responses. Creating a climate of entrepreneurship in the classroom is one of them. Targeted education policies can support young people to create their own business and jobs. The European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework, in the **News&views** section, is the latest in a series of European Union policy documents underlining the importance of fostering an entrepreneurial mindset through education and training. The ETF has been busy discussing the framework and facilitating actions with its partner countries. One country leading the way in this area is Montenegro. In the cover **Interview**, Minister of Education Predrag Bošković explains how entrepreneurial learning is being promoted throughout education, higher education

and VET, and the positive results being realised.

From Montenegro we travel east to Moldova, which is moving towards a dual vocational system based on the models of Austria and Germany. The dual approach pairs education with on-the-job training, resulting in a smoother transition to work for many learners. As part of the ETF's **Voices from the field** series, reporter Zarina Alimbaeva looks at the developments, shedding light on the reality of VET in the partner countries and the impact on real people.

Live&Learn strives to dig out the stories behind the data sets. In this issue's **Country focus** we head to Ukraine to see how the Torino Process is helping VET specialists in conflict-torn areas plan for the future. We also check-in on the country's ambitious plan to improve its vocational education and training system by rolling out the Torino Process to all regions.

In every issue we strive to bring you reports about developments taking place on the ground in the partner countries – the frontline. The ETF is working just as hard behind the scenes, providing support to EU external relations policies and assistance. What does this mean? Find

out more when we speak to Outi Kärkkäinen, team leader of the Support to EU Assistance in the Context of EU External Policies, one of seven thematic areas guiding the ETF's work in human capital development.

In the words of Marianne Thyssen, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, the ETF provides a common language to translate experience and expertise, and to learn from each other – EU member states and institutions on one hand, and partner countries on the other.

She continues ...

'We seek nothing less than the transformation of VET systems in the pursuit of stronger, fairer, and more open societies and economies. While this transformation might test our resources and our imaginations, the benefits will be felt globally.'

Commissioner Thyssen's reflection on the role and contribution of the ETF can be found in the forward to a new magazine-style publication – ETF Highlights and Insights. So once you're done with this issue of Live&Learn, be sure to check it out!: <http://goo.gl/xlPbJ8> ■



* This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

MEET PREDRAG BOŠKOVIĆ

Promoting an entrepreneurial spirit equips learners with the mindset, competences and skills to build competitive economies. When it comes to advancing entrepreneurial learning throughout the education system, and supporting the small business environment, Montenegro is a regional leader. Live&Learn caught up with Minister of Education Predrag Bošković to find out more.



number of challenges, for example, schools were simply not well equipped for training. Over the past few years, the government has invested a lot in vocational schools, but still we face some challenges, for example a lack of interest. We have been campaigning to promote vocational education.

What is the VET Development Strategy 2015–2020 about?

Supply and demand in the labour market is something that we need to tackle. This strategy is about good policy in VET that will see graduates into jobs. It is an advantage that we are a small country because we can change fast and seek to provide every student with a job. That is why we have been building better connections with the private sector, which, in the end, is where graduates get jobs.

Montenegro is a fast growing tourist destination. How is the hospitality sector working with vocational education institutions?

We are seeing more and more collaboration between business and VET. Previously, some of the biggest hotel chains were collaborating with schools outside Montenegro to bring in seasonal workers. Now this is changing. Each year, more and more vocational schools are cooperating with the private sector, and

How is entrepreneurial learning promoted in education?

Entrepreneurship is something that has been missing in Montenegro, particularly during the socialist era when private initiative was far behind the role of the state. Now, entrepreneurial learning is high on the agenda. We are promoting it throughout the education system and in the labour market. For example, we have subjects focussed specifically on entrepreneurship from primary schools through to secondary schools, and into higher education. There is also a focus on foreign languages, in particular English.

We don't know exactly what jobs will exist in say four years time, but we are sure that entrepreneurship will always exist. Without it, there is no development. Entrepreneurial learning is about mindset, it is about tradition.

What developments are being made in the area of vocational education and training (VET)?

From agriculture through to tourism - entrepreneurship is a pillar of vocational education. More generally, vocational education and training has been facing a

placing a much greater focus on practical training. Learners undertake practical training in the hotel chains and hospitality companies. This increased interaction is changing mentality and delivering positive results.

The ETF's latest Small Business Act assessment shows that Montenegro is excelling when it comes to improving the business environment for SMEs. What is driving this progress?

The Small Business Act is a project that gives us many possibilities to develop. Small business in Montenegro is important for national development. As a small country, we cannot count on big companies and businesses, so more and more people are going into their own business. We have an advantage because we are not a big traditional economy like Germany or France. SMEs are developing from the ground up – when you start something from zero it is easy to develop the right way.

What kind of partner is the ETF?

We are putting a priority on education and cooperation with the ETF. We put a lot of value on the collaboration because it has such a positive impact and gives us new

perspectives. Sometimes it is much easier to see problems from the outside when you are not absorbed in domestic politics. However, progress also needs to be regional. Good things that happen for Montenegro mean far less if good things

are not happening in neighbouring countries. We need to see good developments at a regional level to have the ultimate impact. ■

Photos: ETF/Andrea Guermani



Minister Bošković shared an update on VET developments with members of the ETF's Governing Board at a meeting in Turin.

Entrepreneurial Communities

A long-running public-private partnership has boosted the hospitality sector in the Montenegrin resort town of Budva. It was one of ten Entrepreneurial Communities (read about the innovative programme in Live&Learn Issue 35), which formed the centrepiece of a two-day dialogue between policymakers, practitioners, and entrepreneurial community representatives in Brussels in March, 2016.

Tanja Kazanegra, from Budva's municipal government, described how the partnership formed: 'We put the municipality into the chain of connections, so that government, municipality, and private sector initiatives came together to support the local labour market.' Anita Mitrovic Milic's Hotel Education Centre provides the private sector element in the partnership. With hospitality a priority sector in Montenegro there was demand to improve the industry and the skills that support it. The shift to a market economy in the late 1990s created the need for a new VET and adult education system. 'We had to



respond to the needs of a rapidly emerging entrepreneurial ecosystem,' said Milic, 'by finding partners in Montenegro willing to share skills and knowledge.'

Watch the film on the ETF YouTube channel here:

The Local Skills Matter publication, featuring all ten innovative partnerships, is available here:



FROM MONTENEGRO TO WALES: ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING HAS NO LIMITS

Exchanging ideas, information and experience is a powerful way to learn. The ETF coordinates regular study visits for delegations from the 29 partner countries to see good practices in partner countries and across Europe. While the schedules and scope vary, knowledge sharing and peer learning are always on the agenda. Following on from our feature interview with Minister Bošković, Live&Learn revisits a Montenegrin delegation's study trip to Wales in late 2015.



Kevin Mansell-Abell is in his 20s and has been running a successful business for more than a decade. The founder of creative marketing company, That Media Group, also takes time to mentor young people around Wales, helping them to realise their own business aspirations.

The award-winning entrepreneur took time out of his busy schedule to mentor another group of eager learners from much farther away – Montenegro. Kevin met with a delegation of high-level officials from Montenegro, discovering more about the building blocks for lifelong entrepreneurial learning.

He shared his passion for working with young people, inspiring, encouraging and equipping them with the skills to start their own business.

‘You can achieve anything. Hard work and determination are key to success in life and business. I was taught to never give up, but believe in what you do and what you can achieve,’ he tells Live&Learn. ‘It’s great to be part of a network that’s helping young

people overcome obstacles to achieve their business and enterprising success.’

The meeting was just one stop on the two-day study visit organised by the ETF, which included meetings with business leaders, government officials and schools. Welsh Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science, Edwina Hart, welcomed the group.

With its autonomous education system, Wales stands out in the European Union, particularly in the area of entrepreneurial learning. Its well-established governance framework sees entrepreneurship promoted across all levels of formal education.

