

TURKEY

ETF COUNTRY PLAN 2007

1. Socioeconomic background

The macroeconomic policy and political stability achieved since the financial crisis of 2001 has contributed to a GDP increase of 7.4% in 2006, although economic growth is not equally spread throughout the country. It is generally acknowledged that the decrease in the inflation rate (from 70% in 2002 to 8% in 2005) and the increase in productivity, private consumption, imports and private fixed capital investment, together with price stability, have substantially contributed to this growth.

The Turkish population was 72 million in 2005¹, of which around 20 million are in the age cohort 0-14 years. Given the current trends in participation in employment and education, Turkey will miss out on a major opportunity unless there is substantial progress on modernisation and reform in human resource development (HRD).

The overall educational attainment levels of the working population are low compared to the EU25 or other candidate countries (e.g., nearly 60% of the labour force is composed of basic education graduates or people who dropped out from basic education; the average number of years in education is 6.8 for males and 5.3 for females, etc.). Problems related to access to education by gender, rural/urban and social background (such as enrolment, drop-out and graduation rates) still exist (12.5% of the population—4.7% of men and 20.1% of women—is illiterate).

The employment rate is also low when compared to EU benchmarks, in particular for women. Unregistered employment was 53% of the total in 2004, as a result of a growing informal economy in Turkey. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent 60%-77% of total employment. Around 95% of these businesses are very small (with fewer than 10 employees), contributing only around a quarter of added value to the economy. This is a consequence of the low level of productivity resulting from inadequate technology and human capital investment.

The employment rate for women decreased from 31% in the mid-1990s to 24.3% in 2004, largely due to migration from rural to urban areas leading to a fall in the share of female unpaid workers in agriculture.

The at-risk-of-poverty rate among the working population is 22.7%, substantially higher than the EU average of 7%. Thus, whilst employment is the most important factor in preventing poverty and social exclusion in EU member states, this is not the case in Turkey because of low wages and poor working conditions.

2. Key policy issues and strategies in human resource development

Turkish priorities in the following areas can be identified:

Institution building

- To strengthen the coordinating capacities of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in formulating priorities for Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) financial support to HRD.
- To enhance the dialogue and capacity for policy analysis and formulation of both the Ministry of National Education and the Council of Higher Education (YOK) so as to ensure that effective and

¹ Source: Eurostat.

efficient reforms of education and training within a lifelong learning (LLL) perspective are implemented with the support of international donors.

- To consolidate the capacities of the Turkish Employment Organisation (ISKUR) in terms of policy formulation and the implementation of active employment measures, in particular, at the regional level.
- To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of existing social dialogue platforms in the definition of national priorities for HRD and, in particular, for the operations of the Vocational Qualifications Authority.
- To build up technical and administrative capacities for implementation of the European Social Fund (ESF) at both the central and regional level.

Education and training

- To improve the quality of education and training and set up mechanisms for adapting qualifications to the needs of the labour market, in line with EU Education and Training 2010 guidelines.
- To promote gender equality in education and training through higher participation at the primary, secondary and continuing training levels.
- To promote LLL as a way to improve the skills of the workforce.
- To continue to invest in improving the quality of human resources at every level of the education system (teachers, principals, school guidance counsellors and administrators).

Employment

- To attract and retain more people in employment, particularly by increasing the employment rate for women.
- To decrease the share of unregistered employment.
- To reduce the level of unemployment among young people through the establishment of closer links between the worlds of education and work.
- To promote a socially inclusive labour market that offers opportunities to all disadvantaged groups in society.
- To address regional disparities in the labour market, in education and training, and in social exclusion, within a perspective of implementing ESF-type projects that comply with European Employment Strategy priorities.

3. EU and other donor policies and interventions

The European Commission (EC) has implemented the following programmes:

- **Support Basic Education:** curriculum reform from Grades 1 to 8 to create the conditions for students to become free, democratic and capable citizens.
- **Strengthening of Vocational Education and Training (SVET):** development of modular competence-based curricula based on the needs of the labour market and establishment of the Vocational Qualifications Authority as an important step towards ensuring transparency and comparability in the educational system.

- **Modernisation of Vocational Education and Training (MVET):** strengthening the capacity to organise and deliver a modern system of pre-service and in-service vocational education and training (VET) teacher training.
- **Active Labour Market Strategy (ALMS):** promoting active employment measures including training, vocational guidance, etc.

Since the early 1990s the main donor in the HRD field has been the World Bank, which supports education, labour market and redeployment programmes. Switzerland and Germany have, until recently, provided financial assistance to MEKSA (a foundation established by employers, trade unions and the Ministry of National Education) by organising apprenticeship training following the dual system model. UNICEF supports the Ministry of National Education in promoting enrolment in basic education.

