

# TORINO PROCESS 2012

## TAJKISTAN



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## PREFACE

This country report reviews vocational education and training (VET)<sup>1</sup> policies in Tajikistan in 2012. It updates the 2010 review and provides a concise, documented analysis of the progress of VET reform. The report is the result of a process implemented in Tajikistan, at both national and regional level, in order to assess how new education and training policies are being implemented across the whole country. A participatory approach was used, involving meetings, interviews and focus group discussions (April 2012). These brought together the main stakeholders to discuss and collect information on the reform process. The first draft of the report was circulated within the country for comments and was validated at a workshop in Dushanbe in October 2012, with contributions from representatives of the Presidential Administration, State Statistical Agency, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, vocational schools, adult training centres, employer associations, trade unions, the Chamber of Commerce and the public employment service.

The European Training Foundation (ETF) is grateful for the insights provided by the participants during the rich discussions that took place in all the meetings. The analysis was undertaken with the support of the economist Dr Jamshed Kuddusov. We are also grateful to the EU Delegation in Tajikistan for their contributions and support.

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<sup>1</sup> In this report VET refers to three types of learning: initial VET, secondary VET and vocational short courses for adults.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 1990 enrolment in VET in Tajikistan has halved, with fewer than 4% of secondary education students now entering VET. The VET system has a low status, which is partly due to the low quality of learning. The government has recognised that VET should play a stronger role in promoting socio-economic developments in Tajikistan. In April 2012 the country's President announced that the network of IVET schools would be expanded and up to 100 000 jobless individuals would be provided with training.

During the past two years two important strategies on education and the labour market have prepared the ground for a stronger investment in education and training. With these policy intentions in place, the coming years will be crucial for the implementation of a substantial reform programme. The Torino Process 2012 reviewed the actual implementation of the two strategies, at both national and local level, through meetings and debates organised in Dushanbe, and in Sughd and Khatlon regions.

The government in Tajikistan faces serious barriers to the development of the VET system. These are linked to a substantial lack of both financial resources and institutional capacities at the national and regional levels of the system. This is combined with a shortage of competent school managers, teachers and trainers. In addition, the new adult education system is developing rapidly as a parallel structure to the initial and secondary VET system, though there is still a lack of a specific methodology and of specialist teachers for adult learning.

The two strategies on education and the labour market are leading important reforms that affect key sectors, identifying relevant priorities and related actions. The stakes are high, as this is a matter of improving living conditions and the competitiveness of the country, and in view of the country's very young population (more than half of the population are less than 25 years old), the latter issue is particularly critical. Since the VET system covers less than 4% of the students enrolled in general secondary education, it will be a major challenge for VET to have an impact on the modernisation of skills provision and an increase in the country's competitiveness. Hence, this issue also relates to the capacity of the VET system to attract a higher number of students, in order to have an impact, in particular, on youth unemployment (16.7% in 2009), poverty (47%) and migration (remittances represent 40% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP)).

Despite a number of national and international interventions, the VET system is currently still characterised by obsolete training facilities (with the exception of the adult education system) that are poorly tailored to labour market demands in terms of curricula, teaching materials and the organisation of the educational process, and generally suffer from inefficient management (pilot projects have not been scaled up). The low levels of enrolment in VET are also linked to the problem of quality and the weak dialogue with employers, which is a result of employers' lack of engagement.

For this reason it is very important for policy makers, advisers and VET experts to make efficient use of tools for monitoring the reform progress in order to assess the state of play and make evidence-based decisions about the next steps. In this respect, the capacity to create, use and monitor evidence (in the form not only of data, but also of information and experience) is fundamental. The regular implementation of the Living Standards Survey conducted by the State Statistical Agency is an example of work carried out with the intention of collecting data to monitor country development and evaluate the impact of important initiatives such as the National Development Strategy and the Poverty Reduction Strategy. The main problem, as highlighted in the analysis matrix of VET governance in Annex 1 (completed by the stakeholders involved in the Torino Process), relates to the

lack of technical competences, mainly in monitoring and evaluating the progress of reform. This seriously jeopardises the immediate development of appropriate measures and therefore the implementation of the reform itself, particularly at regional level.

A Conceptual Framework for the Financing of Education was adopted in 2011 and a per capita financing system introduced. This is aimed at increasing transparency in the use of public resources; establishing a close connection between the funding and the performance of educational institutions; and distributing resources on the basis of the numbers of students and specific regional or local conditions. Educational institutions are given considerably more freedom and responsibility in the allocation of public resources. However, this raises the problem of a lack of capacity on the part of schools to manage autonomy and curricular flexibility, particularly in regions such as Khatlon, and in rural areas. The issue is even more critical given the need to dramatically increase the number of vocational schools in order to provide wider coverage across the territory, as envisaged in the reform. However, the general lack of proper allocation of funds for VET (0.1% of GDP) remains a very significant medium-term challenge, in terms of not only the need to improve infrastructure and equipment, but also the very low wage levels, which make VET unattractive for competent teachers and managers.

In conclusion, it is clear that while in 2010 the lack of harmonisation of VET within the education system as a whole was an issue (and the main recommendations in relation to the Torino Process were linked to this), two years later this aspect is being properly addressed by both the education strategy and the labour market strategy. Many recommendations from different studies and reports have been taken on board and translated into a large number of actions. Now it is a case of implementing these actions from the two strategies. Discussions within the Torino Process for 2012 (focus group reports) have underlined the great need for capacity development at different levels of the system in order to ensure proper implementation of all the planned measures, and to allow stakeholders to play a role (at both institutional and individual level) in line with the complexity of the evolving environment (see Annex 1).

Cooperation between initial/secondary VET and adult learning system could lead to substantial efficiency gains and effective investment opportunities. This could be further strengthened by the implementation of a model of VET multilevel governance in which decisions are made closer to the parties who are most involved. In this respect, there is a need to increase structured and coordinated dialogue, both vertically and horizontally, which could bring VET closer to the world of work and empower stakeholders at all levels of the system. A structured dialogue can also create an environment of trust among all the stakeholders involved, which makes it easier to share knowledge, information and experience, and helps everyone to implement their respective roles, as required by the changing society.

The priorities identified in the Torino Process 2012 relate to:

- building a more integrated system of VET segments (initial VET, secondary VET, continuing VET/adult education);
- enhancing the relevance and quality of VET by strengthening the engagement of social partners in a dialogue of policy development and implementation;
- enhancing technical competences at vocational school level (for more responsiveness) to manage increased responsibilities and flexibility, including promoting the competences and motivation of teachers and trainers, as they are central actors in the implementation of education reform.

Within an overall context in which building stakeholders' capacity in the policy lifecycle is considered a critical necessity and VET is officially recognised as a key educational sector for socio-economic development, coordinated investment in VET by government and donors can give a boost to VET in the coming decade.

## A. VISION FOR VET SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Over the past two years, following the first round of the Torino Process, positive developments have taken place in Tajikistan on initiatives and activities relating to education, training and labour market policy development. In 2011, to celebrate the country's 20 years of independence, many publications and statistical data on education were produced (see Bibliography). In addition, the Ministry of Education (MoE) developed a comprehensive National Education Development Strategy up to 2020, covering all education sectors, including vocational education. In June 2012 a Programme for the Development of initial and secondary VET up to 2020 was submitted to the government. The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP) produced a Strategy for labour market development up to 2020 (approved by the government in June 2011) and a Programme for an adult VET system development up to 2015 (approved by the government in December 2010).

At the beginning of 2012 the new Minister of Education, Mr Saidov, former chancellor of the Tajik National University, completed the consultation process for the education strategy started by his predecessor, Mr Rahmonov. The strategy was submitted to the government for approval in June 2012. It was supported by a series of surveys and data sets that were included in the National Report on Education Sector Development published by the MoE in October 2011. The labour market strategy was also designed following evidence-based principles, with labour market surveys and policy analysis supporting it.

All these initiatives demonstrate the highest level of interest on the part of Tajikistan's government, which officially recognizes that education is a key sector for socio-economic development and for the future of the country. A well-functioning VET system is seen as an important element for economic development, cohesion and social inclusion. The President of the Republic, Mr Emomali Rahmon, in his annual speech to the Parliament in April 2012, declared that vocational education, particularly initial vocational education and adult learning, was a priority sector and would be expanded in the future, both in terms of enrolment (see Section D) and in terms of infrastructures<sup>2</sup>.