Montenegro is keen to see how cross-stakeholder cooperation works, says ETF expert Kristien Van den Eynde, who helped organise the study visit.

‘The visit was designed to demonstrate how policy at national level translates into practice at school level, and particularly how each player in the entrepreneurship ecosystem plays its part. The Welsh hosts ensured the Montenegrin delegation could see the results of its entrepreneurship drive.’

Study trips help participants gain insights to better inform policy design and implementation. Reflecting on the approach, Montenegrin Minister of Education Predrag Bošković says these types of experiences are very valuable.

‘The UK has such a long tradition in developing businesses and vocational education and training. In Wales, the delegation learned what types of entrepreneurial learning systems could be implemented.’

‘We’ve had a lot of positive study visits in Europe, including Germany, which is a great example of the cooperation between private and public sectors. The dual system is a really good example for Montenegro and for Europe.’

‘It’s great to learn first-hand from other countries what works, and also to identify the issues that we can potentially avoid.’ ■

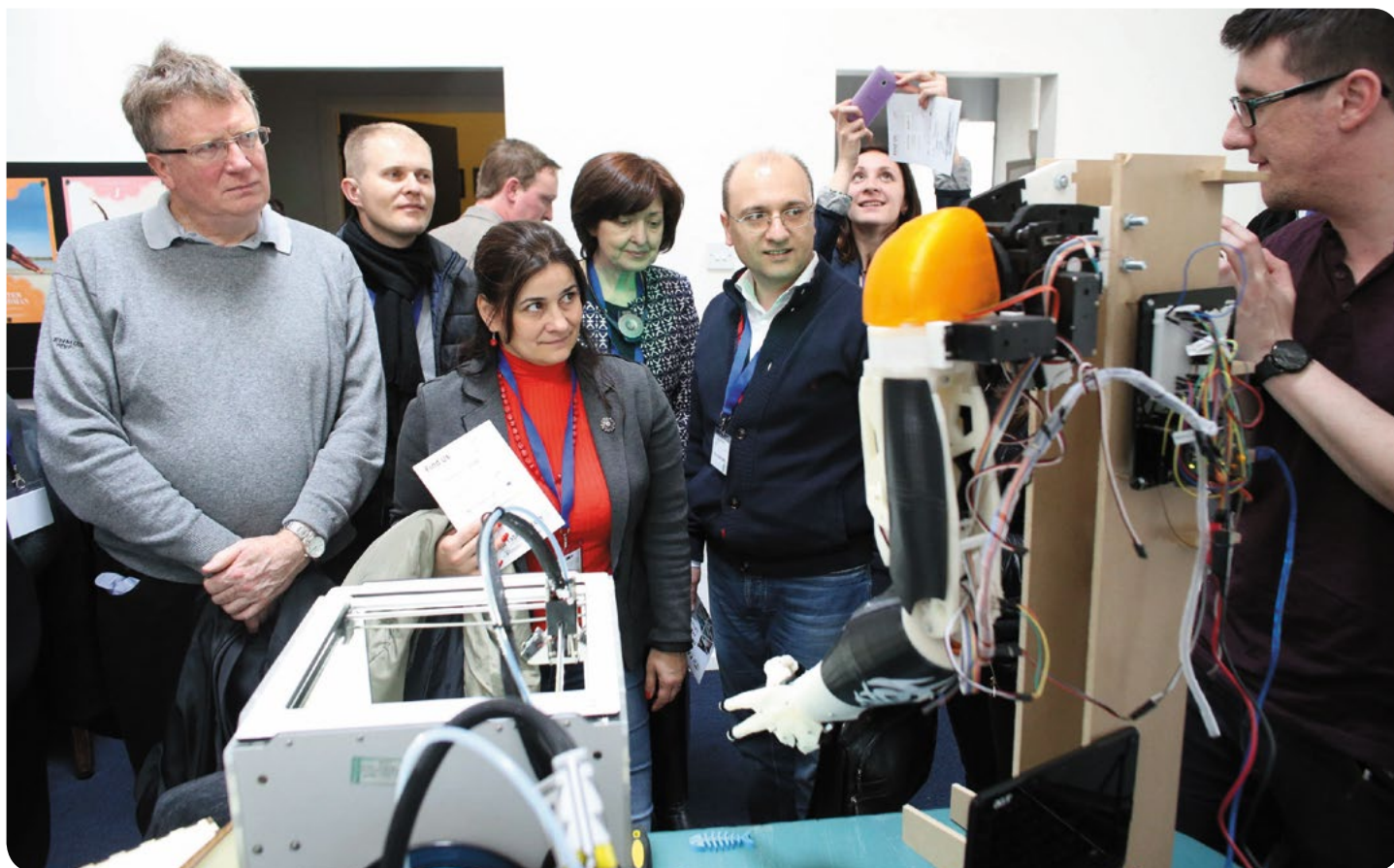
Want to know more about what the ETF is doing in the area of Entrepreneurial Learning? Check out the short animation on the YouTube channel here:



Minister Hart shares smiles and insights with the Montenegrin delegation.

Text: Susanna Dunkerley/ETF
Photos: ETF/That Media Group

TEACH US TO BE THE AUTHORS OF OUR OWN LIVES



Queen's University in Belfast was the venue for the Second International Conference on Entrepreneurial Learning in the European Union's Eastern Partnership Region. Delegates shared developments and pledged concrete actions in their respective countries to promote the Entrepreneurship Competence Framework, launched in June by the European Commission.

Policymakers in many countries are looking at how competences that support entrepreneurship can be introduced into the curriculum in general education, higher education and vocational education and training (VET). The EU's Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – share this interest as they work on market reforms and build closer trading links with the EU. The ETF's conference, European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework – Implications for Curriculum and Teacher Training, provided an opportunity for all countries to take stock of their own developments and borrow on the European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework.

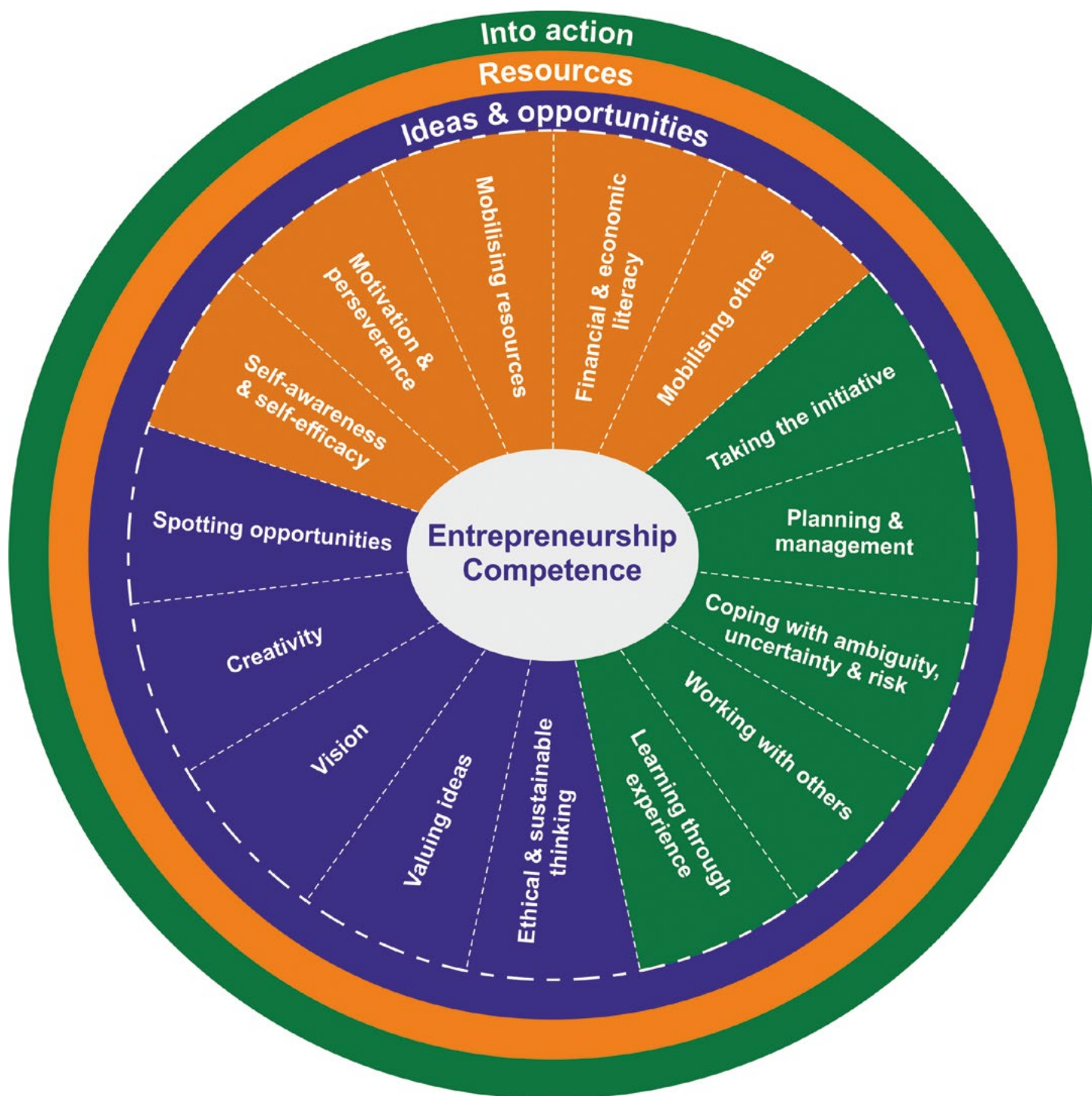
Set in the gothic grandeur of Queen's University Belfast, the event brought