Under the IPA's HRD component, Turkey will receive EC support in 2007-2013 as follows:

- Support for policy promotion and innovation of structures and systems for employment, education, training and social integration, aimed at aligning Turkey with EU-Lisbon benchmarks and parameters.
- Assistance with developing technical and administrative capacities for implementing the ESF through preparatory measures (active labour market measures, equal opportunities, training, education and counselling, research, science and technology, management, and in-company training).

4. Mid-term perspective ETF intervention strategies contributing to added value in national, EU and donor reform-support policies

In accordance with its mid-term perspective 2007-2010, the ETF will provide assistance to Turkey in reforms of education and training systems that adopt an LLL perspective and in developing links with the labour market in the context of new EU external assistance programmes. The ETF's strategy for Turkey—as a candidate EU accession country—will aim at contributing to efficient and effective implementation of IPA assistance in the field of HRD, with a focus on improving the capacity of Turkish authorities to carry out policy analysis through a facilitation of policy dialogue and debate.

The ETF will continue to build on established networks of relevant partners, including public institutions, social partner organisations, donors, and NGOs. It will also contribute to capacity building for the implementation of preparatory ESF measures. In line with overall priorities, ETF support will include: policy advice, information collection and analysis, the promotion of best practice exchanges with other countries in the region and with EU member states through peer learning activities, and the enhancement of donor coordination in order to ensure synergy and complementarity of actions and the development of innovations/learning projects, whose results will contribute to the formulation of reform strategies.

The ETF strategy of intervention is to consolidate the outcomes of existing or completed projects, to ensure that policy proposals are taken forward and embedded in the national system, and to enable Turkish policymakers and stakeholders to take responsibility for reform by facilitating policy learning.

The ETF will respond in the mid-term to four main policy challenges in Turkey, described in turn below.

A. Institutional capacity building

The need to find national solutions in a European—and global—context is the real challenge facing Turkey. European cooperation can support and inspire Turkey and there are good possibilities for shared learning—but the real efforts and the hard work will have to come from the country's own national priority setting and policy decisions. Policy makers and practitioners at all levels in Turkey therefore have to develop the capacity to become policy interpreters, as there is a choice of models, measures and practices available for achieving the same goal.

Diagnosis

Turkey needs to develop capacities to translate goals into nationally preferred practices and to manage the internal processes involved. There are a number of critical elements in the policy-making chain which must be identified and overcome. Turkey will, in the coming years, need further support for capacity building, so as to shape its own policies and to overcome barriers to implementation. In short, efforts to intensify the organisation of policy learning platforms and to establish meaningful policy learning for key actors and stakeholders in Turkey are key to enabling the country take responsibility for its own VET and HRD policies. The ETF will, therefore, concentrate support to Turkey in a number of key policy learning areas in the coming years.

Measures

ETF will provide assistance to ensure:

- Better governance of the system (particularly by the Ministry of National Education), supportive institutional capacity building measures, and greater financial and human resources.
- Support for the development of social dialogue and other types of partnership through institutional capacity building programmes, aimed (at the provincial level) to local authorities, NGOs and social partners.
- Strengthening of the institutional capacity of the Turkish Employment Organisation (ISKUR), in particular at the provincial level.

Concrete steps

- a) Through its support to the EU Delegation, the ETF will contribute to identifying priorities for institution building activities, promoting the continuity of networks created through the first generation of EU projects, and fostering bridging with the new generation of projects.
- b) At the policy level, the ETF will establish policy learning activities through round table discussions with key stakeholders aimed at refining SVET and Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) documentation and decision making, and will, if possible, organise a peer learning activity for key actors in the Turkish VET system.
- c) At the provider level, the ETF will engage key stakeholders in policy learning activities, and in 2007, Turkish school managers will participate in a ETF peer learning activity aiming at analysing the impact of national education policies on schools and school management.
- d) The ETF will support activities to strengthen Turkey's awareness of, and participation in, EU Education and Training 2010 discussions and activities and to promote Turkish participation in CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) networks.
- e) The ETF will contribute to the development of indicators for assessing administrative capacities for policy development and implementation.

Outcomes

- Continued recognition of the ETF as a partner in the HRD field and consultation of the ETF on a regular basis by competent authorities and by other donor organisations.
- Identification and agreement on priorities for continuing VET reform by the national authorities, drawing on the positive outcomes of the SVET programme.
- Reformed Ministry of National Education structure that overcomes fragmentation and segmentation in VET management and delivery.