The priority for improving the quality of human capital in Tajikistan through VET had already been identified in the National Action Plan for reform of the initial VET up to 2015, and in both the National Development Strategy up to 2015 and the Poverty Reduction Strategy up to 2015. In these strategies education is seen as the key sector for poverty reduction, highlighting that progress in education 'significantly determines the outcome of all efforts to improve governance and to promote sustainable economic growth and development of human potential' (Poverty Reduction Strategy, 2010). The two newly developed strategies on education and the labour market were produced within a consultative environment that involved the main stakeholders of the sectors and that tried to create channels of communication between education and employment. Evidence-based principles were followed, and this highlights the need to increase the capacity for policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation at all levels (national, regional, local and sectorial). The result is that there are now two important strategies designed to make connections between the world of education and labour. In particular, the Labour Market Development Strategy identifies, under the heading of creating a flexible and accessible labour market, a specific objective for 'reorienting education to support structural economic reforms' (Labour Market Development Strategy, Annex 1, Objective 2.2). This objective sets out actions for achieving wider access to lifelong learning opportunities; extending educational flexibility

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<sup>2</sup> [www.president.tj/eng/news\\_200412payom.html](http://www.president.tj/eng/news_200412payom.html)



with the recognition of informal education; supporting the transition from education to work through career guidance enhancement; and introducing entrepreneurial skills in vocational education.

In addition, the education strategy addresses particular priorities for initial and secondary VET. These priorities relate to:

- improving the management of VET institutions by enhancing the capacities of managers, teachers and trainers;
- improving the quality of education by implementing a new monitoring system;
- enhancing effective cooperation with employers;
- introducing international standards of education;
- improving infrastructure and equipment;
- developing new models to attract funding from various investors;
- developing private vocational schools (which do not exist currently);
- implementing training for the new occupations that are demanded by the labour market;
- generally reviewing and improving educational programmes.

In May 2010 the Law on Education was amended, providing the basis for the transition to a new system of general secondary education. The most relevant steps are the transition to a 12-year system of general secondary education, which also implies an extension of compulsory education from 9 to 10 years, the start of the first grade at age 6, and the introduction of vocational training courses during the final 2 years (grades 11 and 12). However, as a result of the lack of sufficient finances, the transition to a 12-year education system has been suspended until 2020. During the period before implementation, preparatory work will be carried out.

Training for adults is provided by the adult education system, which has been the responsibility of the MoLSP since its creation in 2008. This system consists of more than 30 specialised training centres located across the country, a number that will be increased with donor support. It has the objective of ensuring that vocational adult education develops in order to meet the internal and external labour market requirements for a skilled labour force. Adult education is still covered by the Law on Initial Vocational Education (Law No 21, 22 April 2003, complementary to the Law on Education, No 34, 17 May 2004), but a specific law for adult VET is expected to be finalised and approved by 2015. The adult education system offers short courses with certificates for specific professional skills (not linked to any education level). As this is a complementary area to the initial VET system, in May 2012 an agreement was signed between the competent authorities, the MoLSP and the MoE. In addition, the parliament is reviewing a new draft of the Law on Education (developed by the MoE) that integrates adult education and paves the way for developing a lifelong learning approach. The process should be finalised by the end of 2012.

In conclusion, in a country with a constant growth of labour resources and a low employment level, VET is seen as a tool for adapting skills to labour market needs. In particular, adult education is considered a tool for lifelong learning that can provide, on a continuing basis, updated skills for the requalification of unemployed individuals and of labour migrants facing unemployment, and for promoting poverty reduction (Programme for the development of an adult vocational education and training system 2011–15).

## B. EXTERNAL EFFICIENCY: ADDRESSING DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC AND LABOUR MARKET NEEDS

The population of Tajikistan has been growing steadily in recent years, reaching 7 564 500 in 2010 (according to the most recent census), up from 6 250 000 in 2000 (rural population 73.7%). With regard to the demographic structure, the country has a very young population: 60.5% are below the age of 25 years; 32.4% are aged between 25 and 54 years; and 7.2% are 55 and over (United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Division, World Population Prospects, 2010 – ETF calculation). The fact that Tajikistan has a young population may present a further challenge in terms of accommodating this large proportion of young people in the education system as well as the local labour market. In fact, the level of economic activity of the working population has been falling continuously since 2005, and in 2010, according to administrative data, it was 50.2% (MoLSP, 2011).

Tajikistan's economy is based mainly on the export of raw materials, cotton and aluminium. The fall in economic growth since 2008 was caused by higher oil prices, lower prices for exported raw materials and a reduction in the volume of migrants' remittances as a result of the international financial crisis. These remittances fell from 49.3% of GDP in 2008 to 47.0% in 2011, as indicated in Table 1.

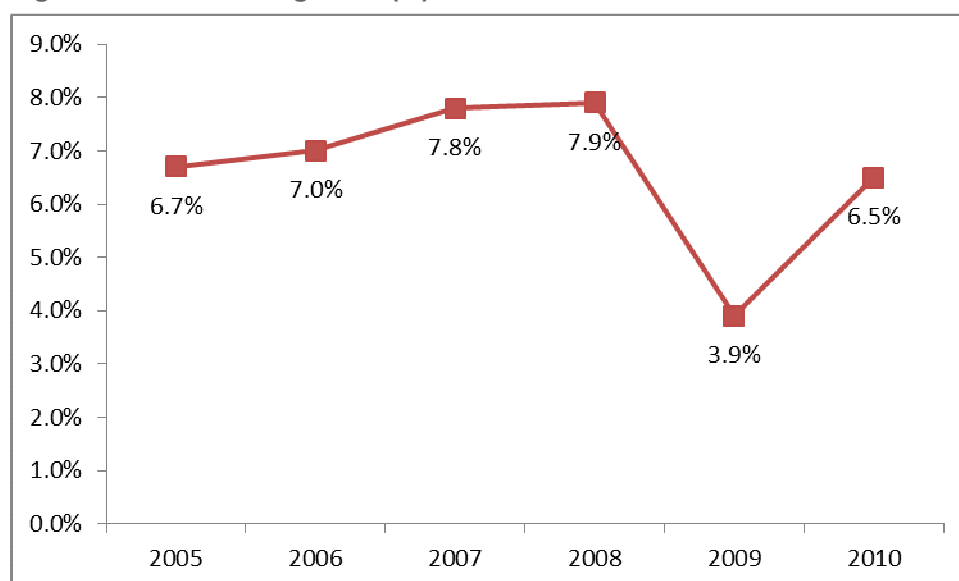
**Table 1: Remittances as a percentage of GDP**

|                         | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Remittances as % of GDP | 36.0 | 45.5 | 49.3 | 35.1 | 40.0 | 47.0 |

Source: World Bank World Development Indicators. Last accessed 13 February 2012 at: <http://databank.worldbank.org/ddp/home.do?Step=3&id=4>

GDP growth followed a positive trend between 2005 and 2008, with a slowdown in 2009 to 3.9%. It recovered to 6.5% in 2010 and is now forecast to be 7.0% in 2012. Inflation was also significant over this period, at around 10% per year.

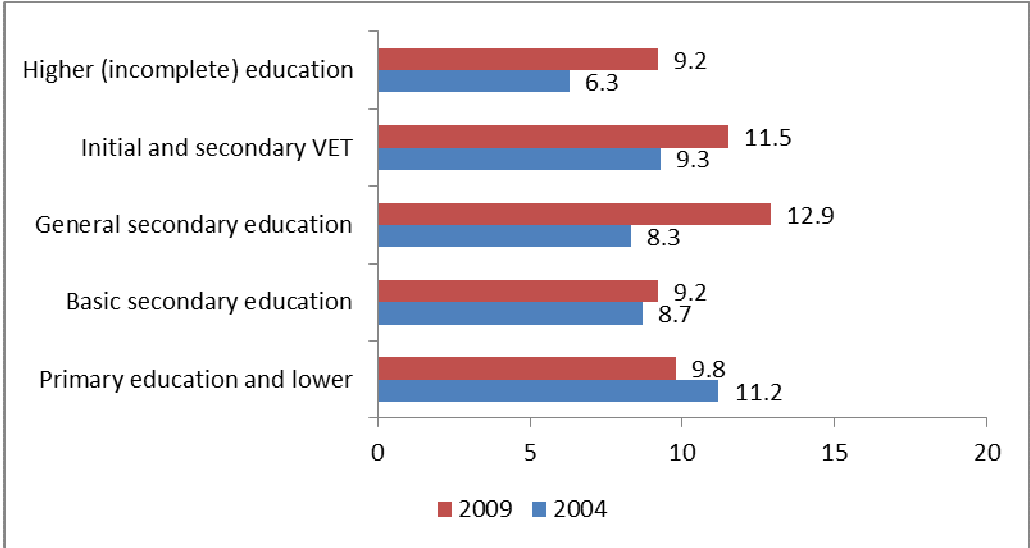
**Figure 1: Annual GDP growth (%)**



Source: TAJSTAT, *Tajikistan: 20 Years of State Independence*, 2011

Youth unemployment (age 15–29) has been increasing in recent years. In 2009, the most recent year for which official data is available, it was 15.4% (TAJSTAT, 2009 – ETF calculation). However, data on unemployment and education show that the opportunity to find work is very much linked to an individual's level of education. The unemployment rate among people with general secondary education was 12.9% in 2009, which was higher than the unemployment rate among those with initial and secondary VET, as well as those with higher (incomplete) education, as shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Unemployment rate by education, age 15–75 (%)**



Note: Labour migrants are not included.