together local entrepreneurs and educators, international experts, and colleagues from the EaP countries with a mix of positions, backgrounds and experience. This offered participants a 'window of opportunity,' said ETF specialist in entrepreneurship and enterprise skills, Olena Bekh, because 'we're not in the office and this is a big chance to bring back something really new.' The conference programme not only discussed how to get entrepreneurship more embedded in education but through local site field visits, debates, interviews and creative workshops, delegates were able to see how successful approaches to entrepreneurial learning promotion depend on a whole entrepreneurship ecosystem. Northern Ireland was the EU's Entrepreneurial Region of the Year in 2015.

Wheel of fortune

The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework sees entrepreneurship as acting upon opportunities and ideas and creating value from these. Value can be financial, cultural or social. Several questions arise from this definition, such as: Where do 'opportunities and ideas' come from? What does it mean 'to act upon' them? What happens to the 'value' created? These questions have implications for policymakers and education and training providers as they determine how the school curriculum, and teaching and learning processes, can be adapted to build the next entrepreneurial generation.

The framework was elaborated following extensive EU stakeholder consultation with policymakers, teachers, business



and other stakeholders. It is designed around a set of competence areas and is backed up with learning outcomes which policymakers, curriculum specialists and the education and training communities in the EU's Eastern Partnership countries

can refer to as they work on their own education reforms.

The European Commission's Margherita Bacigalupo presented the rationale and objectives of the framework to delegates in

Belfast. She highlighted the potential use of the framework in areas such as curriculum design, extra-curricular activities, teaching materials and self-directed learning and self-assessment exercises.

The European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework is the latest in a series of EU policy documents underlining the importance of education and training in building the entrepreneurial mindset and 'can do' attitude for 21st century economies. In 2006, the commission included entrepreneurship in its wider recommendations on key competences in education.

The framework is a reference tool for policymakers, curriculum specialists and teachers to develop entrepreneurship attitudes and skills of schoolchildren, students and adults through teaching and learning. 'The most useful feature,' says ETF expert Anthony Gribben, 'is a set of learning outcomes for all levels of education which others can borrow from and adapt into their own education system.'

Not quite mainstream

Delegates also heard from the European Commission's education policy analyst, Jari Riihelainen, whose research in some 30 European countries highlights that entrepreneurship education has fully embedded entrepreneurship into the education system. The main areas that need to be addressed are the development of comprehensive and consistent learning outcomes, and teacher education, he said. Despite some innovative practice being shared, through teacher networks and centres of expertise, the cross-cutting nature of many of the entrepreneurship competences are yet to be adequately reflected in pre-service teacher training or continuing professional development programmes.

Similar challenges face education systems in the Eastern Partnership countries. Nonetheless, many young people are already demonstrating excellent entrepreneurial spirit. The conference included young entrepreneurs from all countries and Northern Ireland who shared their passion and achievements. Some, like Georgia's Baia Abuladze, were prompted by family business traditions – in her case, in wine-making – while others, such as Denis Orsik from Belarus, took their cue from a love of music. Belfast entrepreneur Eve McClelland's focus is on social innovation, such as her 'Embed' design for a cardboard structure, which can be used as a bed in emergency situations. The conference talk show, involving the young entrepreneurs demonstrated vision, determination and hard grind – all key factors in building the entrepreneurship mindset which educators would need to work on.

Listen to the young entrepreneurs share their stories on the ETF YouTube channel here:

Entrepreneurial by design

Delegates visited start-up businesses, quizzed local and regional enterprise experts, and staff and students at the Belfast Enterprise Academy, which recently picked up an ETF Good Practice in Training Award, featured in the interactive Live&Learn Issue 36 and short animation on the ETF YouTube channel here:

A World Café dialogue and design-thinking discovery sessions further added to a productive engagement process generated by the conference allowing for wide-ranging views and experience to be shared. The final day saw delegates working on specific plans to bring forward the entrepreneurship key competence developments in their countries.

The conference contributed to a more developed understanding of the entrepreneurship key competence amongst country delegations. It allowed for policymakers and experts to explore technical areas such as entrepreneurial learning outcomes. Access to good practice allowed for delegates to see at first-hand what worked. An important outcome was a follow-up plan – a set of concrete steps defined by each country to work on back home. The conference was a catalyst for change. The ETF will follow up with all countries on their conference plans.

Text: Ezri Carlebach

Photos: ETF/Press Eye

Infographic: European Commission



Young entrepreneurs take part in a Q&A session, sharing their adventures in enterprise.



MOLDOVA'S MOVE TOWARDS A DUAL SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Combining in-company apprenticeship and training with vocational education courses is a win-win. Businesses gain workers equipped with the skills they need, while learners experience a smoother transition into the world of work. The dual system is a proven model in several countries, most notably in Germany and Austria. Since 2014, Moldova has been piloting a similar model, with plans for national implementation. As part of the ETF's Voices from the field series, reporter Zarina Alimbaeva has been following the developments in work-based learning.



Students at Vocational School No. 5, Bălți, are combining studies with work-based learning.

Ion Riciu is a future machine-tool operator. He is studying how to manufacture wiring harness systems for German cars. Ion is one of 30 lucky students selected to participate in a dual education pilot project similar to those already existing in Germany and Austria.

Ion says that he would have never chosen to study in a vocational school, but this offer was particularly attractive.

Vocational School No. 5, in the northern Moldovan town Bălți, began its dual education pilot project with Drăxlmaier, a branch of a German company, in late 2014.

'I haven't chosen the school; I've chosen curricula created by Drăxlmaier,' says Ion, who is encouraged that he can develop both theory knowledge and professional skills throughout his studies.

'The theory is provided by professors, but during workshops local workers disclose to us certain professional secrets. Another great advantage is the opportunity to work with modern equipment.'

The piloting of a dual education system in partnership with the business community is one of the pillars of Moldovan strategy for domestic trade developments. Authorities are willing to improve the human capital involved in commercial activities and trade and to upskill the labour force via the technical vocational training system.