- Participation of networks of relevant partners (public institutions, social partner organisations, donors and NGOs) in policy dialogue with national authorities on the implementation of reform measures and ESF preparation.
- Active engagement of key stakeholders in policy learning activities and understanding of the facilitation role of the ETF.

B. Teacher training

Teacher training and modernisation of learning processes are currently high on the VET reform agenda in Turkey. The EC MVET project for teachers ended in 2006 and the EC SVET project for VET reform will end in September 2007.

Diagnosis

At the end of the project, sustainability is at risk because of a lack of strategic focus by the Ministry of National Education and considerable coordination difficulties between this body and the Council of Higher Education (YOK). While training of teacher educators at the provider level has been quite successful, the white paper process at policy level has neither created a consolidated basis for new legislation nor delivered sufficient strategic guidelines for establishing an agreed concept on which a new coherent VET teacher training model can be built (based on initial education and continuous professional development for teachers). The current in-service training programme for VET school principals is not in line with the new leadership dimensions introduced through the SVET project that prepares school leaders for decentralised management.

Measures

The ETF will establish follow-up activities to ensure that policy documents, curriculum initiatives, and university faculty and teacher/educator training investments are taken forward to 2007 and beyond.

Concrete steps

- a) At the policy level, the ETF will establish policy learning activities through round table discussions with key stakeholders aimed at refining SVET policy documents and decision making, and will, if possible, organise a peer learning activity for key actors in the Turkish VET teacher training system.
- b) At the provider level, the ETF will organise a series of meetings with the VET teacher training faculties involved in the project, with a view to ensuring coordination between VET teacher training providers, supporting the review of plans for faculty organisation change and curriculum development, and stimulating the application and dissemination of new learning methodologies developed through the SVET project.
- c) At the practitioner level, the ETF will support national monitoring of whether new methodologies have the envisaged impact in classroom teaching and will stimulate the involvement of selected schools in discussions on policy changes.
- d) The ETF will invite Turkey to become a full member of the ETF VET teacher training network for southeast Europe and will help select 4 Turkish representatives, 1 each from the policy and provider levels, and 2 from the practitioner level (1 school leader and 1 VET teacher).
- e) The ETF will stimulate the setting up and professional functioning of an Association of VET School Principals together with the Ministry of National Education, and will help organise a workshop (with an EU team experienced in school management training) as a step towards formulating a national programme that capitalises on the experiences of locally trained instructors qualified through the MVET project.

Outcomes

- Awareness of policy options and of the financial, legal and administrative requirements for taking forward SVET policy documents and recommendations and for articulation of peer learning needs.
- Establishment of a framework (mechanism or protocol) for collaboration and knowledge sharing by university faculties that enables transfer from pilot institutions to all VET teacher training providers.
- Creation of capacity at the policy and (selected) school levels for monitoring innovation in teaching and learning, reinforced in particular through peer learning activities in regard to the impact of ongoing VET reform on schools.
- Organisation of a national teacher training network conference in Turkey in autumn 2007, to be fully supported by the national authorities.
- Awareness of the need for stronger school leadership/stakeholder involvement in systemic reform via channels articulating organised interest, supported by follow-up policy recommendations and strengthened by the involvement of EU school leadership experts.

C. Lifelong learning

The issues of lifelong learning and the development of a national qualifications framework (NQF), including the Vocational Qualifications Authority, are currently high on the VET reform agenda in Turkey. Parliament has passed the necessary legislation, but the implementation challenge now has to be tackled. Among the ongoing Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (MEDA) projects, the SVET project will come to an end in September 2007 and a new project can only be designed in the course of 2007.

Diagnosis

In order to cope with the challenge of designing and implementing an overall LLL strategy, there is a need to continue, consolidate and expand the process of modernisation and innovation undertaken by the Ministry of National Education at various levels of the system, as follows:

- Increasing educational attainment at all levels (pre-school, primary, general secondary general, VET secondary, and higher education).
- Reforming the education system to facilitate easier transition through better links and pathways between different types and levels of education.
- Ensuring a high quality education system that provides students with key LLL competences.
- Adoption of an NQF.
- Increasing the quality and relevance of education and training institutions.
- Making the VET system a real and attractive option for students.

Measures

The ETF will establish follow-up activities to ensure that policy documents are taken forward in 2007-2010 and will support Turkey in its reporting on LLL to the EC. The ETF will support the EC in developing specific actions and projects to address the LLL challenge, as follows:

- Facilitating fundamental reforms in the role, mission and functions of the Ministry of National Education, including significant decentralisation to the level of provinces and schools.
- Assessing the impact of the new curricula implemented in vocational education and adjusting them as necessary.