Source: TAJSTAT 2004 and 2009, according to the Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The officially registered unemployment rate for the past five years (State Statistical Agency, Statistical Yearbook of Tajikistan, 2011) is only 2%. The reason of such a low level of registered unemployment mainly relates to the current way in which employment offices function, delivering as they do a very poor service (Kuddusov, 2010). This issue remains open for further research and study.

The unemployment rate by region (Table 2) shows that the highest rates are in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province (GBAO) (23.3%) and Dushanbe (19.1%, from 2009 Labour Force Survey (LFS) data). However, compared with 2004, the rate has decreased by 5.3 percentage points in Dushanbe and by 2 percentage points in the Districts of Republican Subordination (DRS); it has increased by 2.2 percentage points in Khatlon and by 9.1 percentage points in Sughd, where the highest poverty rate was also recorded, this being the result of the poor rural conditions (see Section C).

Unemployment is the result of a lack of jobs in the domestic labour market and limited business development, especially in rural and remote areas. Migration is officially recognised as an efficient tool for keeping social tension at a low level and for supporting skills development that is not directly provided by the VET system (Labour Market Development Strategy, 2011). Labour migration has two main strands:

- internal – mainly from rural to urban areas;
- external – mainly to Russia (99.3% of migrants).

Dushanbe attracts people from the DRS and Khatlon region. According to the 2009 LFS, the number of daily commuters travelling to Dushanbe is 46 800, compared with 4 200 travelling from Dushanbe to other districts. The numbers of commuters are highest among the employed population of the DRS (15.2% of employed population) and Khatlon region (12.3%). In GBAO the figure is 9.3%, and in

Sughd region 8.5%. Overall, there has been an increase in labour mobility. The volume of commuters increased between 2004 and 2009: 86 900 people were involved in commuting in 2004, while in 2009 the figure had increased to 200 900. Over 82% of these are men from rural areas (Statistical Yearbook of Tajikistan, 2011).

The highest rate of external labour migration is from the DRS, at 15.1% of the population aged 15–75 years, while the lowest rate is from Dushanbe city, at 6.4%; 13.5% (21 000) of the population aged 15–75 years from GBAO are migrants; 11.2% (160 700 people) from Sughd; and 9.5% (152 000 people) from Khatlon region (Statistical Yearbook of Tajikistan, 2011).

The main reasons for the growth of external labour migration from Tajikistan are as follows (as set out in the Labour Market Development Strategy).

- Lack of jobs: according to the Employment Services, by the end of 2009 the number of vacancies was only half that of 2004. The most critical situation in the labour market is in the Sughd and Khatlon regions.
- Low wages: despite annual increases, the average remuneration level remains low. According to the LFS, in 2009 it was TJS 284.35 (USD 68.6), compared with TJS 61.81 in 2004.
- The global economic crisis in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors has led to a reduction in employment and an increase in unemployment (except in Dushanbe), as shown in Table 2.
- The economic growth rate does not correspond to the potential of the workforce, which is increasing in size (annual average rate of increase in the period 2001–10 was 3.7%).

**Table 2: Employment and unemployment rates by region (%)**

| Region         | 2004            |                   | 2009            |                   |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
|                | Employment rate | Unemployment rate | Employment rate | Unemployment rate |
| GBAO           | 60.6            | 18.0              | 34.4            | 23.3              |
| Sughd region   | 62.3            | 5.0               | 43.8            | 14.1              |
| Khatlon region | 65.9            | 7.2               | 48.4            | 9.4               |
| Dushanbe city  | 36.8            | 24.4              | 37.6            | 19.1              |
| DRS            | 50.3            | 7.7               | 43.2            | 5.7               |

*Note: Labour migrants are not included.*

*Source: TAJSTAT, 2009 – ETF calculation*

The process of migration involves lost educational opportunities being replaced with work experience, and many migrants, having gained practical working skills abroad, are now applying to educational authorities in Tajikistan for certification of their professional skills. Despite a lack of data on the need for skill certification, the state is taking the first steps to address this problem. The MoLSP is establishing a mechanism for the recognition of qualifications in order to credit labour migrants for their skills and assist them to increase their income and living standards. For the moment migrants can register with the public employment service. Like other unemployed people they can also receive vocational training in the form of short courses in the newly created adult training centres, or undergo an examination for certification (without having followed any courses) and obtain a state certificate. However, there is no proper normative and legal basis for certificated recognition of informal learning, in particular linked to migration (Kuddusov, 2012).

In addition to its influence on migration, the increase in the working-age population has particularly affected the informal sector, which is mainly made up of household-based enterprises or corporate

enterprises owned by households producing goods and services. The results of the LFS 2009 confirmed the continuing increase in informal employment (51%, excluding the agricultural sector).

The position of women in the labour market is very weak. Women are mostly engaged in low-wage jobs, in particular in the education, healthcare and agricultural sectors, where the percentage of female workers is high but the level of professional skills is very low. In general, female wages are almost 46% lower than male wages (LFS, 2009). However, in 2011 a national strategy (to 2020) for enhancing the role of woman was developed, and this aims to create conditions for economic empowerment and equal participation of women in the economic sphere, increasing their competitiveness in the labour market.

An important way to judge the efficiency of the linkages between the education system and the labour market is to assess the opportunities for transition from education to work. Many direct and indirect factors determine how hard or easy it will be for young people to enter the labour market, where they should be able to start benefiting from their previous investments in education and continue to improve their working skills. In this respect, the Labour Market Development Strategy includes a number of measures to address the transition from education to work (Labour Market Development Strategy, Annex 1, Objective 2.2.), such as:

- to include in the school programme subjects relating to the labour market, basics of business, improving functional literacy and logical thinking;
- to implement vocational guidance and career education at school level.

Few studies have addressed the issue of transition from education to work in Tajikistan. In 2007, inspired by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Centre for Strategic Studies (attached to the Executive Office of the President of Tajikistan) carried out a large-scale study of issues associated with the transition from school to work. The study was conducted in 28 cities and districts of Tajikistan and included 4 332 respondents (ILO, 2007). However, despite its large scale and its potential to analyse the situation of young labour market entrants in Tajikistan, the study was never included in the policy debate on youth, education or labour market policies. In 2012 the Tajik non-governmental organisation (NGO) Socservice carried out a field analysis (funded by ETF) covering 2 000 respondents, and its results will be presented at national level in March 2013.

According to the Labour Market Development Strategy, the current status of the labour market in Tajikistan is the result of the imbalance between demand and supply. In quantitative terms, the supply of young graduates entering the labour market greatly exceeds the demand in the economy, as demonstrated by the high unemployment rate among 15–29 year-olds. In addition, the education system is not able to provide young graduates with the skills that are in demand in some parts of the labour market. This situation is reflected in the paradox that vacancies remain unfilled because of the lack of relevant competences provided by the education system, while at the same time there are a high number of unemployed people. One of the reasons is that the employers do not trust the quality offered by the VET system, and they are not involved in defining the standards for professional education. The mismatch between labour market requirements and the education system offer is largely due to the lack of mechanisms to link labour market needs to the education and training system (Kuddusov, 2012).

The dialogue between education and the labour market is generally weak, but is particularly so in the case of micro/small and medium enterprises, which account for 25% of employment, most of them related to farming and trade (Pasadilla, 2010). The number of private enterprises and organisations is increasing rapidly at the rate of 3 500 new entities per year, mainly as a result of the increase in the number of farms. The number of state-owned, collective and other enterprises is also increasing, but their share of the total number of enterprises is decreasing annually. Enterprises and organisations in

non-production branches of the economy are mostly concentrated in public administration (3.7%), education (2.4%), healthcare (2.0%) and public associations (5%) (Kuddusov, 2010).

Hence, the issue of cooperation between education and business remains an open question. In the Sughd region there are some good examples of cooperation with enterprises, but as a general rule (and particularly in the Kathlon region), small and medium-sized private enterprises, which are the drivers of economic development, lack the necessary understanding, resources and incentives for cooperation with educational institutions. Small and medium-sized private enterprises have yet to develop their involvement in education and skills development in such a way as to benefit them in terms of the availability of well-trained staff. In addition, there is a tendency to hire relatives or friends, instead of going through a transparent selection process to hire staff on the basis of the competences and skills required for the enterprise. However, a growing understanding of the need for skilled workers is emerging as a key factor for the country's competitiveness (Kuddusov, 2011)<sup>3</sup>.

In conclusion, one of the main problems for the VET system in addressing skill needs arises from the lack of structured cooperation between the VET system and social partners, which in practical terms is mainly related to the regulation of cooperation between vocational schools and enterprises. In addition, the VET system should act to prevent any possible corruption and ensure transparency of the learning and assessment processes.

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<sup>3</sup> The Global Competitiveness Index ranked Tajikistan 116th out of 142 countries in 2011/12 (compared with 122th in 2010/11).

## C. EXTERNAL EFFICIENCY: ADDRESSING SOCIAL DEMANDS FOR VET AND PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION

As stated in the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the government recognises that one of the most challenging tasks in education is to provide better access to education for both girls and boys, especially those from socially vulnerable segments of the population. Attention is now focused on making more effective use of the available funds and methods, and on developing new mechanisms to support children from vulnerable groups. In order to overcome barriers to school attendance, which is directly linked to poverty, school children in the primary grades will receive free hot meals (PRS report 2010–12)<sup>4</sup>.

