

# Live&Learn

NEWS, VIEWS AND INITIATIVES FROM ACROSS THE ETF COMMUNITY

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## Ondřej Liska, Czech education Minister: Education - at the heart of Europe's future



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## Letter from the editor THE ETF – 15 YEARS IN TURIN

When Turin, in the early 1990s, dedicated itself to becoming the European capital of education and training, it was rewarded by being allocated the European Training Foundation at the Edinburgh European Council in October 1993.

In spring 1994, the ETF's first Governing Board convened and kick started activities, and this spring, the ETF can celebrate 15 years of successful work and

the achievement of significant results in ensuring stability, prosperity, democracy and freedom in Europe by spreading the message about the importance of learning and practice in vocational education and training to countries neighbouring the EU.

Located in the splendid Villa Gualino building in the hills above the city centre of Turin, the ETF and its experts have, over a decade and a half, assisted

countries outside the EU in making the best possible choices when preparing their citizens for tomorrow's society and labour market.

Today, the ETF is the largest international organisation of its kind, specialising in the area of education, training and labour market reform to meet global challenges. In January 2009, the ETF's mandate was enlarged and this opened up the possibility for the ETF to work with



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[www.etf.europa.eu](http://www.etf.europa.eu)

any country in the world – outside the EU - on human capital development and the new mandate has put the ETF in its strongest position ever.

Education and training must be at the heart of all the EU external policies, and as the current lead minister during the Czech Republic's EU Presidency, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, Ondrej Liška, states in an interview in this issue, it is important to keep

developing human capital by focussing also on entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation – to be able to use knowledge and develop a sense of creativity and innovation.

The EU and the ETF play an important role in promoting best practice and policy reform in Russia, Central Asia and other former Soviet states, the Balkans, the Middle Eastern MEDA countries and elsewhere. This will

be the challenge for the next 15 years and beyond and the ETF is well prepared for this challenge.

by Bent Sørensen  
Head of ETF Communication

The ETF is marking its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a concert in the Auditorium Giovanni Agnelli at the Lingotto, Turin, on 9 May 2009 on the occasion of the 59<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Schumann Declaration (Europe Day).



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## // EDUCATION - AT THE HEART OF EUROPE'S FUTURE //

# WE NEED A REFORM OF MINDS

Ondřej Liska, lead EU education minister talks to the ETF

**As lead spokesman on education during the Czech Republic's current Presidency of the European Union, Ondřej Liska has both the experience and, at the age of 31, the youthfulness to understand the importance of learning to the development of Europe's human capital.**

Mr Liska, who ran education in the Czech Republic for 15 months until the collapse in March of the country's coalition government under Mirek Topolánek, credits the European Training Foundation with being "particularly helpful" in sharing know-how and best practice five years ago when the country became a member of the EU.

"The European Training Foundation, from my point of view, was particularly helpful when it came to sharing know-how with us: policy learning at a time of reforms and changing an outdated system of education gave us a lot of inspiration for our own reform."

Education and training must be at the heart of European strategy.

As a university student Mr Liska was a committed Green and community activist: in the mid 1990s when at Brno's Masaryk University he headed Youth for Intercultural Understanding – an organisation dedicated to challenging some of the narrower points of view found in his largely ethnically and culturally homogenous country.

### NGOs

The experience of working with NGOs outside the system served him well when he went into politics.

"I worked in NGOs previously and I knew their limits. I work in public service now and I too see its limits such as slowness, low effectiveness, little



Photo: ETF/Getty Images

Ondřej Liska at the recent EQF conference in Brussels.

taste for change or rigid opinions,” Mr Liska says.

“What I consider a big success is changing my ministry into a communicating institution where many talented, motivated and hardworking employees discuss issues with experts and the general public. This is the only way to create policies and implement actions that will have more durability than one election period,” he adds.

He is pleased with the progress made on implementing reforms in vocational and technical education, although he recognises that in a country where deeply held, conservative views tend to work against educational change, there is a lot still to be done.