'The dual system will allow the professional training of graduates to adapt to the real need of employers,' asserts senior consultant in vocational education and training (VET) for the Ministry of Education, Ludmila Gherasimenco.

'Students spend 70 to 80% of their time in the company. It is here they gain their first professional experience. The rest of time they attend classes of general and specific subjects in school.'

About 570 students were enrolled at the Vocational School No. 5, Bălți, in 2014. Every year the demand for places increases but only about 60% of graduates manage to find a job.

'This is going to be a long-term project and it's very promising for the school and the company, as well as the students,' says Vocational School No. 5 Director, Lucia Caraiman. She continues: 'All students involved in this project will become well-prepared experts in their field. We don't want to bring up the unemployed anymore; we want to prepare qualified workers. Unfortunately,

however, only about half of graduates find a job, while others continue to study at a college, at university, or migrate.'

Soviet heritage and empty classes

Secondary technical vocational education has been an unattractive option for students. According to the last Torino Process regional report, the number of people enrolled in VET institutions has fallen. In 2012, there were 8.7% fewer students than in 2011.

Over the past two decades, the number of students enrolled in secondary vocational and specialist secondary education has halved, while the infrastructure remained almost entirely unchanged. Meanwhile, between 2006 and 2011, the total cost of training per

student tripled in technical vocational schools.

The reform of VET in Moldova is probably the most challenging work for the Ministry of Education, which is working to improve the quality dimension by developing occupational standards, revising curricula and retraining teachers.

'We want to convince students that VET is not for those who are less capable, but for those who want to get a job faster. We should make it more attractive for students and there is much work to do, not only to implement the dual project,' says the Ministry of Education's Silviu Gincu, who is in charge of vocational education.

Another challenge is the reliability of data on the employment of graduates. The ad

hoc data collected by teachers shows around 20% of learners continue full-time studies at higher educational institutions; 40% combine employment with part-time higher educational studies; 20% are employed, while the situation of the remaining 20% is unknown.

Denis Gavril graduated from Vocational School No. 1, in the southern Moldovan town Cahul, where he studied cookery. Upon graduation, he moved to the capital Chişinău and found a job in a pizza house but he was forced to quit due to poor working conditions.

'I love my profession, but unfortunately it's hard to get a good job in Moldova. I had to work more than 14 hours daily. Sometimes I even didn't have a day off, as there were too few staff and conditions were a total disaster.'

'I got paid about 6,000 leu per month (about €270). I see few perspectives for graduates from vocational schools to find well-paid jobs in Moldova,' recounts Denis, who is leaving for Moscow to work as a driver.

According to the April 2015 National Employment Agency report, there were close to 6,000 vacancies, particularly in vocational fields such as light industry and construction.

The largest garment factory in Moldova, Ionel, receives more than 150 interns from vocational schools annually, but only a few remain to work, despite a significant lack of company manpower.

'The dual education project could help the factory solve the problem of the lack of qualified workers,' says Ionel Director, Tamara Luchian.

'We have a problem with qualified workers in Moldova indeed,' confirms Silviu from the ministry. 'Most workshops in VET institutions are very old. Students have to work with soviet machinery from the 1980s. In the near future, we are going to create ten centres of excellence and reequip workshops. But we cannot implement reforms in just a few years, when almost nothing was done for two decades.'

Even less optimistic are the managers of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), facing the same challenges as big companies. The Moldovan Organization for SME Development (ODIMM) conducted a study of SMEs in 2014 to identify the key problems, including financial resources, outcomes, labour, tax burden, regulatory framework, supplies, access to information, etc. The results point to problems regarding human resource qualifications and labour



Infrastructure and equipment at Moldovan vocational schools is not in line with current labour market needs.

shortages. Close to 60% of businesses interviewed cited difficulties in finding suitable staff.

In 2013, Janna Grosu created a small enterprise producing pillows and uniforms, but the lack of workers is a continuous problem. 'In summer we need more workers, as it is high season for uniform manufacturing. We have to search for seamstresses in Moldovan villages, as we can't find them in Chişinău.'

'We found young girls who wanted to earn money, we taught them and they worked. They earn about 4,000 leu (€180) monthly; in general, tailors earn about 8,000 leu (€360). Many pupils say they don't want to study in a professional school, as there is no possibility to get a well-paid job. But, as you see, remuneration in this field is sometimes better than in public institutions where

students have to be MA (degree) holders.'

If SMEs cannot participate in the dual project, they should group together in associations, take on more interns, contribute to the educational process and revised curricula, says senior economist at the Centre for Economic Policy, Tatyana Laryushin.

'We are in tough competition for the labour force in the region. Moldovans are very welcome in the Russian labour market. They are amenable, they work well, they do work that Russian citizens don't want to do, and they know the Russian language.'

'They are welcome in Romania as well,' says Tatyana, who insists SMEs should be important initiators in the implementation of the VET reform, but must create better working conditions.

Deputy Director of the National Institute for Strategic Studies, Elena Gorelova, says dual education can serve the interests of several economic agents.

'Moldovan industry was almost destroyed in the 1990s. All workers either retrained, or migrated and worked in different positions. In the context of the whole economy, they are not much in demand. Only certain companies need manpower. So, the dual project could solve the problem of certain factories, but not on a large scale.'

For Ion Riciu, the advantages of this project are obvious: 'In the future I will probably combine academic studies while working for Drăxlmaier. I will study by correspondence and do my best at the university using professional experience and gaining theoretical knowledge.' ■



Despite advertised job opportunities for seamstresses application rates remain low.



Zarina Alimbaeva is one five young journalists who took part in the 2015 Voices from the field workshop in Turin. Organised by the ETF, in collaboration with non-profit Transitions Online, the journalists worked together with an editor, digging out stories behind the data sets of the Torino Process reports. These stories shed light on the reality of VET in the ETF's partner countries and the impact on real people.

WORK-BASED LEARNING: A PATHWAY TO SUCCESS

Apprenticeships, internships, on-the-job training, work placements and simulated company settings – different types of work-based learning that play an important role in vocational education and training (VET) reform.

Improving outcomes for learners, employers, VET institutions and society is a driver of the ETF's Skills Connexion project (2015–2017). The project seeks to map and review work-based learning schemes in participating countries in order to identify the best ways of moving forward.

VET policymakers and employer groups from the Eastern Partnership region – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine as well as Kazakhstan – visited Turin in June for a three-day Skills Connexion workshop.

Keynote speaker Alexandra Costa Artur shared the findings of a European-wide study into the cost-effectiveness of apprenticeship schemes from the employers' perspective.

'What ETF partner countries can learn is that short-term investment is a long-term

investment that really support business. For example, what we find is that apprenticeship is less expensive than the recruitment process.'

Hear more about the study and findings from Alexandra in an exclusive interview on the ETF YouTube channel and read the full report here: goo.gl/mBe4H3

The Skills Connexion project has reached the halfway mark. Live&Learn asked participants what they have learned and where they are going?



Armenia – Naira Papoyan, Union of Employers, 'Work-based learning is important because our market economy is developing very

quickly. Through Skills Connexion we are exchanging experience and learning. We want to pilot different forms of work-based learning in order to understand what works.'



Azerbaijan – Nigar Ismayilzade, Ministry of Education, 'We are looking to involve more stakeholders in the strategy and roadmap development. We want to learn from others as much as possible.'



Belarus – Aksana Beliyeva, Institute for Vocational Education, Ministry of Education, 'Apart from the similarities, such as a lack of

incentives for these schemes, there are also various ways of working together to find solutions. It is very useful to learn from the other ETF partners.'



Georgia – Misha Kordzakia, Employers' Association, 'We want to see more activity in the area of work-based learning

among our member companies, working together with government and trade unions. The development of our region and country depends on this.'