Targeted economic assistance is provided to children from needy families, with resources concentrated on the poorest and most isolated areas of the country (PRS report 2010–12). The transition to a 10-year compulsory education system is seen by the government as a way of improving gender inequality in the education sector and bringing the education system into line with international education standards (PRS report 2010–12). In theory the VET system is accessible to all, but in practice this is not the case for children (especially girls) from low-income households living in remote areas, and for children with special needs (Olimova, 2010). The Social Exclusion Survey conducted by the UNDP in 2010 also concluded that social inclusion needs to be better promoted (UNDP, 2012).

Despite meaningful improvements in living standards in recent years, poverty in Tajikistan is still a very critical issue. According to the Living Standard Survey 2009, the rate of poverty declined from 72.4% in 2003 to 53.5% in 2007 and 46.7% in 2009, with 13.8% of this figure represented by those in extreme poverty (the poverty line is considered to be TJS 195 per month, and the extreme poverty line TJS 124). The rural poverty rate in 2009 was 14.1% higher than the urban rate (50.8% for rural and 36.7% for urban areas). Given the total population of Tajikistan, the poverty rate covers more than three million people. Poverty is unevenly distributed across the five regions: the lowest rate is in Dushanbe (19.1%), followed by GBAO (34.5%) and DRS (44.2%). Sughd (52.5%) has a total poverty rate slightly higher than the Khatlon region (50.2%). However, Khatlon has a similar poverty rate in both urban and rural areas, while the rate in Sughd is 44.7% in urban and 57.0% in rural areas.

Legislation aims to ensure equal access to education at all levels, eliminating inequity in both urban and rural areas. This concept is reflected in the National Education Development Strategy, in which major measures are put forward to expand the number of people covered by vocational education. This gives official recognition to the impact of vocational education on poverty reduction and youth unemployment. The intention of the MoE is also to enlarge significantly the number of vocational schools, in order to achieve wider coverage of the territory, both urban and rural (Kuddusov, 2012). Incentives and improvements in the conditions for participation in initial and secondary VET for girls and young people living in rural areas are also planned in the new National Education Development Strategy. National minorities are entitled to enrol for specific courses: these minorities are Uzbeks (15.3%), Russians (1.1%), Kyrgyz (1.1%), others 2.6% (2010 census data).

In theory, children with special needs have access to all levels of education, but there is a significant problem because of the lack of competent teachers and proper school infrastructures, in particular in VET (Kuddusov, 2012). There is only one vocational school in Tajikistan (in Dushanbe) that

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<sup>4</sup> Data on vocational school attendance and dropout rates are missing or incomplete.

specialises in providing education for students with learning disabilities. In the survey carried out within the framework of the ETF project on human capital development and equity in Tajikistan in 2009, it emerged that 'most respondents think children with disabilities should not attend public secondary schools; this attitude is particularly prevalent among rural residents where 78.5% of respondents believe that children with special needs should not attend mainstream schools' (Olimova, 2010).

Boarding schools in Tajikistan are critical for social inclusion. In order to improve the functioning of the 84 boarding schools, the MoE has opened a specific unit for their management with the aim of developing new curricula and enabling children enrolled in boarding schools to complete secondary general education. Teachers and specialists for boarding schools, special pre-school institutions (13 in total in 2010, with almost 9 000 children and 939 teachers) and at-home study schools (6 in total in 2010, covering 740 children) study at the Faculty of Education Science and Psychology, and are specialists in 'defectology' (a term used in the Soviet Union to indicate a medicalised approach towards children with disabilities). Higher education institutions do not offer special education specialisms such as speech therapy or other related sciences (MoE, 2011). Disabled people are officially recognised as 'socially excluded' in the Labour Market Development Strategy.

Complementary education is provided by 78 centres (completely funded from the state budget) to 32 046 children outside normal school times. These centres cover the whole country, and are distributed as follows: 6 in Dushanbe; 27 in Sughd; 24 in Khatlon; 8 in GBAO; 13 in DRS (MoE, 2011).

There is a growing disparity in educational enrolment rates among regions, socio-economic groups, age groups and genders, and geographic differences are also significant factors in determining attendance. In addition, attendance is higher in urban than in rural areas (Olimova, 2010). Maternal levels of education and the economic backgrounds of students have a significant impact on school attendance rates in secondary schools. School enrolment rates diminish significantly for all levels above the basic level of education. Girls mainly drop out of school after achieving basic education. Children from low-income families have the highest level of school dropout rates. The ETF survey conducted in 2010 by Sharq shows that 15% of secondary education students do not attend classes (Olimova, 2010).

The main areas of intervention should relate to the expansion of access to education for excluded social groups, such as women, poor people and villagers living in remote mountain regions. For women in particular, it is important to implement information campaigns to encourage them to obtain technical and vocational education through career development sessions, and to disseminate information on career opportunities.

In conclusion, in order to make individual choices in education more equitable, VET should be made more attractive and standards of professional training should be further developed in order to reflect the needs of both the internal and external labour markets. It is recommended that the various elements of VET be integrated in order to improve VET management and coordination in a comprehensive way, introducing VET councils, undertaking strategic planning and enhancing coordination among government agencies, donor agencies, businesses and public organizations at regional and local level.



## D. INTERNAL QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF VET DELIVERY

The National Education Development Strategy highlights the fact that the lack of quality in education and training is a major challenge, particularly in rural areas. Improving the quality of education is a priority in the National Education Development Strategy, which sets out measure for modernising infrastructure, academic programmes, teaching methods and management towards a result-oriented organisation. The development of social partnerships and the implementation of new financial mechanisms are also planned.

VET provision, as showed in Figure 3, is organised into four main sections: initial VET (IVET), secondary VET (SVET), higher VET (not included in this report) and vocational training for adults.

In 2010 the **IVET system** (ISCED 3), which is the responsibility of the MoE, involved 22 316 students in 66 schools, offering training in 96 professions. It has the lowest level of coverage of secondary school graduates (4%). Its 1 210 teachers and 1 077 trainers are not enough to cover the requirements, as 5% of teaching posts are vacant. The 66 IVET schools possess 710 computers, 900 hectares of land and almost 2 000 machinery and equipment units (MoE, 2011). The main challenges for IVET relate to the serious shortage of modern training equipment, the limited availability of internet connections, the outdated nature of programmes, the weak managerial capacity, the lack of qualified teachers, the lack of quality assessment, the lack of textbooks in the Tajik language, and the system's weak connection to the labour market. The IVET system includes the following types and levels of training:

- initial vocational and technical education: one year after compulsory schooling (nine years); diploma of vocational and technical qualification is issued;
- initial vocational and technical education combined with complete secondary education: two years after compulsory/general secondary schooling; diploma of complete secondary education and diploma of vocational and technical qualification are issued;
- initial vocational education: three to six-month training courses after compulsory schooling; certificate of vocational qualification is issued<sup>5</sup>.