“I believe the Czech model of VET is changing continuously not only due to the reforms but mainly thanks to global trends - demographic development, migration trends, dynamic communication and communication technologies.”

“Complex reform is still in front of us though,” Mr Liska says, before listing the “new tools for vocational education and training” that his ministry is promoting in the Czech Republic: the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) and the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQARF).

### Opportunities

Providing opportunities for interest groups and decision makers to meet and discuss the implementation of such new tools through various events,



presentations and conferences is a core part of his approach as education minister and during the Czech Presidency.

An April conference on partnership projects has sparked wide discussion on the openness of educational systems to employers' requirements and in early May, as part of the Czech Presidency's Lifelong Learning Programme Conference<sup>1</sup>, outstanding examples of European projects in that area will be presented under the banner '2009 Success Stories'.

Joining the EU had definitely helped promote more progressive agendas across the educational spectrum – he notes the Czech Republic's “focus on lifelong learning – covering all levels of education from pre-primary to adult education” – adding that this was something “obvious in the EU” that is now gradually influencing national policy.

### Cooperation

Less open to change are Czech universities, where conservatism dating back to long before the post-war communist mindset, continues to dog reform.

“There has been a boom of inspiration and best practice examples coming from the EU since our accession. We faced and are facing problems in the education system like every post-communist country. European cooperation has a strong influence on shaping the Czech education system – Leonardo or Erasmus programmes are among the most visible.”

“However, the biggest task ahead of us is to change ourselves, in our own minds. No matter how EU policies challenge and shape our education and training, we need a reform of minds to be able to build a new reputation.”

Achieving that reform calls for both a strategic and a tactical approach.

The priorities<sup>2</sup> of the Czech Presidency for education and training – “a new strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training until 2020” – are designed to address the economic downturn from the perspective of education and “help Europe recover,” Mr Liska says. Key to that is promoting partnership between education and training institutions and employers.

“I believe it is undisputable that education and training must be at the heart of any European strategy and we have to follow ambitious objectives in this area. In the future we should focus more on entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation – to be able to use knowledge and develop a sense of creativity and innovation.”

### Policy reform

It is not only about Europe – the part that the EU and institutions like the ETF play in promoting best practice and policy reform in Russia, Central Asia and other former Soviet states, the Balkans, the Middle Eastern MEDA countries and elsewhere is also extremely important.

“I really appreciate the role the EU plays in this area; there are specific programmes for mobility exchanges but also projects of mutual cooperation, especially between education institutions.”

A Western Balkan conference on scholarship in May organised by the Czech Presidency, European

Commission and other EU bodies is one example.

The Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries is designed to help stimulate, monitor, coordinate, facilitate and support cooperation in research and technological development between EU countries, countries of the Seventh Framework Programme for research and technology development and countries of the Western Balkans.

This is not just about charity: promoting educational innovation and “a reform of minds” is the key to Europe’s future social health and economic wealth, Mr Liska believes.

In March during an informal meeting of EU education ministers in Prague<sup>3</sup>, the Presidency came up with an eight-point plan for helping tackle Europe’s economic downturn.

The plan included: focusing on skills and transferable key competences, entrepreneurship and a sense of innovation and creativity, more ways of providing for further and adult education and greater cooperation between education and business.

“From the perspective of education we should see the economic downturn as an opportunity to prove that investments in human capital are the most valuable ones,” Mr Liska observes.

It all fits with his vision of life as a Green.

“Educational policy lies at the centre of Green politics simply because in order

to realise the Green vision for life you need well educated people - people free of prejudice and intolerance, people capable of thinking critically and within a broad context, people who take responsibility for their actions and people who do not think only in short term hedonistic ways.”

And his dream if he could wave a magic wand and create what he wanted right now?