Kazakhstan – Lyazat Shonayeva, National Chamber of Entrepreneurs, 'This not just important, it is urgent for our country, which aims

to be among the top 50 competitive world economies in the short term. Employers are the driving force – they need highly competitive staff. We are learning from the experience of others in how to optimise the benefits of work-based learning approaches.'



Moldova – Vera Chilari, Ministry of Education, 'Work-based learning is vital to get skills that reflect the labour market. In Moldova,

internships, on-site learning and simulated work places are a compulsory part of the VET curriculum. But there is a lot to do to improve the quality. We have been piloting dual training since 2014 and plan to expand to take this through to implementation.'



Ukraine – Rodion Kolyshko, Federation of Employers, 'Employers want professionals – but we have a problem. We are in the

process of finding profitable solutions by bringing employers and education providers together to match skills and knowledge with employers' needs.' ■

Text: Susanna Dunkerley/ETF

Photos: ETF/Cristian Afker

SEEING THROUGH THE FOG OF WAR: HOW THE TORINO PROCESS IS HELPING VET SPECIALISTS IN CONFLICT-TORN PARTS OF UKRAINE PLAN FOR THE FUTURE



On the frontline: vocational school buildings damaged and destroyed.

When war came to the eastern Ukrainian city of Lugansk in 2014, vocational teacher Lubov Chikhladze did not linger. As the fighting broke out between Russian-backed rebels and forces loyal to the Ukrainian government in Kiev, she left her job at the city's Higher Professional Auto Service School, packed her husband, daughter and 90-year-old mother into a car and drove north to safety.

'I left behind my house, apartment and 25 years of work. All I had to resume my professional career was a computer and a flashcard,' Lubov told Live&Learn.

There's no trace of self-pity as she relates the traumatic events of that spring and early summer when Ukraine descended into armed conflict in its eastern industrial heartland, the Donbas.

Lubov's aged mother knew from bitter experience the cost of staying put. As

a young woman in her 20s, she had resolutely refused to leave Lugansk in the summer of 1941 before the invading Nazi army swept in. She, like many other Ukrainians, paid dearly for her obstinacy – being deported to Germany to work as a forced labourer in a factory before ending up in a concentration camp.

'We just packed and fled,' Lubov recalls.

Today she is one of eight fellow refugees – all vocational school professionals – who form the core of the region's Vocational Education and Training (VET) Centre in exile, based in the city of Severodonetsk, some 80 km from Lugansk — and just 60 km behind front lines.

Of the 81 vocational schools in the Lugansk region before the fighting, only 26 are under Ukrainian government control. The rest are in rebel-held territory and key parts of the regional VET administration have been lost to it too. Out of a pre-conflict population of 2.3 million, just 217,000 people are now living

in territory under the control of Ukrainian government forces.

Lubov, who is now Head of the Cabinet of Methodology of the Lugansk regional VET Centre in Severodonetsk – set up 18 months ago – never imagined that the Torino Process would become a tool for rebuilding a system of professional and vocational training torn apart by war, but that is precisely what it has become for this part of Ukraine.

'Quite a number of staff from the VET system in the region fled the war, but not a single vocational school moved,' she says. 'They have all their technical equipment and other materials and chose to stay.'

A couple of schools that straddled the frontlines bravely continued to work until the fighting and shelling became too much to bear and they had to be evacuated, Lubov says.

A story of courage and dignity in the face of war is mutely borne out in the statistics she presented to a one day regional workshop on progress in Ukraine's Torino Process – the ETF's tool for analysing and improving the delivery of professional VET services – in June, 320 km east of Severodonetsk. One slide presentation shows the number of vocational schools in the region fell from 81 in 2013, to 28 in 2014, and 26 today.

Other slides showed the brutal impact of war: the pockmarked walls of the frontline VET school in Zolote; a shell hole in the schoolyard; a member of staff, hand outstretched, displaying a group of jagged metal shrapnel fragments from an exploded mortar bomb.

Most schools in the region have been more fortunate, she says – although some have been hit by artillery, no teachers or students have been killed on site. Sadly,



Shrapnel litters schoolyards, hit by heavy artillery.

however, some have died during the fighting, either through shelling or in military service.

‘We hope that one day we shall be reunited with our brothers and sisters who are currently not under Ukrainian control,’ Lubov adds. ‘And that VET can once again play its role in the economic development of our region. Until then we shall continue working on our part of the VET system in order to be able to use this experience in the event we are reunited.’

Olena Makarenko, Deputy Director of the Department of Education and Science, Donetsk Regional State Administration, takes a less optimistic view on the future of her own, divided region.

The region is, she says, roughly divided 50/50 in terms of territory and population between rebel-held areas and those loyal to Kiev. The regional capital, which had suffered badly during the conflict, is a frontline city now under the control of rebels, its regional airport totally destroyed in the fighting.

‘We lost many of our department in 2014 – entire divisions that fell under rebel control simply resolved stay where they were. They did not even want to cooperate with us,’ Olena recalls.

The professional-technical education department was one that refused to cross over, meaning that Olena and her colleagues have had to start from scratch in rebuilding the database for the VET system in the region.

Like her Lugansk colleague Lubov, she has found the Torino Process an invaluable tool in creating a detailed picture of the regional VET system, its strengths and weaknesses.

‘We had to start over and learn how many staff, specialists and students we had. The Torino Process is helping us objectively assess our situation today.’

The conflict left the regional VET system in Ukrainian government-controlled territory without any specialists in some key areas – including sanitary/technical, photography and web-design, she says.

‘One positive is that we have effectively developed our own system for these areas. But of course there are negatives too – we have very difficult relations with former colleagues and many families are completely split.’

Already the VET systems in the divided region are beginning to move farther apart: those in rebel-held areas have adopted Russian standards, leading many parents and students to move to government-held areas as they value Ukrainian qualifications more, she adds. Officially, the number of such ‘refugee’ students in the Ukrainian part of the regional VET system is 300 (out of 12,000 enrolled students), but this counts only those who are officially registered as refugees. Olena believes that as many as a further 1,500 students are from families that have chosen to move across, rather than being forced out directly by the fighting, which in recent months has not

been as severe as two years ago. Numbers of students in other parts of the education system – schools and universities officially counted as refugees is much bigger – around 18,000.

‘Last year, we still believed that our region would eventually be reunited,’ Olena observes. But with each passing year we doubt this more and more. There is very strong propaganda on the other side and people are already becoming used to the system.’

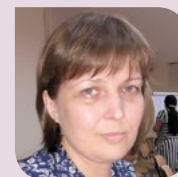
No similar conflict has ever ended with reunification of the two sides, she adds, citing Cyprus, Transnistria – the breakaway region of Moldova and the disputed Abkhazia region located between Georgia and Russia.

‘Many people are simply forgetting about Ukraine; the war had completely divided families. It is very sad.’

Stories such as this may not make it into the detailed technical write-up that will form Ukraine’s Torino Report, or be discussed at the June 2016 international conference on progress, but they remind us that vocational education and training has a role to play in meeting economic, political, social and industrial challenges that the world may bring to the door. ■

Text: Nick Holdsworth

Photos: Lubov Chikhladze



Deputy Director of the Department of Education and Science, Donetsk Regional State Administration, Olena Makarenko.



VET schoolteacher, Lubov Chikhladze.

UKRAINE'S EASTERN REGIONS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT TORINO PROCESS

Ukraine has been involved in the Torino Process since reporting began in 2010. By 2013, five regions were taking part. Driven by the positive outcomes, Ukraine announced an ambitious plan to take the Torino Process to all 25 regions in 2016–17. Reporter Nick Holdsworth joined a workshop of regional coordinators in June to find out more.

As a hot and humid summer's day in the city of Dnipropetrovsk broke into thunderstorms of sub-tropical intensity, specialists in vocational and professional training from eastern Ukraine reported the enthusiasm with which they were embracing the Torino Process – the ETF's tool for analysing and improving vocational education and training (VET) systems.