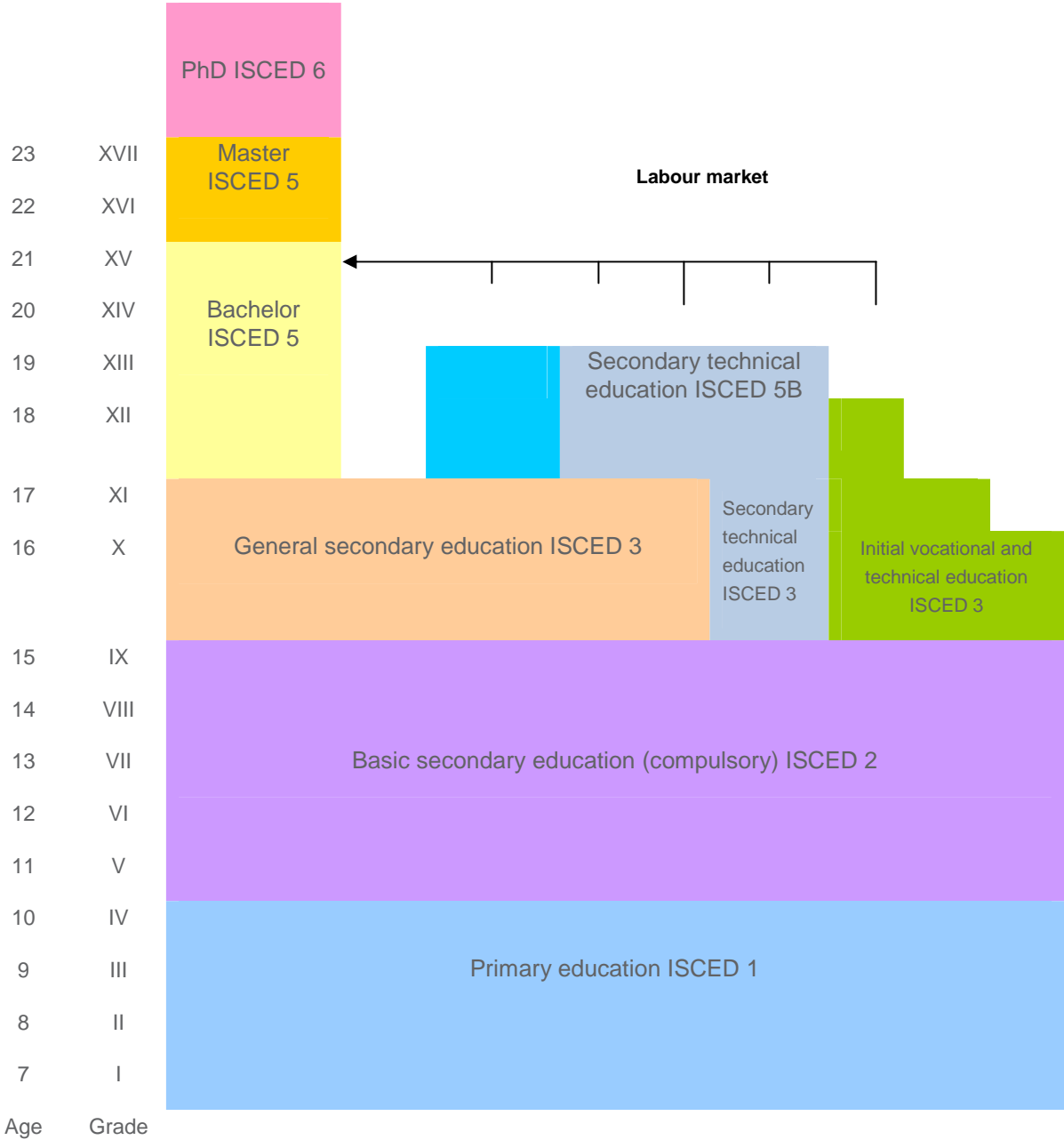
The **SVET system** (ISCED 3 and 5B), which is the responsibility of the MoE and other ministries (see Section E) in 2010 involved 37 550 students, 3 710 teachers and 49 schools (colleges), offering training in 110 professions. The colleges possess 1 067 computers (MoE, 2011). The main challenges for this system are exactly the same as the ones listed for IVET. The SVET system includes the following types and levels of training:

- secondary technical education: four years after compulsory schooling; diploma of secondary vocational education is issued;
- secondary technical education: two years after secondary general education (11 years), or after the initial vocational and technical education; diploma of secondary vocational education is issued.

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<sup>5</sup> Joint resolution of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour (joint decree 2313 of 29 September 2007) to offer short training courses within initial vocational training schools (PTUs, vocational training institutes).

**Figure 3: Educational provision in Tajikistan before the reform**



Source: Faudel et al., 2006b

The **vocational training system for adults**, which is the responsibility of the MoLSP, offers short, fee-based courses to all those over 15 years old. The public employment service (represented by the State Agency for Social Protection, Employment and Migration of the MoLSP) covers tuition fees for registered unemployed individuals (active labour market policy framework). The National Adult Training Centre of Tajikistan (NATCT) in Dushanbe and its regional branches are part of this system, to which the local training centres and the social and business centres are linked<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, the

<sup>6</sup> Social and business centres are organisations which provide services for entry-level entrepreneurs through business- incubator-type facilities.

MoLSP is very active in coordinating donor support for the further development of the adult education system. Modern classrooms have been provided for the NATCT and its branches in the regions through cooperation with GIZ, ACTED and Turkish and Iranian partners.

In 2011, 44 500 people were trained and their skills certified within this system, and in 2012 the President of the Republic set a target to train 100 000 people in the next two years across the whole country. In 2011 the NATCT started a process of certification of knowledge and skills, which allowed the number of graduates to be increased from 11 000 to 44 500 (Kuddusov, 2011). Although Tajikistan lacks the legal framework to regulate the process of knowledge certification, this measure can be considered as a pilot and could pave the way for the development of a related legal framework. Table 3 provides figures on the secondary education and VET systems for 2010.

**Table 3: Secondary education and initial and secondary VET systems in figures, 2010**

|  | Students  | Schools | Teachers | Specialisms |
|--|-----------|---------|----------|-------------|
| General secondary education (ISCED 3)* | 1 694 600 | 3 741   | 99 400   |             |
| IVET (ISCED 3)                         | 22 316    | 66      | 2 287    | 96          |
| SVET (ISCED 3 and 5B)                  | 37 550    | 49      | 3 710    | 110         |

*Notes: Total population aged 15–24 years: 2 268 000; (\*) 85% of general secondary schools have two shifts, 9% have three shifts, 6% have one shift. Dropout: up to 17%.*

*Source: MoE, 2011*

The number of students involved in initial and secondary VET (which is 3.5% of the number of students involved in general secondary education) is too small to have an impact on the modernisation of skills provision in the country. Furthermore, around 90 000 young people enter the labour market every year without any vocational education. If they fail to find a job, these unskilled young people enter the economically non-active population or decide to become migrants. In this sense migration becomes a way of obtaining skills and competences outside the Tajik VET system or labour market (Kuddusov, 2010).

The low number of students involved in VET (and there is a lack of dropout data for this segment of education) is also due to a general lack of quality in the system. In fact, the improvement of methodological and personnel support for the education system is considered to be vital for raising the overall quality of education. This can be addressed by updating educational content, improving curricula and study programmes, and preparing textbooks that reflect new approaches to education. The transfer to 10-year compulsory education is being undertaken with the intention of moving in this direction. Another important focus is the retraining and professional development of teachers, which is aimed at improving the quality of instruction and reducing the shortage of teachers, particularly in rural areas. There are plans to organise professional development courses for teaching staff, taking into account modern requirements for introducing new technologies into the educational process. Local government bodies need to take steps to attract young teachers to work in rural schools and thus help to solve this problem. An independent educational quality control system will be set up, and methods of correlating school performance assessments with results are in the process of being implemented (PRS report 2010–12).

After completing initial VET, students have a general lack of knowledge of basic subjects, particularly in rural schools. Additional courses are planned for such students, but are not always implemented by schools because of a lack of teachers. As a general issue, vocational school management is weak, which jeopardises its ability to use the autonomy that it is legally granted.

An external system of quality assessment has been implemented in Tajikistan by the MoE through the state Service for Quality Supervision. Once every five years the school is assessed by a commission in terms of both its provision and its teachers; once a year students' knowledge is assessed/monitored. In reality, only a general check on the learning process is carried out. At the end of each cycle an examination takes place. This examination requires the participation of a state commission with the involvement of employers (usually the chairman of the examination committee). There are also examinations for entry to secondary education, but teachers complain about the low education level of students. The adult education system has the same system of examinations, but without entrance exams.

Quality in education remains a major challenge for the entire education sector, but in particular it has a significant effect on the initial and secondary VET system (MoE, 2011). In 2010 a decree on a national standard of secondary vocational education was approved in order to address this problem. The main factors that affect quality are a lack of qualified and motivated teachers, weak school management that has failed to implement new education requirements, inadequate learning materials and a poor learning environment (Kuddusov, 2012). Examples of well-functioning vocational schools are those in which the management has introduced modern assessment tools, including more participatory and practical learning approaches, enhanced communication with teachers, parents and students, and cooperation with enterprises. The immediate and rapid increase in student enrolment in these very few schools demonstrates that young people are aware of their needs and are calling for quality vocational education. This was demonstrated very clearly during visits to a number of vocational schools: the purpose of the visits was to evaluate the impact of their participation in the capacity-building programme on management and partnership organised in 2011 within the framework of the ETF school development initiative. The following extracts illustrate the findings.

**Vocational school No 16:** Communication Lyceum, Dushanbe – 370 students, two shifts.  
Interview with Mr Safarov (director), Mr Nazriddinov and Mr Tsabirov (deputies).

For the first time we have organised practical training outside the school, thanks to the conclusion of partnerships with four major communication companies in Dushanbe (Tajik Telecom, Tajik Post, Dushanbe Post, and Tajik TV) and we plan to increase the number of partners in the new year. In addition, also for the first time, we have produced a video about the school that was broadcast on national television. This had the effect of attracting more people to the school. We usually had 200 students, but this year we received 800 requests (500 last year). As a consequence, we requested permission to establish a second shift and we now we have 370 students in two shifts. We have also started short courses, part-time courses and cooperation with other schools in the area of foreign languages, and we plan to open a new language course next year.

**Vocational school No 30:** Construction School, Dushanbe – 700 students, one shift.  
Interview with Mr Nozimov (director), Mr Muchtorov and Mr Machmadulloev (deputies).

We have concluded three major partnerships with Knauf, Akted and Bosch. They are all international organisations that have agreed to train our students in their companies and also to certificate their learning, and they have provided us with new equipment for our laboratories. They will support us in the refurbishment of laboratories and by hosting practical training for students. With Knauf we will open two new specialties and they will provide equipment for two classes; with Akted we will train 30 students on new techniques in welding, electricity and gas; and with Bosch there is an agreement to equip two classes for carpentry. All this is very important for us, as students learn new technologies for their fields of study. We have also advertised in newspapers with a high return in terms of interest and requests to study in our school.