“I would implement inclusive education,” Mr Liska says without a moment’s hesitation. ■

### FIND OUT MORE:

**Czech Presidency of the EU -**  
<http://www.msmt.cz/eu-presidency-2009/>

<sup>1</sup>For more on this see:  
<http://www.msmt.cz/eu-presidency-2009/lifelong-learning-programme-conference>)

<sup>2</sup>For more on these priorities see: <http://www.msmt.cz/eu-presidency-2009/priorities-of-the-czech-presidency-in-the-education-youth>

<sup>3</sup>For more on this see:  
<http://www.msmt.cz/eu-presidency-2009/informal-meeting-of-education-ministers-begins-in-prague>)

by Nick Holdsworth, ICE

## //NEW DIRECTOR FOR THE EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION//

# MADLEN SERBAN TO START WORK IN TURIN THIS SUMMER

**Madlen Serban, 52, Director of the National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Romania, has been appointed as the next Director of the European Training Foundation.**

Following a public recruitment procedure, the ETF's Governing Board chose Madlen Serban from a short list of three candidates put forward by the European Commission and today the appointment was recently confirmed by the European Parliament.

"I'm pleased and honoured that the Governing Board has selected me to become the new ETF director. I consider the ETF a unique agency because of its mandate and the partner countries it works with," Madlen Serban stated upon the appointment. She will take up her position at the ETF Headquarters in Turin over the summer.

"I look forward to joining colleagues at the ETF in Turin and to working with both the Commission and Parliament in a spirit of transparency and mutual trust, which will allow the agency to give an added value from which not only the partner countries but also the Member States can benefit," Madlen Serban said.

She will succeed Dr. Muriel Dunbar, whose mandate as Director comes to an end on 30 June 2009 and who has managed the ETF since 2004.

Madlen Serban, who is Romanian, has spent most her career working in the



Photo: ETF/EUP Images

field of vocational education and training. She is currently Director of the National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Romania.

The new ETF Director has broad international experience from her work as an expert and evaluator for international organisations such as the European Commission, UNESCO and the ETF.

Madlen Serban holds a PhD degree in Social Partnership in Education and Training from the University of Bucharest.

## Selection procedure

In line with the requirements of the EU regulation governing the ETF, the Governing Board reached its decision after interviewing candidates short listed by the European Commission. The meeting was chaired by Odile Quintin, European Commission Director General for Education and Culture. The Board comprises one representative of each EU Member State plus representatives from the European Commission and three observers from the European Parliament. Before being appointed, the candidate selected by the Governing Board made a statement before the Committee of Employment and Social Affairs at the European Parliament.

## COUNTRY FOCUS: MOROCCO

//THE ETF ACTS AS A GREAT CONVEYOR BELT OF BEST PRACTICE//

# THE OUTWARD-LOOKING MOROCCAN ECONOMY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF GLOBALISATION

**“As a country open to foreign investment, it is crucial, indeed a priority, that we have the means to certify qualifications and experience”. So spoke Mohammed Slassi, Vice-President of the General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises (CGEM), which is made up of hundreds of member companies.**



The challenge facing the country in this respect is further accentuated by the fact that Morocco - with a population of 31 million and a workforce of 11 million distributed among the services sector (45%), the agricultural sector (40%) and the industrial sector (15%) - was granted advanced status by the European Union as recently as October 2008.

Mohammed Slassi refers to the ETF as a “great conveyor belt for best practice” that links Europe, the rest of the world and the Maghreb region. Thanks to the ETF, he says, they “have grasped the importance of what is at stake and can also avail of tools for self-assessment”.

## Communication

Expectations are palpable in the textile sector, for example, since the NQF, in addition to promoting intersectoral mobility, is likely to become an excellent communications tool for interacting with customers outside Morocco. Morocco will have to decide on the best way to implement the NQF, whether universally or sector by sector, but at least, the initiative is underway. This project, which is part of a regional initiative that also includes Tunisia, Jordan and Egypt, is characterised by an aspect to which great importance is attached by Moroccan stakeholders: the ability of the ETF to raise awareness



According to Mohammed Slassi, the ETF's National Qualifications Framework (NQF) project, is designed to raise Moroccan certification schemes to the same level as European schemes and so enhance the quality of human resources and promote lifelong learning. The project is overseen by the Ministry of Vocational Training in cooperation with other government departments, including the School Education Department and the Higher Education Department. CGEM is involved in this initiative through representatives of professional bodies from sectors such as textiles, tourism and information and communication technologies (ICTs).



and to provide support in key issues within the framework of a globalised world economy.