'The Torino Process enables us to see the complete picture,' says Lidia Levada, of the VET Methodological Centre in central Ukraine's Poltavsky region, summing up a view expressed in different ways by the two dozen experts from nine regional VET departments.

'By gathering the statistical information necessary to analyse VET we can see for ourselves the effectiveness of reforms. And if we want to work at a European level we need to adopt European approaches.'

Earlier in 2016, Ukraine's Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Pavlo Khobzey, launched an ambitious plan to improve the country's VET system by taking the Torino Process to 25 regions. The Dnipropetrovsk workshop was one of three similar stocktaking events taking place around the country late June.

Anton Demura, Deputy Director of the Dnipropetrovsk Department of Education and Science, says Ukraine needs to understand where it stands within the international system of VET.

Speaking from the meeting's podium, flanked by the blue and yellow flags of Ukraine and the European Union, Mr Demura said: 'The process that is beginning now in Ukraine is a global one. It is taking place in all countries; each has its own experience and view. With the help of our colleagues from the ETF we can work together on this.'

Viktor Vasilinenko, Director of the Dnipropetrovsk regional VET

Methodology Centre, says the working groups set up to gather and interpret financial and professional statistics were helping to map the region's position – where 26,000 students are enrolled in vocational schools – within the national VET system, which caters for 380,000 young people.

Meeting participants spoke of the value of analysis that showed the precise level of regional demand for qualifications in different sectors. In a region that was

traditionally reliant on heavy industry and mining – but is fast changing – such figures are essential for matching VET to regional labour market needs.

Nataliya Niderman, Director of the Zaporizka regional VET Methodology Centre, says analysis showed that though Ukraine's economic crisis had put pressure on the employment prospects of VET graduates in recent years, more than 75% of vocational school students in her region find a job after graduation. ■

Faces of the Torino Process

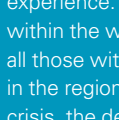


Tatiana Kardel, Dnipropetrovsk Regional Employment Centre. 'The question of decentralisation

is a simple one for us – we are already involved in that process, so being part of the Torino Process comes naturally. We have a national system of adult education vouchers that enables people to pay for specific skills upgrading. We also support the recognition of prior learning and non-formal skills acquisition.'



Mariya Golovach, Poltavsky Regional VET Centre. 'All professional skills need to be refreshed through training and experience. The Torino Process fits smoothly within the work of our department, involving all those with a stake in vocational education in the region. Today, due to the economic crisis, the development of education is critical to the future of our country.'



Larisa Garan, Professional Technical Training Department, Khersonsky region. 'Before we were introduced to the Torino Process we did not really think about the importance of formal statistical analysis for our sector. Working with the Torino Process shows our

stakeholders how important VET is to economic development and the essential role methodological and statistical analysis plays in that. With such analysis we can better lobby for support from regional and national leaders.'



Olga Lebedinska, VET Centre, Lugansk region.

'We have great hopes that although today we are only

able to work with a fraction of our regional VET system (the region is largely under rebel control) one day we shall be able to put our experience of the Torino Process to use in the entire region.'



Nataliya Sologub, Kharkiv Regional VET Centre. 'It is important that we see our VET systems within a global

perspective, that the challenges we face are those that confront all VET systems.'



Irina Volik, Department of Education and Science, Kharkiv region. 'We start with children at the age of 14

- this generation is our future. Through using tools such as the Torino Process, VET can be re-oriented to meet the demands of the modern economy.'

Text and photos: Nick Holdsworth

GOVERNANCE FOR EMPLOYABILITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN PROJECT DRAWS TO A CLOSE, BUT ACHIEVEMENTS SET TO CONTINUE



Following more than three years of intensive work, the European Union-funded GEMM initiative ended in August. The achievements of the pilot projects in southern and eastern Mediterranean countries, however, are set to continue.

Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean kicked off in 2013 as part of the European Union's continued efforts to address the high rates of youth and female unemployment across the region. The ETF designed the project with the aim to increase capability in technical and

vocational education and training (TVET) governance and connectivity with the labour market.

Working with a wide range of stakeholders, GEMM had three dimensions: regional, national and local. Regionally, neighbouring countries shared best practices and knowledge; nationally, VET governance systems were mapped; pilot projects were designed and implemented locally in order to maximise impact.

What are the innovative pilot projects about?

All the pilots focused on skills anticipation, matching and apprenticeship. Six countries – Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt and Israel – developed tools specifically for this.

Lebanon sought to improve the transition to work by appointing career guidance and employment officers (GEOs) in six TVET public schools. Working with local companies, the GEOs mapped recruitment needs and skill profiles. Now, thanks to a new EU-funded programme, the initiative will be extended.

With the help of the ETF, Palestine developed an online tracking system following graduates from 15 institutions in the West Bank to see if, and how, graduate skills are meeting labour market needs. The initial results are due later in 2016. The tracer study is part of a broader monitoring and evaluation system being developed together with the government and international donors Belgian Technical Corporation and GIZ.

Upscaling and replicating the pilot projects is one of the key recommendations set out in the Compendium of Pilot Projects publication. Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia have already concrete plans for sustainability. Read the publication here: goo.gl/TKorjE



GEMM achievements

The aim was to improve the employability of young people and women in a region where more than a third of the population is under 15 years. Improved employability, increased female participation and stronger multi-level partnerships are among the outcomes. More than 30% of participants were women, more than 100 local enterprises were involved, and hundreds of vocational education graduates have found work placements, analysis shows.



The journey and achievements of GEMM are captured on an interactive storyboard here: goo.gl/j5uXSk



GEMM team leader Abdelaziz Jaouani says the pilot projects began as small initiatives and have developed into structural reform. 'This success can be put down to ownership of the pilot projects and working together with local enterprise.'

'Realising the structuring reach of these initiatives, we have worked with countries to ensure their sustainability, either by mainstreaming or institutionalising at local and national level.'

The regional dimension

Through regional dialogues, GEMM strengthened the cross-country network for the exchange of knowledge and ideas on multi-level governance and youth employability.

Irene Mingasson, Head of Regional Cooperation Neighbourhood South, European Commission, says this type of approach was a success factor of GEMM.

'Contexts are specific and solutions need to be country-owned. There is value in bringing the bulk of experiences together – to share knowledge and expand the breadth of innovative practices. When more ideas come to the floor, there are more opportunities to influence or enrich policy making.'

'This is very much the spirit of the renewed European Neighbourhood Policy and we think that GEMM embodies this! Looking ahead, we should make use of what we have learnt from GEMM to continue to support regional dialogue and support countries in the neighbourhood to build better skills for their young people.'

Irene Mingasson is one of the many voices of GEMM. Hear more from her about the project, and others involved, on the ETF YouTube channel here: goo.gl/x4KHUa

Capability through communities of practice

EU officials joined VET teachers, trainers and students, policymakers, social partners, employer organisations, experts and media at the final dissemination workshop in Tunis in June.

Participants discussed GEMM outcomes, lessons learned and how to continue to build upon the successes.

During the opening session, former Tunisian Minister of Vocational Training and Employment, Zied Ladhari, praised the success of the pilot in Gabès for young job seekers in the construction and maintenance sectors.

Minister Ladhari announced that a further 200 jobseekers would soon be involved in the programme that would be extended to the Kairouan and Mahdia regions.

More generally, he said youth unemployment was an urgent issue, and prioritising young people would help to bring more stability to the region.

'Tunisia faces a challenge for its young people and this is a priority for the government. If we want to create a more stable region we need to invest in young people and give them more hope.'

Markku Markkula, who heads the EU's assembly of local and regional

representatives – the Committee of the Regions – was among the speakers. He said while top-level governance has a role to play, change comes from the bottom up: small communities of practice.