Improving the socio-economic status of teachers is the most important component of the modernisation of education systems, and the introduction of a new salary system will more closely link remuneration to teachers' qualifications with the real labour costs of teachers and will deter teachers from resigning. It will also help to improve the quality of education. The current state of education is characterised by a shortage of personnel, a lack of qualifications and a growing need for school teachers as a result of demographic trends and the transition to a 12-year study system. Low wages in the education sector have caused a significant outflow of qualified teachers. In 2009 an important decision was made to increase the monthly salaries of SVET teachers from TJS 76 to TJS 250–300 (MoE, 2011). In April 2012 a further increase was announced by the President of the Republic.

The main actions identified in the National Education Development Strategy for addressing the shortage of VET-qualified teachers are the following:

- restructuring the in-service teacher-training system: transition to personalised accounting and financing, and module-based organisation of programmes;
- reorganisation of the system of pedagogical colleges and higher education institutions;
- involvement of traditional universities in the education of teachers.

The new strategy sets out plans for a result-oriented management system with the following actions:

- development of a process of monitoring and evaluation as a basis for making managerial decisions and result-oriented management;
- introduction of a new generation of state educational standards at all levels of education;
- establishment of a regulatory and methodological framework and infrastructure for a national system to assess the quality of education;
- introduction of a national system for assessing the level of achievement of educational outcomes according to national standards at all levels of education, and a system for the analysis of test results and for issuing recommendations to administrators of education and educational institutions, teachers, and authors of textbooks and curricula;
- implementation of the management of quality of training in educational institutions following the principles of ISO 9000 or other systems of quality assessment and management.

This new approach will affect the entire education sector, including VET. In particular, the programme for the development of an adult VET system (2010) puts strong emphasis on occupational standards that are internationally benchmarked, and these are seen as the key reference point for all VET. There are plans within the MoLSP to develop these jointly with experts from the respective sectors, following a common logical structure in order to determine what a person should be able to do in order to perform a certain occupation. Occupational standards cover all aspects of training, so it is intended that they will become the reference point for VET and adult training (short courses). Occupational standards should become the basis for curriculum development, the development of teaching and learning aids, equipment, assessment and certification. Only if they are developed and approved at national level they can function in an effective way. This will ensure comparability among all training courses provided in the country, and these can be awarded national recognition. In order to ensure that educational programmes continue to be in line with labour market demands, independent professional certification will be introduced, and a network of certification centres developed throughout the country.

In order to address these issues, a National Centre for Education Quality Management will be established as an organisational, procedural, service and research unit. A new information management database, which will focus on the monitoring of the current situation and analysis and forecasting of the new development of education, will be established in addition to the education quality management system. This calls for the development of a system of indicators describing

available resources and their efficiency; the effectiveness of the system and compliance of these results with external demand; and the level of accessibility of educational resources for all, including the most vulnerable groups in the population.

Since 2000, private schools in the form of lyceums have been established in response to an emerging demand in society for high-quality secondary education. There are no private vocational schools, though paid training courses are available in some of the more prestigious vocational schools. Students of vocational schools are not paid a stipend, but they receive a free meal every day. Some vocational schools converted into lyceums request payment for tuition, as in the system of higher education. The IVET schools (which are exclusively public) mainly survive on the basis of their own incomes from large land plots, and from providing such services as the repair of agricultural machinery. Each year all school principals provide the MoE with information on their financial needs, though their requests are never fully satisfied (Kuddusov, 2012).

Each school can accept a maximum number of students, a figure that is stipulated by the MoE, and the situation is reviewed every year in case the number of students needs to change. The Service for Quality Supervision provides licenses on request for any new specialism, together with an indication of the maximum number of students that can be trained in this area. State funds are allocated on the basis of school facilities. Conditions and procedures for funding per student are established by decree (Government decree 505 of 3 October 2007), which provides guidance on calculating the per capita norm, budgets and use of funding, with a view to reducing the inequity inherent in the flat-rate funding of schools. This per capita approach has already reduced regional inequities, although it presents new challenges for school principals and accountants, who are forced to take a more active role in managing their finances and in attracting additional resources from private institutions. This approach calls for new management capacities, and for strategic planning and self-governance skills that were not previously required for such positions (MoE, 2011). The Republican Information and Education Resource System (RIERS) portal, which was established within the framework of the National Educational Computer Network, could also be used to share information and stimulate the development of distance learning for teacher training.

The main conclusion is that in order to develop an efficient VET system, there is a need to create an integrated VET system, avoiding overlaps between initial, secondary and adult VET. More cooperation is envisaged between the MoE and the MoLSP, in particular in terms of developing a common approach in the implementation of the two new strategies. As financial resources are limited, it is also important to implement a network of educational institutions in order to find common solutions and optimise resources. Improving quality is a real priority for all the stakeholders involved, with a clear awareness of the importance of the position of managers, teachers and trainers. The system of teacher training, the financial literacy of school directors and accountants, and quality management are all aspects of human resource capacity development that need to be drastically improved.

## E. GOVERNANCE AND FINANCING OF THE VET SYSTEM AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES FOR CHANGE

Since 2008 initial and secondary VET have been the responsibility of the MoE. All the 66 schools that provide initial VET are under the competence of the MoE, while responsibility for the 49 secondary vocational education schools is shared between the MoE (20 schools), Ministry of Health (15), Ministry of Culture (6), Ministry of Energy (3), Ministry of Agriculture (2), Tajik Aluminium Plant (1), Hydropower Station of Roghun (1) and Committee for Youth, Sports and Tourism (1).

The professions and specialisms offered are proposed for government approval by the MoE in cooperation with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade. The MoE has a Department of Initial and Secondary Vocational Education, which is responsible for developing and implementing VET policy and strategies, and which is divided into two units, one for initial and the other one for secondary VET. Vocational schools in Dushanbe, the DRS, Khatlon and GBAO are directly under the MoE, rather than under an intermediate education department of a regional, district or city executive authority. The only exception was in Sughd region, where a VET unit within the education department in the executive branch of the regional government directly managed the 23 vocational initial and secondary schools (7 000 students, 36 professions). However, this unit was disbanded in 2012.

The Academy of Education (created in 2009 from the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences) is responsible for the development of standards, the content of subjects, curricula, textbooks and training materials. It has a very important role in this phase of transition to the new education system of 10-year compulsory education and 12-year general education. The Academy of Education is the direct responsibility of two institutions:

- Institute of Education Development,
- National Institute of Professional Development and Re-Training.

The Institute of Education Development is a research centre dealing with all aspects relating to the content of education, developing programmes, producing textbooks, and organising conferences and research activities. The National Institute of Professional Development and Re-Training is responsible for teacher training and monitoring education quality.

Direct management within initial and secondary vocational education institutions is carried out by the directors, who are appointed and dismissed by the MoE on the basis of a recommendation from local authorities. Each vocational school has a Pedagogical Council that deals with educational activities and acts according to the Charter on Pedagogical Council of vocational schools.

The adult education system is under the competence of the MoLSP and is managed by the State Agency for Social Protection, Employment and Migration. The MoLSP had a section for policy development for adult education, which is now a unit for labour, employment and migration, while the agency has a unit for developing vocational education for unemployed people. Methodological expertise is provided by the NATCT, which was established in Dushanbe in 2008 with four regional branches in Kurgan-Tube and Kulyab (Khatlon region), in Konibodom (Sughd region), and in Tajikabad. All the state employment service's 15 adult training centres and a modular training centre in Dushanbe with branches in Kulyab and Garm are attached to the NATCT. In addition, in 2009 two education centres were created, in Dushanbe and Kujand, with the aim of updating the skills of unemployed individuals and potential migrants.

The MoE collects data from initial and secondary VET institutions, including aggregated and disaggregated data on students, teachers, trainers, non-academic staff and equipment. A statistical book is published annually by the MoE, and more generalised information is published by the State Statistical Agency within the framework of the annual statistical report *Education in the Republic of Tajikistan*.

The MoLSP collects adult education statistics on the number of unemployed people trained in short courses, by gender, region, age and profession, and on the number of staff employed and their salaries. However, not all of the collected data is made available for general use, and statistics on adult education are only partially published by the State Statistical Agency. No data is collected on the quality of the training provided to adults.

The state budget allocated to education has been increased slightly in recent years, though it remains below 5% of GDP, and well below 1% for initial and secondary VET. The MoE estimates that in order to solve the crisis in the education system, expenditure as a proportion of GDP needs to be increased to at least 10%. Tables 4 and 5 show the percentage of public expenditure on education and VET in recent years.