Another recent example is the regional MEDA-ETE programme for the development of e-learning activities and tools for training in both the ICTs and technical and vocational education and training. The initiative was essentially developed in response to a need to improve local trainer expertise in e-learning concepts, methods and techniques (widely referred to as training for trainers). Morocco, with over 400 public and private schools involved in ICTs, was among the top ten countries in terms of applications for participation in this programme. Because he had already participated in creating online courses within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Open Sky University project Med Net'U, and because two of his teachers had some experience in this area, Zniber Taoufik, Director of the Rabat-based International School of Advanced Information Technologies (EITIA), with over 400 students, commented how they "were very motivated to be one of the 15 participating schools from Morocco".

### Coordination

The Multihexa group, encompassing six private education centres, was

also involved in the project, with its Chairman, Abdelhafid Benmoussa, given responsibility for technical coordination. Having identified beneficiary training needs and profiles by country, in 2006, EITIA and Multihexa launched the next task, which was to implement learning platforms and develop a package of e-learning practices and policies for the entire region. As Znifer Taoufik explained, they were fully aware that these methods would "reinforce face-to-face learning by our students and allow them to learn much more than they would normally learn in two years". Abdelhafid Benmoussa views the initiative very positively, commenting that although they had experience, "the ETF has provided us with a more rigorous method that will upgrade us to the same level as European schools".

Abdelhafid Benmoussa mentioned two difficulties in particular that emerged during the programme. One was a linguistic problem, resulting from the fact that some participants did not have sufficient knowledge of French; the other was faulty tutor scheduling, meaning that trainers were not always online when needed by the students. Nonetheless, Benmoussa referred to the participation of the Canadian expert Jean-Luc Marcelin - a tutor of tutors - as helping to oil the wheels, and concluded that: "procedures are complex and problems are inevitable", and that the important thing was "to ensure that Moroccan trainers find the experience sufficiently satisfactory to want it to continue."

## New challenges

Thanks to the e-learning programme, Morocco hopes to award certification for Bac plus two (secondary school plus two years of college) distance courses. Furthermore, within the framework of the European Federation of Schools, the Multihexa group of private institutes is working on the creation of an online European Higher Education Diploma course (Bac plus three) in Computer and Multimedia Systems.

The human resources are indeed there, but the unknown factor is whether financial support and political commitment will ensure continuity in feeding e-learning platforms with new content. That said, from his vantage point at the headquarters of the CGEM, Mohammed Slassi sums up what he considers to be one of the ETF's main contributions to Morocco: there has been "great merit" in how it has "raised our awareness of good governance, in other words, about focused governance that, by mobilising competent people, ensures appropriate decision making and progress."

### FIND OUT MORE:

**MedNet'U:**  
<http://www.consozionettuno.it/mednetu>

**by Rebecca Warden, ICE**



Photo: ETF/Aqeel Salih

## COUNTRY FOCUS: MOROCCO

# MOUNIR BAATI, AN INTEGRATING FORCE BETWEEN THE ETF AND THE MAGHREB REGION

**In the early 1990s, in his early career in the Tunisian Ministry of Employment, Mounir Baati, a graduate of the Tunis National School of Administration (ENA), opted to specialise in vocational education and training. “The economy was buoyant, political will was strong, and tremendous possibilities were opening up in this exciting field that touches on both economics and sociology”, he recalls.**

His greatest achievement is a qualification recognition system that is still in place today. Later on, in charge of vocational education and training at the United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestinian Refugees, when he had to overcome resistance and square cultural differences, he came to realise that there was no way forward unless “the main people responsible were fully involved”. In short, his technical expertise, diplomacy and pragmatism are likely to open the door to closer collaboration with the ETF. He was offered the option of taking on Tunisia but felt that dealing with compatriots might have resulted in “compromising situations”, adding that he feels “quite at home” in Morocco, an open, export economy eager to attract foreign investment.