- Designing and implementing new student assessment and examination systems in line with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).
- Promoting transition to secondary education (in particular of girls) and fostering flexibility within the system in order to make VET more attractive.
- Expanding access to training for adults through the development of adult learning strategies and pathways between initial and continuing vocational education.

Concrete steps

- a) At the policy level, the ETF will provide, on request, policy support with Turkey's reports to the EC, in particular on LLL progress (the first one coming up shortly), and possibly on the Joint Action Programmes (JAP) and the Joint Inclusion Memorandum (JIM).
- b) The ETF will establish a task force consisting of all the relevant stakeholders, which will prepare follow-up to the present generation of EU projects within the framework of an LLL approach.
- c) The ETF will establish policy learning activities through round table discussions with key stakeholders aimed at refining SVET policy documents and decision making, and will, if possible, organise a peer learning activity for key actors in the implementation of the Vocational Qualifications Authority.
- d) The ETF will develop peer learning activities with national and regional representatives of social partners, with a view to developing strategies for their increased involvement in the education and training dialogue and to assessing the feasibility of strengthening sector approaches to skills development.

Outcomes

- 1. Provision of feedback to the EC on LLL progress by national authorities.
- 2. An operational Vocational Qualification Agency supported by EC funding which has adopted and implemented the concept of learning outcomes, and with staff and stakeholders fully aware of policy options and financial, legal and administrative requirements.
- 3. Identification of national LLL priorities that reflect those identified in the JIM and JAP and in SVET policy documents.
- 4. Design and successful implementation of an EU-funded programme for LLL development.

D. Employment and labour market policies

The EU has been an important actor in the field of employment, including through the recently finalised ALMP worth 40 million EUR. A follow-up project has been designed for implementation in 2007. Most of the interventions consist of grant schemes implemented as active employment measures. EU tools to monitor progress with the *acquis communautaire* in the field of employment and social inclusion (the JAP and JIM, respectively) are expected to be agreed in the course of 2007.

Diagnosis

The main challenge identified in the ETF country analysis for IPA programming relates to the development of a comprehensive strategy to integrate economic, employment and education policies. The following issues are a priority from the policy making perspective:

Creating more and better quality jobs in the economy—and, considering recent trends in regard to low-value and poorly paid informal jobs in the services sector, the most urgent issue is to expand the services sector with better quality jobs.

- Increasing the employment rate through special activation measures (particularly among women and young people, and in the agricultural sector).
- Reducing the share of unregistered employment.
- Increasing the efficiency of labour market institutions (particularly ISKUR, the Turkish Employment Organisation) through better financial and human resources and institutional capacity building measures.
- Creating a more flexible and adaptable labour market by reforming labour market regulations and policies.
- Linking labour market reforms with an expanding social safety net for the whole population, given that social security reform is also an extremely important issue as far as the Turkish labour market is concerned.
- Increasing the involvement of all stakeholders (public institutions, social partners, NGOs, private organisations, etc.) in strategies that address the Lisbon goals.

Measures

The ETF will support the EC in developing specific actions and projects, as follows:

- Assistance to Turkish authorities, through EU programmes, in the adoption and implementation of the JAP for employment policy priorities, focusing on employment of certain population groups (women, young people, and those exiting the agricultural sector).
- Support with the implementation of active employment measures, particularly those targeting gender equality and social cohesion for vulnerable groups.
- Support to labour market institutions by increasing their capacity to implement employment programmes and, in particular, their capacity for absorbing active measures.

Concrete steps

- a) The ETF will facilitate policy learning among key stakeholders through dialogue, reviews and regional cooperation.
- b) The ETF will provide input to IPA programming in the field of employment.
- c) The ETF will follow up on the main findings of its evaluation of grant schemes within the ALMS project, and will further support the capacity to implement ESF-type measures.

Outcomes

- Adoption and implementation of the JAP for employment policy priorities, and incorporation in national policy of lessons learned from recent EU experiences of the Lisbon strategy and the EU Employment Strategy.
- Regular review of progress with EU-funded active employment measures for certain population groups, and incorporation of lessons learned in major programme development, in particular in the implementation of preparatory ESF measures.
- Provision of inputs to IPA programming through contributions to the elaboration of policy documents in line with national priorities.
- Strengthened policy learning capacities (in particular at the regional level) and social partner institution support for the implementation of ESF-type measures.