**Table 4: Share of GDP spent on education and initial and secondary VET (%)**

|   | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Share of GDP spent on education                 | 3.40 | 4.10 | 4.10 | 4.10 | 4.60 | 4.70 | 4.60 |
| Share of GDP spent on initial and secondary VET | 0.10 | 0.10 | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.16 | 0.17 |

Source: MoE, 2011

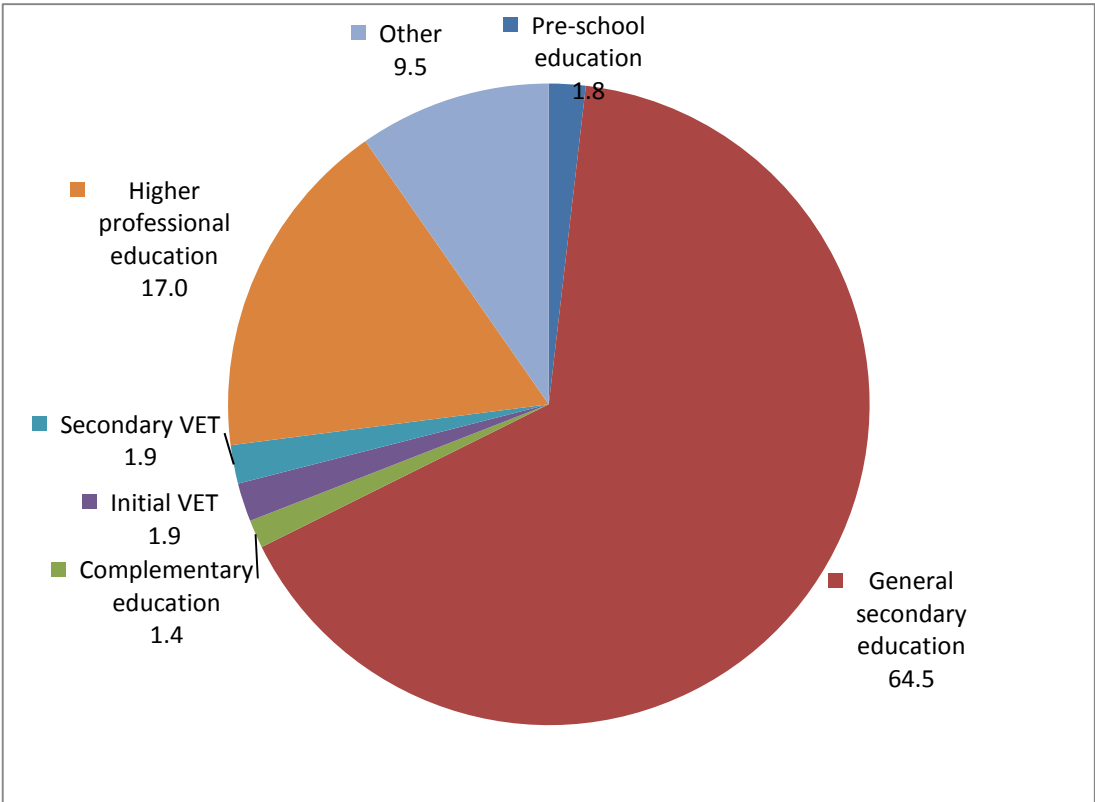
**Table 5: State expenditure on VET**

|                                  | 2006  | 2007  | 2008  | 2009  | 2010  | 2011   |
|----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| <b>Initial VET</b>               |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| Expenditure (TJS million)        | 9.3   | 10.7  | 12.7  | 17.9  | 18.1  | 25.5   |
| Expenditure per student (TJS)    | 395.4 | 414.6 | 607.3 | 812.6 | 880.0 | 1124.0 |
| <b>Secondary VET</b>             |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| Expenditure (TJS million)        | 11.3  | 11.7  | 11.7  | 27.2  | 26.0  | 26.4   |
| Expenditure per student (TJS)    | 354.7 | 361.1 | 344.4 | 797.7 | 677.7 | 702.0  |
| <b>Adult VET – short courses</b> |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| Expenditure (TJS million)        | 1.5   | 1.5   | 1.5   | 1.7   | 2.4   | 3.0    |

Source: MoE, 2011; State Agency for Social Protection, Employment and Migration



**Figure 4: Expenditure on education as a proportion of the overall budget for education, excluding adult education, 2011 (%)**



Source: MoE, 2011

There are plans to introduce a package of measures aimed at improving the use of government funding in the education system, increasing public funding and attracting private resources to this sector in order to establish a more effective system for the use of available resources. A Conceptual Framework for the Financing of Education in the Republic of Tajikistan until 2015 was adopted in 2011 and a per capita financing system introduced. This is aimed at:

- increasing transparency in the use of public resources;
- establishing a close link between the funding and performance of educational institutions;
- distributing resources by taking into account the number of students and the specific regional or local conditions;
- granting to educational institutions considerably more freedom and responsibility in the allocation of government resources.

In order to properly implement these measures, there is a need for capacity building for school management. As highlighted in the matrix on governance in Annex 1, the areas in which there is need for institutional capacity enhancement are:

- policy monitoring,
- development of standards and qualifications,
- work-based learning,
- teacher training.

In terms of governance there are two key challenges. The first one is to bring decision making closer to the parties that are most involved, by increasing structured dialogue and cooperation, both at institutional and territorial level. A stronger involvement of stakeholders, and in particular of social

partners, in policy design and implementation will make the VET system more responsive to the needs of society, employers and learners. VET providers will need to design and deliver VET programmes, to be aware of and take into account developments in the local labour market, and to be responsible and accountable for the outputs and – most important of all – the employability of their trainees. Vocational schools would benefit from being given increased responsibilities, with incentives to promote good performance. Capacity building is essential for school directors, but also for policy makers.

However, it should be mentioned that one of the key stages in VET development is the transfer of policy reform to local level through the implementation of existing regulatory mechanisms that have yet to be put into practice. This process gives VET institutions more opportunities to focus their offers on local labour market needs. Although local departments of education, including schools, are funded from local budgets, the heads of these departments are appointed by the MoE. Moreover, existing regulations and government programmes provide autonomy to local bodies, enabling them to establish cooperation on the territory. It would therefore be appropriate to initiate steps to enhance the professional capacities of education managers, in order to contribute to the success of the VET reform.

A similar situation exists in relation to the issue of improving partnership for development of VET and the labour market, the difference being that instead of an education unit there is a labour unit and/or an agency for employment and migration. For example, the Law on the Enhancement of Employment gives regional and local authorities responsibility for employment policy and labour market regulation at local level. These regional and local authorities have sub-divisions of labour that coordinate the activities of all bodies at regional/local level for labour market and employment, including adult education. In order to create a mechanism of social partnership for labour and employment that is directly related to VET, the decision of the government at national, regional and local level established coordination committees to promote employment. The main principle of these committees is that there should be equal representation from three parties: government, employers and trade unions. At local (regional) level the activities of these committees are organised by local (regional) public authorities. Unfortunately, because the culture of social dialogue is limited, this mechanism does not always work in practice.

The second challenge relates to the optimisation of VET provision. Before making substantial investments in the expansion of vocational schools and adult learning centres, it is important to analyse the level of efficiency of the present provision and to consider the option of larger regional VET centres that cover initial and secondary VET and adult learning. This could lead to efficiency gains in terms of equipment, teachers, teacher training and teaching materials.

# ANNEXES

## Annex 1. Governance matrix

| ELEMENTS OR FUNCTIONS WITHIN A VET SYSTEM         | AUTHORITY   | COMPETENCES  | RESOURCES  | ACCOUNTABILITY   |
|---|---|--|--|--|
|   | Who are the actors legally in charge of the VET function? Have roles and responsibilities been adequately defined?  | Do actors have the technical competences needed to fulfil this function?   | Do actors have adequate financial and human resources to fulfil this function?   | In what way are the actors in charge made accountable for the work done?   |
| <b>Policies and legislation</b>                   |   |  |  |  |
| Defining national VET and employment policies     | MoE for initial, secondary and higher VET. MoLSP for adult education and employment. These ministries make proposals to the government, which makes amendments and takes the final decision. The division of responsibilities sometimes creates confusion, because the adult education and employment policy under the MoLSP has to be formulated by the MoE. Cooperation between MoE and MoLSP is weak. VET policy is formulated by MoE without taking into account labour market needs. | The competence levels of MoE and MoLSP representatives are not always appropriate for the elaboration of efficient policies. | Financial and human resources are sufficient. The effective use of these resources is problematic.   | There is a system of intradepartmental/ intraministerial accountability. The ministries are accountable to the government, and must provide quarterly reports to the government. |
| Monitoring national VET and employment policies   | Monitoring of policy implementation is the responsibility of the MoE and the MoLSP.   | Ministries do not have sufficient competences for monitoring implementation. The most common form of monitoring is control.  | The financial resources are not sufficient for monitoring implementation. The human resources are sufficient, but staff need to be better trained. | There is a system of intradepartmental/ intraministerial accountability.   |
| Legislation for VET (both initial and continuing) | MoE for initial VET. MoLSP for adult education and employment.  | Competences are sufficient.  | Financial and human resources are sufficient.  | There is a system of intradepartmental/ intraministerial accountability.   |