In Morocco as in Tunisia, where he was involved in adapting vocational education and training to a competence-based modular approach that included quality

processes, Mounir Baati is particularly keen on “providing advice and increasing awareness” with regard to the latest best practice. He also enjoys implementing them. An upcoming task, for example, is a study of the relevance of the concept of flexicurity in Maghreb countries. “Not all concepts are transferable”, he warns, referring to the

many that need to be adapted. Nonetheless, the fact that Morocco has been granted privileged partnership status by the European Union undoubtedly facilitates matters. ■

**by Rebecca Warden, ICE**



Photo: ETF/A. Ramella

**//TARGETED SUPPORT BENEFICIAL TO PARTNER COUNTRIES, BUT ALSO TO THE EUROPEAN UNION//**

# FIFTEEN YEARS OF LEARNING

The European Training Foundation celebrates a decade and a half of development

**It was 15 years ago that the European Training Foundation opened its doors in Turin to assist countries outside the EU in making the best possible choices when preparing their citizens for tomorrow's society and labour market.**

Since 1994, this core mandate of the ETF has remained unchanged. In the same period however, the notion of what 'tomorrow' entails has changed dramatically and repeatedly. The landscape in which the ETF operates has been in constant flux: twelve new Member States have joined the EU, education and training have moved centre stage in EU policymaking, the internet has grown from being a network for computer fiends into a common feature of most European households and the notion of international security has taken on a whole new meaning. And, as we write in 2009 amidst the current upheavals of the world economy, the importance of effective human capital development seems only set to grow.

Naturally, the way in which the ETF operates has also changed. Not only because it has closely followed international labour market developments and new trends in policymaking, but also because staff



Photo: ETF/Decorato

who started with largely administrative tasks have gone on to develop a level of expertise that has become increasingly sought after and valued.

## Reform programmes

In the first years of its existence, the highest profile activities of the ETF included a number of programmes in which the agency assisted the European Commission with day-to-day management.

One of these was the first batch of eight VET Reform Programmes which aimed to, quite literally, plant examples of reform in schools in the new democracies of central and eastern Europe. Curricula were revised, staff were retrained and equipment was upgraded. Another high profile project of those early years was the Staff Development Programme, which singled out high profile individuals involved in vocational education and training in the ETF's partner countries to take part in extensive training programmes.

<sup>1</sup> Excluding the Baltic countries and including Mongolia.

Delegates discuss key migration issues at ETF conference in 2008.

Photo: ETF/A. Ramella



In the countries that emerged from the former Soviet Union<sup>1</sup>, the activities were quite different. There was so little knowledge of the labour markets in these countries that a by now classic anecdote tells how The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) looked to the ETF as a source of information on education and training in central Asia while the ETF had a subscription to the EIU. What was needed here was mapping and stocktaking and, to a large extent, this need would continue to set the ETF agenda in these countries for many years to come.

To assist in collecting relevant information and key data for analysis in Turin and for follow-up action from the European Union, the ETF came up with the idea of what it called National Observatories. Eventually, a network of 24 such units was established in the partner countries. They became a key source of data for producing ETF country reports and later came to constitute the ETF's principal operational network.

### Growth

The number of countries in which the ETF operated grew almost every year. As the smoke of the Balkan wars cleared, activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina commenced in 1996 and other countries were to follow.

In 1998 the Council of Ministers amended the ETF's regulation to extend

its scope to the non-EU Mediterranean countries. This dramatically changed the work of the ETF. Until then the common denominator of all partner countries had been that they were in transition from some form of centrally steered, communist government to free market economies and democracies. The mainly Arab countries of North Africa and the Middle East were an entirely different ball game and came with new challenges, such as the training needs of the informal labour market, equal opportunities and migration.