5. Work programme 2007: objectives and indicators

ETF 2007-2010 Activities and Services in Turkey							
ETF objective for Turkey 2007-2010: To contribute to HRD reform in Turkey by facilitating policy learning.							
PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT TITLE	SPECIFIC COUNTRY OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	(YEARLY) OUTPUTS	PROJECT DURATION
IPA 07-01	Facility to respond to EC requests	<p>The ETF will provide support as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ finalisation of an operational HRD programme for IPA assistance. ■ regular review of progress of ongoing reform and of consolidation and extension to the rest of the system. ■ institutional capacity building and an integrated regional VET dimension that meets the needs of SMEs (in particular in South Eastern Turkey). ■ establishment of the Vocational Qualifications Authority, identifying also priorities for possible EC assistance in this area. ■ a national strategy for LLL is officially adopted and covered under an EC financial assistance programme. 	<p>Key competent authorities fully involved in the preparation of the operational programme.</p> <p>MEDA programmes for the reform of education and training successfully completed.</p> <p>EC programmes for institutional capacity building and VET in regional developments that meet SME requirements ready to start.</p> <p>Vocational Qualifications Authority operational and an EC programme designed for funding under IPA 2007 of an NQF.</p> <p>EC programme designed to support institutional capacity building in the field of LLL, with pilot actions implemented.</p>	<p>Good quality operational HRD programme available.</p> <p>Reform disseminated at all levels of education.</p> <p>Full support for implementation ensured by the Ministry of National Education and by regional authorities.</p> <p>Rules and regulations to commence operation of the NQF Authority in place, and appointment of general assembly members and executive board.</p> <p>National strategy reflects EU orientations and debate within the context of the Vocational Qualifications Authority.</p>	<p>IPA planning document.</p> <p>Mid-term monitoring reports, green and white papers.</p> <p>Programming documents, terms of reference for technical assistance and steering committee.</p> <p>Work plan for the period 2008-2010.</p> <p>White paper on LLL.</p>	Comments by e-mail	2007-2010
IPA 07-02	Education and Training 2010	To raise awareness on a systemic basis of the development and purposes of the EU Education and Training 2010 agenda.	<p>Innovation strategies for Turkey reflect priorities and objectives of the Education and Training 2010 agenda.</p> <p>Increased Turkish participation in CEDEFOP activities and networks.</p>	<p>Active contributions to EU discussions and reporting.</p> <p>EQF is orientation for Vocational Qualification Authority.</p>	<p>Reports to EU and minutes of EU meetings.</p> <p>Work plan for VQA</p>	European Credit (Transfer) System for Vocational Education and Training presentation.	2007

IPA 07-05	Policy learning to support VET reform processes	Within the perspective of promoting regional cooperation, to organise peer learning among school managers from Turkey, Albania and Kosovo on the impact of policies on schools and school management.	<p>Through peer visits to ALB, KOS and TUR key stakeholders from TUR have an enhanced common understanding of key issues for policy implementation in schools.</p> <p>Three country analyses in ALB, KOS and TUR and one cross-country report produced on how policy development and implementation has impacted on the learning process and management of the schools.</p> <p>Regional and country agendas developed for follow-up activities in order to provide feedback/policy advice to national authorities and EC services on options for and barriers to reform.</p>	<p>Improved capacity through peer learning.</p> <p>Self-study discussed with national stakeholders.</p> <p>Peer learning results disseminated by peers.</p>	<p>Self-study report.</p> <p>Peer evaluations of peer visit.</p> <p>Minutes and presentations, dissemination meeting.</p>	<p>Self-study report.</p> <p>Cross-country analysis.</p>	2007
IPA 07-06	Governance and administrative capacity in employment	To improve government and administrative capacity through the development of indicators to assess capacity in employment.	National assessment of capacity for policy development, planning, implementation and monitoring in relevant national, regional and local administrations. National Action Plan 2008-2010 developed.	Priorities defined for developing administrative capacities at different levels.	Assessment report and action plan.	Assessment report and action plan.	2007
IPA 07-07	Learning and teaching	<p>To promote sustainability in the reform of the VET teacher training system undertaken through the MEDA programmes, with follow-up activities including elaboration of policy documents, curriculum initiatives, university faculty and teachers/educator training taken forward.</p> <p>To set up an Association of VET School Principals together with ministry assistance and to organise a workshop with an expert EU school management training team as a step towards formulating a national programme to capitalise on the experiences of locally trained instructors qualified through the MVET project.</p>	Better coordination between VET teacher training providers, plans for faculty organisation change and curriculum development reviewed and supported, and the application and dissemination of new learning methodologies promoted through the SVET project.	<p>TUR has set up a national teacher training network (TTnet) structure.</p> <p>New training programmes in teacher training institutions.</p>	<p>SVET progress reports.</p> <p>Minutes of South Eastern Europe TTnet.</p>	TTnet seminar.	2007