'We need to energise local regional ecosystems and promote activities of citizens as innovators. You are doing exactly the right thing, involving people and integrating regions,' he told participants.

'Learning comes from collaboration, engaging local people and the young generation who are eager. We need to be able to provide them good learning circumstances and chances to create jobs.'

'GEMM has shown that action-oriented results, based on best practices, happens through people. The hard work starts now, but I am sure that with the concrete work that the ETF is doing here in Europe's neighbouring countries, we can go forward!'

Text: Susanna Dunkerley/ETF

Photos: ETF/ Cristian Afker and Aleandro Tubaldi



Committee of the Regions President Markku Markkula praised GEMM for energising local and regional ecosystems.

GUIDING STUDENTS TO EMPLOYMENT

For young people in Lebanon, the transition from school to work can be problematic. Less than one in four people under 25 are in work and around one third emigrate to find jobs. The ongoing conflict in neighbouring Syria has seen an influx of refugees, also competing for work. Career guidance, backed by up-to-date labour market research, is helping vocational students to better identify training paths that lead to jobs. Now, thanks to the GEMM pilot project, more students will have access to guidance employment officers (GEOs).



Electrical technician-in-training Charles Malek with Rabih Sabra who helps match businesses with skilled graduates.

When Charles Malek finished a two-month internship with a local electricity production contracting company in Saïda, southern Lebanon, he was offered a job. The 21-year-old was thrilled but could not take the position because he still had two years left of his vocational qualification as an electrical technician.

‘I learned so much on the job in those two months. I was working in a new plant with new standards in the production of electricity. The company really wanted me to stay but I had to go back to school.’

Charles is on track to graduate in 2017 and transition into the labour market thanks to the support of his GEOs Rana Jammal and Botres Mousa.

‘It is rather difficult to get access to internships; it’s really about connections – you have to know people who can refer you to a company. It’s not the responsibility of the school to find you a work placement. My internship wouldn’t have been possible without the help of the GEOs. Now, with this experience, when I graduate I am hopeful to find a job as an electrical technician.’

Charles’ tailored career guidance was made possible through the GEMM pilot project, which was modelled on a successful programme in private vocational schools across the country overseen by French development organisation IECD (Institut européen de coopération et de développement).

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education appointed the officers, who, with the support of the ETF and IECD, were trained in career guidance, job placement techniques, market research and analysis.

Applying their new skills, the GEOs selected and approached local companies, mapping their recruitment needs. They used this information to inform students about their training paths and work placements.

Updating and expanding this database of information, with feedback from companies, will be an ongoing task for the GEOs, because thanks to the success of the pilot, and with continued financial support from the European Union, there

are plans to implement the programme nation-wide.

Rabih Sabra, Director of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, which represents 15,000 member companies, says business is keen to be onboard.

‘Job opportunities emanate from enterprise, so we wanted to create a coordination link between us, the technical schools and the ministries of labour and education, so that once job opportunities arise we can relay them.’

‘Through this project, we’ve improved coordination among various actors in the private sector, NGOs, schools and the ministry. It’s a win-win situation.’ ■

Text: Susanna Dunkerley/ETF

Photos: ETF/Aleandro Tubaldi



This project is funded by the European Union

HOW THE ETF SUPPORTS THE EU DELEGATIONS

Live&Learn often reports on the projects and developments happening on the ground in ETF partner countries – the frontline. The ETF is working just as hard behind the scenes, providing support to the EU external relations policies and assistance. What does this mean? The ETF's Outi Kärkkäinen explains.



You lead the 'Support to EU Assistance in the Context of EU External Policies' team. What does your team do?

Human capital development projects – including vocational education and training (VET) reform initiatives – are an important method of EU assistance to neighbouring countries. These projects usually involve both technical assistance and substantial financial investment in order to be well designed, effectively implemented and properly monitored.

The ETF provides expertise and technical advice to the EU Institutions and EU Delegations working in these areas. The support focuses on programming, monitoring and evaluation, and EU bilateral policy dialogue with the 29 partner countries. The bulk of our work takes place directly with the EU Delegations, but we are also working with the Directorate-Generals in Brussels (DG NEAR, DG EMPL, DG DEVCO, DG HOME, DG GROWTH).

Our team is in charge of coordinating these EU support activities at the level of the ETF. It is important for us to keep up to date on the latest developments regarding the EU external assistance policies, tools and methodologies.

What is role of ETF in relation to the EU's external relations policy?

Human capital development remains high on the EU's external assistance agenda. We support policies and instruments that prioritise VET and employment issues, skills, support for young people, competitiveness, etc.

We work in the partner countries through the EU Enlargement Policy, the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Development Cooperation Policy (Central Asia).

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, for example, places a priority on VET and employment issues. Our mandate is to prioritise assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

We also work closely with other neighbourhood countries prioritised by the EU, such as Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Morocco, Jordan and Tunisia to undertake VET reform and align this to EU legislation and procedures.

We help to secure and effectively utilise investment from the EU by identifying gaps in their VET policies and provision, and by supporting their systematic absorption capacity – in other words, the staff and the skills necessary for utilising assistance funding and implementing projects. We are constantly updating our knowledge of EU instruments so we can best advise countries applying for funding.

The European Neighbourhood Policy review, published in late 2015, highlights the important role of VET. Will are the implications for ETF's work?

There is a particular focus on youth and migration. We might see further funds directed to youth and VET, and then that would be more work for us. The review also called for a country-by-country focus, rather than a region-wide standard approach. We have a lot of in-depth country knowledge from our partner countries to share in this respect.

Your project is one of seven thematic areas guiding the ETF's work, emerging from the 2015 organisational restructure. How did this change impact the ETF's work to support the EU?

In 2015, we worked with the EU to design external assistance. During 2016, our involvement has been shifting towards the monitoring and evaluation of these projects. We continue to contribute to policy development through analytical and progress reporting and by joining policy debates.

How is the ETF seen by its partners?

The ETF is seen as flexible and trustworthy by the partner countries. The regular satisfaction survey among the EU Delegations indicates that we are seen as a reliable contributor to their work, and in effect, helping to shape how hundreds of millions of euros are spent by the EU on VET. In many instances we work as both a technical expertise agency, and negotiator or facilitator. We can play a role in the dialogue. We can be the missing link. ■

Photo: ETF/Gary Bonge

* 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'.

EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY REVIEW AND THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF VET

Increasing opportunities in vocational education and training, creating better job prospects for young people, and the skills dimension of migration, are among the priorities of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) review.

Central to the European Union's foreign policy agenda, the ENP review, released in late 2015, considers how Europe and its neighbours to the east and south (ETF partner countries) can build better partnerships, particularly in the context of mass migration, youth unemployment and radicalisation.

Modernising economies, fostering innovation, creating jobs, boosting skills and opportunities for young people, will help to promote stability, security and prosperity among the 16 ENP countries, the review says.

It outlines a number of proposals to achieve this including:

- Creating new opportunities to support vocational education and training (VET)
- Focusing on jobs and skills, particularly for young men and women
- Stepping up support for Erasmus+ including increased funding
- Matching skills and labour market needs
- Promoting international skills migration 'brain circulation' through incentive schemes for people who have studied or acquired skills in Europe to return to their home country
- Increasing cooperation on root causes of migration

These areas are central to the work the ETF undertakes with partner countries to help reform VET and labour market systems. Matching skills with labour market needs, increasing access to quality vocational education and training, promoting the continuous professional development of VET teachers and trainers, entrepreneurial learning and good governance are all part of the solution.

On the issue of skills and migration, the ETF promotes the so-called 'win-win-win' approach to circular migration, which seeks to maximise benefits for receiving and sending countries as well as migrants themselves.

The review places a priority on security cooperation, outlining ways to tackle terrorism and prevent radicalisation. Engaging more on policies for young people in the area of education and employment, and involving civil partners, in particular youth organisations, is crucial, the ENP review says.