The ETF itself expanded too, reaching its peak of more than 120 temporary agent posts in the late 1990s, before a crucial change of tack took place at the turn of the millennium.

### Knowledge economy

In March 2000, a special European Council held in Lisbon launched the ambitious strategy to make Europe the world's most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy. Together with accession negotiations, which were launched with the first candidate countries in March 1998, this renewed focus on investment in human resources was to have a marked influence on the direction of the ETF in the years to come.

With lifelong learning the rising star on the firmament of core EU policies, prospective Member States were confronted with the urgent need to reform their human resources development policies and practice. They needed outside expertise and the ETF had used the first years of its existence to develop just that. A conscious change of direction was made, with a greater focus on learning not just in

partner country policy development but also within the organisation itself.

The process of formulating a new support philosophy came to a head at a large international conference which the ETF organised in Turin in 2003. Learning Matters was the launching pad for a move away from policy copying, which had proven unsatisfactory as a tool for development, towards policy learning - building the capacity among partner country policymakers and other stakeholders in education and training to shape EU experience into tailor-made solutions that suited their own specific contexts.

### Accession

The accession of ten countries in 2004 redrew the map of Europe in many ways. The borders of the EU suddenly reached entirely new lands. For some of these, accession would probably never be an option and this forced the European Commission to rethink its strategy of support to countries in its immediate vicinity. This resulted in a radical transformation of the traditional instruments of support. The outlines of this were already known in 2004, giving the ETF ample time to prepare for its new role from 2007, the year in which more than one hundred support instruments would be replaced by six broader ones.

While preparations for the new instruments were underway, ETF expertise increasingly focused on universal elements of human capital development. To such an extent that the geographic and thematic limitations of its mandate ran the risk of becoming outdated. While in the early days of its existence, ETF work

Muriel Dunbar and Odile Quintin at the ETF Governing Board meeting.



had concentrated on the specific challenges of developing vocational education and training in transition countries, its current focus on human capital policy development through peer learning was far more universally applicable. In recognition of this, a revision of the mandate of the agency was prepared.

It would take until 2008 for this changed mandate to be given the green light but its implications for the future work of the ETF are significant. In theory, it has now become possible for the ETF to assist European Commission services across the entire spectrum of education and training and in countries around the world.

### Pressure

Today more than ever, the work of the European Training Foundation covers a critical area in European Union support to the world outside its own window. Pressure on previously

booming partner economies is now shaking labour markets to their foundations and threatening prosperity and stability across the globe. Three of the ETF's current focal areas are even more topical in today's uncertain economic climate. These are migration, social inclusion and gender issues - topics which departing director Muriel Dunbar highlighted in a recent interview with the European Parliament magazine.

"More migrants are likely to move back to their home countries," she said.

"Within the EU they are among the first to be hit and those hit hardest. They will bring back skills and expertise and harnessing these is exactly one of the challenges we have worked on with authorities and NGOs in many of these countries."

"In our partner countries, the hardest hit will be vulnerable groups, such as the Roma in the Balkans. The big question now is whether or not there



Photo: ETF/A. Ramella

will be a knock-on effect on their children's education. But rather than wait and see, we should pre-empt any negative consequences by taking action now. Targeted support can help them to remain active labour market participants. This will not just be beneficial to their countries, but also to the European Union which has an obvious interest in stability and prosperity in its neighbourhood."

"In some of our partner regions the position of women is, amazingly, still deteriorating. It is absolutely vital to increase female participation in the labour market, particularly in North Africa and the Middle East where we know that growth has been slow because there is so much untapped potential. Education is not the issue here as participation statistics are positive, but after their education women disappear from public life."