| Qualifications and curricula                                      |  |   |  |  |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| National, sectoral and regional skill and training needs analysis | On national and sectoral level: MoE and MoLSP.<br>On regional level: vocational schools and Employment service.  | There is a lack of technical competences at all levels. There is no ongoing analysis of labour market skill needs because of this lack of technical competence. | Human resources are sufficient, but financial resources are lacking. | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Designing a list of occupations                                   | MoE and MoLSP (only for adult education).  | Technical competences are sufficient.   | Resources are sufficient.  | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Definition or revision of standards/ qualifications               | MoE.   | Lack of technical competences.  | Lack of resources.   | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Development or revision of curricula (all types)                  | Methodological Centre under MoE.   | Lack of technical competences.  | Lack of resources.   | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Teachers and trainers   |  |   |  |  |
| Pre-service training and induction of VET teachers                | Under the MoE there is an Engineer-Pedagogical College (in Dushanbe), which is responsible for the preparation of the trainers in practical learning for initial VET.<br>There is no such structure under the MoLSP for adult education. | Lack of competences.  | Lack of resources.   | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Recruitment of teachers   | Vocational schools carry out the selection themselves.   | Lack of competences.  | Lack of resources.   | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |

|  |   |                             |   |  |
|--|---|-----------------------------|---|--|
| In-service training of VET teachers                          | Under the MoE there is a centre for training and retraining of teachers.<br>There is no such structure under the MoLSP for adult education. | Lack of competences.        | Lack of resources.  | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Teacher appraisal and career development                     | MoE and MoLSP assess the teachers' work.  | Lack of competences.        | Lack of resources.  | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| <b>VET providers</b>   |   |                             |   |  |
| Network of providers of<br>- initial VET<br>- continuing VET | MoE and MoLSP.  | Competences are sufficient. | The lack of financial resources is partially offset by donor activities in adult learning (MoLSP) and some donor assistance to initial VET (MoE). | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Planning VET programmes and student numbers                  | MoE and MoLSP, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade.  | Lack of competences.        | Lack of financial resources for data gathering and insufficient human resources and capacities.   | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Planning budgets for vocational schools                      | MoE and MoLSP, in agreement with the Ministry of Finance.   | Competences are sufficient. | Resources are sufficient.   | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Dealing with school expenses (managing school budgets)       | MoE and MoLSP.  | Competences are sufficient. | Resources are sufficient.   | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |

| Learning material and equipment            |                |                                      |                           |  |
|--|----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Learning material                          | MoE and MoLSP. | Competences are sufficient.          | Lack of resources.        | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Workshop equipment                         | MoE and MoLSP. | Competences are sufficient.          | Lack of resources.        | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Practical learning sites                   |                |                                      |                           |  |
| Liaison with employers                     | MoE and MoLSP. | Lack of competences at school level. | Resources are sufficient. | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Practical training places within companies | MoE and MoLSP. | Lack of competences.                 | Resources are sufficient. | No accountability.                                   |
| Apprenticeships                            | MoE and MoLSP. | Lack of competences.                 | Resources are sufficient. | No accountability.                                   |
| Assessment and certification               |                |                                      |                           |  |
| Assessment of students' skills             | MoE and MoLSP. | Competences are sufficient.          | Resources are sufficient. | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |
| Issuing certificates                       | MoE and MoLSP. | Competences are sufficient.          | Resources are sufficient. | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports. |

| <b>Monitoring and impact</b>  |                 |  |  |                           |   |
|---|-----------------|--|--|---------------------------|---|
| Monitoring the quality of VET provision   | MoE and MoLSP.  |  | Lack of competences.                                       | Lack of resources.        | Some information is available on quality assessment (MoE), but there is no system of reporting. |
| School-to-work transition surveys or tracer studies for graduates                         | None conducted. |  | Lack of competences.                                       | Lack of resources.        | No accountability.  |
| <b>Research and innovation</b>  |                 |  |  |                           |   |
| Research and innovation, including the transfer of innovations from pilot to system level | MoE and MoLSP.  |  | Lack of competences.                                       | Lack of resources.        | No accountability.  |
| <b>Donor coordination</b>   |                 |  |  |                           |   |
| Efficient coordination of donors in VET   | MoE and MoLSP.  |  | Lack of competences, especially at MoE for the VET system. | Resources are sufficient. | Accountability is through intradepartmental reports.  |

## Annex 2. Key indicators

**Table A2.1 Torino Process key indicators 2012 – External efficiency**

| Indicator   | Year  | TJ              |
|---|-------|-----------------|
| Total population (million)  | 2011  | 6.98            |
| Annual population growth (%)  | 2011  | 1.4             |
| Share of 15-24 in the total population (%)                            | 2010  | 23.5            |
| Total dependency rates (%)  | 2011  | 66.5            |
| Young dependency rates (%)  | 2011  | 60.8            |
| Old dependency rates (%)  | 2011  | 5.7             |
| Global Competitiveness Index (rank, out of 144)                       | 12/13 | 100             |
| Annual GDP growth (%)   | 2011  | 7.4             |
| GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$)                        | 2011  | 2 340.2         |
| Agriculture, value added (% of GDP)                                   | 2011  | 19.9            |
| Industry (incl. construction), value added (% of GDP)                 | 2011  | 20.2            |
| Services, value added (% of GDP)                                      | 2011  | 60.0            |
| Share of employed in agriculture (% ,15+)                             | 2009  | 52.9<br>(15-75) |
| Share of employed in industry (incl. construction) (% ,15+)           | 2009  | 15.6<br>(15-75) |
| Share of employed in services (% , 15+)                               | 2009  | 31.5<br>(15-75) |
| Activity rates (% ,15-64)   | 2009  | 51.6            |
| Activity rates, female (% ,15-64)                                     | 2009  | 39.6            |
| Employment rates (% ,15-64)   | 2009  | 45.6            |
| Employment rate, female (% ,15-64)                                    | 2009  | 35.4            |
| Unemployment rates (% ,15-64)   | 2009  | 11.6            |
| Unemployment rates, female (% ,15-64)                                 | 2009  | 10.6            |
| Youth unemployment rates (% , 15-24)                                  | 2009  | 16.7            |
| Youth unemployment rates, female (% , 15-24)                          | 2009  | 13.7            |
| Completion of at least upper secondary education (% , total aged 15+) | 2009  | 71.2<br>(15-75) |
| Adult literacy rates (% , 15+)  | 2010  | 99.7*           |
| Adult literacy rates, female (% , 15+)                                | 2010  | 99.6*           |



**Table A2.2 Torino Process key indicators 2012 – Internal efficiency**

| Indicator  | Year | TJ              |
|--|------|-----------------|
| Participation in VET (% of upper secondary)  | 2010 | 10.7            |
| PISA results – % of students at proficiency level 1 or below in reading                            | 2009 | na              |
| PISA results – % of students at proficiency level 1 or below in science                            | 2009 | na              |
| PISA results – % of students at proficiency level 1 or below in mathematics                        | 2009 | na              |
| Employment rates by education level, upper secondary VET (% , 15-64) <sup>1</sup>                  | 2009 | 68.6<br>(15-75) |
| Unemployment rates by education level, upper secondary VET (% , 15-64) <sup>1</sup>                | 2009 | 11.9<br>(15-75) |
| Participation in lifelong learning – % of 25-64 year olds having participated in lifelong learning | 2011 | md              |
| Dropout rates in upper secondary VET   | 2011 | md              |
| Student–teacher ratio in upper secondary VET   | 2011 | md              |

**Table A2.3 Torino Process key indicators 2012 – Governance and financing**

| Indicator  | Year | TJ   |
|--|------|------|
| Public expenditure on education (% of GDP)   | 2010 | 4.6* |
| Public expenditure in upper secondary VET (% of total education spending) <sup>2</sup> | 2011 | 3.8  |

Sources: World Bank, United Nations Development Programme, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, World Economic Forum, Statistical Agency under President of the Republic of Tajikistan

Notes: (1) TJ: primary VET; (2) TJ: primary and secondary VET; (\*) estimated; md – missing data; n/a – not applicable

## ACRONYMS

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| DRS   | Districts of Republican Subordination                |
| ETF   | European Training Foundation                         |
| EU    | European Union                                       |
| GBAO  | Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province                 |
| GDP   | Gross domestic product                               |
| ILO   | International Labour Organisation                    |
| IMF   | International Monetary Fund                          |
| IVET  | Initial vocational education and training            |
| LFS   | Labour Force Survey                                  |
| MoE   | Ministry of Education                                |
| MoLSP | Ministry of Labour and Social Protection             |
| NATCT | National Adult Training Centre of Tajikistan         |
| NGO   | Non-governmental organisation                        |
| PRS   | Poverty Reduction Strategy                           |
| RIERS | Republican Information and Education Resource System |
| SME   | Small and medium-sized enterprise                    |
| SVET  | Secondary vocational education and training          |
| TJS   | Tajik somoni (national currency)                     |
| VET   | Vocational education and training                    |

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