Policy progression

Launched in 2004, the ENP aims to promote political and economic reform in areas jointly agreed with partner countries and supported by EU assistance. More than €15 billion has been committed through the European Neighbourhood Instrument (2014–20) to support these measures.

The 2015 revised policy focuses on cooperation in areas of interest flagged by both the EU and the partner country.

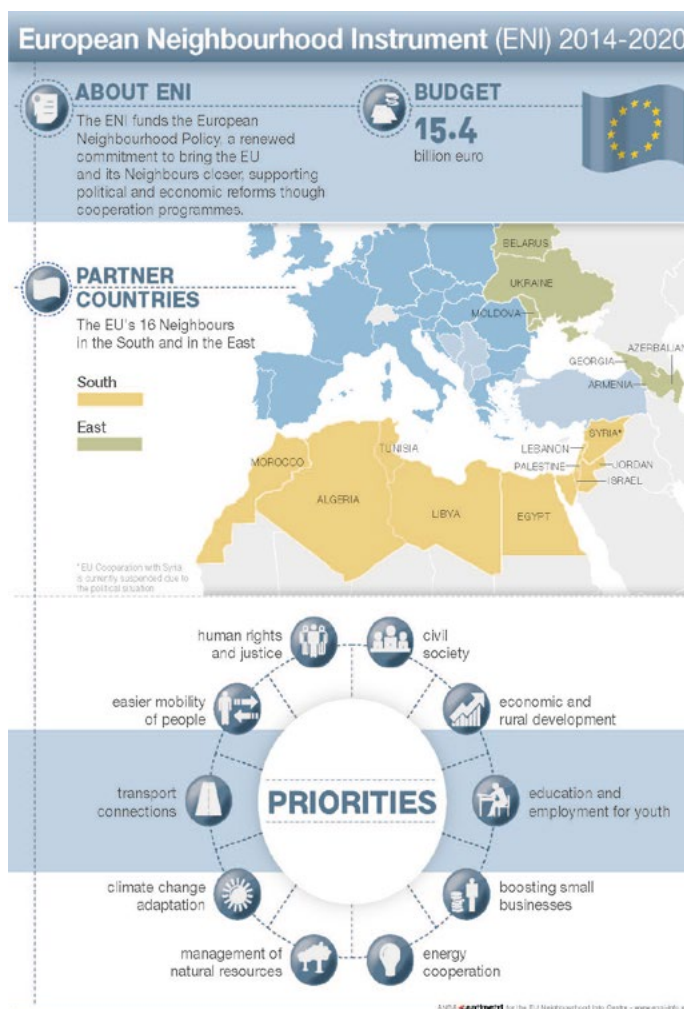
The publication of the review follows an extensive consultation process, with more than 250 written submissions from both government and non-governmental stakeholders.

EU Member States and partner countries have been discussing the ENP review with a view of jointly determining new priorities and the shape of future relations.

Read the joint communication here:
goo.gl/LxG4Sx

Text: Susanna Dunkerley/ETF

Infographic: EU Neighbourhood Info Centre/
Ansa-Centimetri



SPOTLIGHT AZERBAIJAN



What happens when you take 15 experts, EU officials and policymakers out of their offices and away from the city for two days? Collaborative, efficient work!

In April 2016, ETF experts, staff of the Delegation of the European Union to Azerbaijan and senior officials from the Ministry of Education took part in a workshop 30 minutes' drive out of the capital Baku, Azerbaijan.

Over two days and one night, overlooking the Caspian Sea, the team discussed and further developed the terms of reference (ToR) for the design of two projects aimed at improving vocational education (VET) and training and national qualifications.

ETF expert Franca Crestani, who joined the workshop, says bringing stakeholders

together around the table proved an extremely efficient way of working.

'This participative, multi-stakeholder approach is typical to the ETF's way of working – but this meeting was particularly effective.'

'Many of these people from the ministry, for example, do not regularly have the opportunity to meet. We were all staying outside of the capital, so the fruitful discussions within the group continued well into the night!'

Promoting ownership of the project design among the new team of ministry officials tasked with working on qualification systems was a priority, says ETF qualifications expert Arjen Deij. 'The inclusive discussion led to concrete results and now the projects are in the making.'

Margareta Nikolovska, the ETF's newly appointed country manager for Azerbaijan, welcomed the close ties working together with the EU Delegation.

'This was the first meeting in my new role. It was a great way to get to know and to work with the different stakeholders.'

The projects are part of the European Union's €19 million Education Support

Programme in Azerbaijan. Signed in 2015, the four-year programme aims at improving the quality and relevance of education, including VET.

The ETF's role is to provide expertise and input as requested by the EU Delegation to Azerbaijan.

Designing, drafting and validating the ToRs of projects is an example of the different types of requests for assistance made to the ETF by the EU Delegations.

Marion Mitschke, from the EU Delegation in Baku, praised the partnership. 'It is a great pleasure working with ETF given their in-depth knowledge and their way of involving major stakeholders.'

Support to EU Assistance in the Context of EU External Policies is one of the ETF's seven strategic projects that emerged from the Agency restructure in 2015.

The project team works with EU Delegations in the partner countries, as well as the EU Institutions, to provide technical support and expertise based on a twenty-year-old knowledge of the VET context within the partner countries. ■

Text: Susanna Dunkerley/ETF

Photos: ETF/Cristian Afker

What do the EU Delegations say about working with the ETF?

Jordan



Ibrahim Laafia, First Counsellor and Head of Operations

'The ETF has been a very strong partner. They have a real participatory approach that has helped us to come up with a VET strategy that is agreeable to all stakeholders. Bringing European experience, and other countries' experience, into Jordan was wonderful.'

Belarus



Frederik Coene, Head of Operations

'The expertise and the experience of the ETF has been very useful. We are very happy with the speed and the quality of the answers we get from your colleagues. We are able to focus on the transfer of know-how.'

Tajikistan



Anders Djurdfeldt, Junior Professional in Delegation/Attaché

'The support is very valuable for Tajikistan, but also the other counties in the region, because of the experience that the organisation has in developing different projects. The ETF offers a regional perspective.'

NEW PUBLICATIONS



ETF: HIGHLIGHTS AND INSIGHTS 2016

With a foreword by Marianne Thyssen, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills & Labour Mobility, this special magazine-style publication takes you inside the role and contribution of our unique EU Agency in human capital reform. goo.gl/BxrDpm



GEMM FINAL REPORT SUMMARY

Facts and figures, achievements and recommendations – this report provides a neat overview of the European Union-funded project. goo.gl/6brTjJ

* Also available in Arabic and French



GEMM COMPENDIUM OF PILOT PROJECTS

A retail sector training programme targeting women in Jordan, Palestine's first graduate tracer system and career guidance for vocational students in Lebanon – a taste of the eight pilot projects helping address youth unemployment in the Mediterranean. Discover the different pilot projects, and recommendations, in this compendium. goo.gl/DTcTA8



CPD SERIES

The continued professional development of teachers and trainers is a key strategy for improving the performance of vocational education and training systems. This series of country papers and summaries covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. goo.gl/ev1rxc

* Also available in Arabic and French

TUNE IN ON THE TUBE

Did you know there are more than 200 mini movies on the ETF YouTube channel? We've coordinated a special playlist for this issue of Live&Learn. **GEMM:** goo.gl/1qW4nb

Project overview



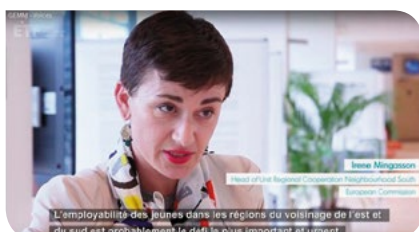
The future of GEMM is?



Pilot project Casablanca, Morocco



Voices



Pilot project Zarqa, Jordan



Pilot project Gabès, Tunisia



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