## The origins

At a meeting in Strasbourg in December 1989, just ten days before the Phare programme was adopted, the decision was made to establish a European Training Foundation for Central and Eastern Europe. From that moment on, EU support to education and training in the new democracies of central and eastern Europe would follow a two-pronged strategy. Tempus became the instrument for grassroots support to higher education while the abovementioned foundation would focus on supporting vocational education and training. While initially the latter was not considered a high priority area in the region, it would soon take on much more prominence with the launch of the Lisbon Strategy and the drive for lifelong learning that followed.

Although the ETF was established in 1990, it would take until 1993 for it to find a home in Turin. The city put in its successful bid on the ticket of being the 'capital of training'. Both its industrial history as the birthplace of FIAT and its institutions, such as the international training centre of the ILO, made it a perfect location.

As things turned out, from 1995 to 2008 the Tempus programme would be administered by the ETF too.

by Ard Jongsma, ICE



# THE CASE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION HAS NEVER BEEN STRONGER

Challenges for entrepreneurial learning in the pre-accession region

**The stakes have never been higher for European economies as the world of enterprise and governments grapple with the squeal of the global economic downturn, including business closures, job losses, wage constraints and broader concerns as to the economic uncertainty generated by the financial crisis.**

The challenge confronting the economies of the EU's pre-accession region is even more pronounced, with countries coping with the challenge of transition to the market on the one hand, and now having to see off the creeping impact of the global financial melt-down on national economies.<sup>1</sup>

A 2009 report on the health of the enterprise sector in the countries of the Western Balkans considers the implications of the global financial crisis for the countries concerned.<sup>2</sup> The report, jointly published by the European Commission (Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry), the OECD and the ETF, is the second in-depth assessment of the countries progress on a number of enterprise policy areas which make up the European Charter for Small Enterprises. The assessment raises particular concerns for entrepreneurship education, increasingly considered as an area

where national education systems could do better in the bid to create more commercial potential from education throughput while contributing to productivity, innovation and overall economic growth.

The entrepreneurship education assessment within the 2009 report follows an intensive review of national policies and programmes in all countries by the ETF's enterprise team. This included dialogue with both public and private sectors as to ways in which entrepreneurship can be promoted across all levels of the education system.

The assessment gave particular consideration to policies to promote lifelong entrepreneurial learning with a specific focus on entrepreneurship promotion in lower and secondary education, including how entrepreneurship is promoted outside of formal education e.g. by community

organisations or business promoters. Given the importance of access to new policy ideas and practice which the evolving area of entrepreneurship education calls for, a final area looked at how good practice was being shared and disseminated.

## Building policies

The assessment points to clear movements by most countries to bring forward policy and strategy building in the area of entrepreneurship education, with several countries having already elaborated perspectives for lifelong entrepreneurial learning. For example, Kosovo's National Strategy for Entrepreneurship and Training lays the grounds for access by all pupils, students and adult learners to entrepreneurship education. The strategy is the result of a cross-ministerial task force (education, labour, trade & industry) in cooperation with the world of business.

<sup>1</sup> European Commission (2009). EU Candidate and Pre-accession Countries Economic Quarterly. Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs. Brussels. 9 January 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia.

A similar, cross-stakeholder initiative in Montenegro, also resulting in a national strategy, is backed up with an action plan with a number of strategic projects concentrated in one region (Berane). The report recommends more concerted action in policy building for entrepreneurship education and underlines the importance of an education-economy partnership to ensure that policies get implemented.

### Secondary education

Turning to entrepreneurship in secondary education, the assessment finds good developments in all countries particularly at the upper secondary level (ISCED 3), with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia already ensuring that all pupils have access to entrepreneurship education. However, progress in lower secondary education (ISCED 2) in the region is less pronounced and where promotion of entrepreneurship as a key competence will be important. The challenge here is significant in terms of further curriculum improvements and a significant adaptation of teaching practice.

### Non-formal education

The assessment points to a number of high profile developments in non-formal entrepreneurship education (e.g. Junior Achievement activities) but underlines how these are located at select schools and are not sufficient in ensuring entrepreneurship education for all young people. The report recommends more synergy between non-formal entrepreneurship education and efforts to mainstream developments within compulsory schooling.

Finally, with particular emphasis given to knowledge-sharing within the Charter, the assessment considered

how policy makers and practitioners were exchanging information on good practice. The report concludes that, while there is good evidence of some excellent practice in entrepreneurship education in most countries, this tends to be isolated from policy circles with little ambition amongst practitioners to 'go public' with their achievements. Building networks and further developments in high-profile events (e.g. thematic conferences, entrepreneurship fairs) is recommended.

More details on the entrepreneurship assessment undertaken by ETF experts (Anthony Gribben, Efka Heder, Aziz Jaouani and Simona Rinaldi) will be available in the 2009 Charter report which will be launched at a meeting of economy ministers from the Western Balkan region in June 2009. The full report will be posted on the ETF's website on 17 June.

**by Anthony Gribben and  
Simona Rinaldi**

## European Charter for Small Enterprise

The European Charter for Small Enterprise comprises a set of ten policy improvement areas for Europe's businesses. It is an integral feature of the EU's Lisbon strategy which aims to promote the Union's economic competitiveness and employment. The Charter has been adopted by the EU's pre-accession countries and where performance on the policy areas, which include entrepreneurship education, is measured against pre-defined indicators which allow countries to determine progress and constraints. ETF has been working with the pre-accession partner countries in the development and improvement of indicators for entrepreneurship education since 2006. A similar policy monitoring and assessment package has been developed by ETF for the Southern Mediterranean partner countries. A first assessment for this region was published in November 2008.

Gavril Lasku, Albania's National Charter Coordinator has no doubts about the value of entrepreneurship education. 'The Charter provides a clear direction for all countries to move forward on entrepreneurship education development', he says, underlining the importance of benchmarks set within



Photo: ETF/A. Remella

the indicators and the value of peer review within the assessment. 'We are now aware of the need for a more intense dialogue on policy development involving a wide range of partners', says Lasku, 'and higher education needs to be fully engaged', he continues, pointing to the need for better links between universities and businesses.

// QUALIFICATIONS ARE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL //

# EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK: CONTRIBUTING TO A GLOBAL TREND IN EDUCATION

Major international conference on qualification frameworks

The European Qualifications Framework or EQF is coming of age, but how this meta-framework is interacting with other frameworks emerging around the world is not so clear. Will what works for Europe also work for other regions? Are the needs of developing countries better served by a different model? What can EU countries learn from the experience of others?



Photos: ETF/EUP Images



The power of qualifications is discussed at a global conference on the EQF held in Brussels in January 2009.

The ETF conference 'EQF: Linking to a globalised world', which brought 170 educationalists from more than 60 countries to the European Parliament in Brussels on 29 - 30 January, helped answer some of

these questions and pose some fresh ones.

What is clear is that the EQF is part of a global pattern. Qualifications frameworks are springing up all over; "a large

number of countries are developing them," said the ETF's Arjen Deij. Together with Cedefop's Jens Bjørnavold, he has compiled a list describing the state-of-play of national qualifications frameworks in 49 countries in and around the EU. Neighbouring countries are usually motivated by one of two reasons. "Countries which are in the accession process need to align their education systems," said Deij, "others have significant mobility to Europe." All are using EQF in different ways. So although the EQF was built to work inside the EU, it is clearly providing inspiration beyond its borders. But what about further afield?

### National framework

Australia was one of the first to take the plunge, introducing a national framework over five years from 1995. It now has a robust structure covering basic, higher and vocational systems and has seen positive effects. "We are finding that the rate of movement from one sector to another is increasing," says Greg Clarke, Director of the AQF and Quality for the Australian government. But the Australians are keen to open up their framework and link it to those of other Asian-Pacific countries and the rest of the world. Here the EQF could be useful.

South Africa relied on international experience from the word go. With initial funding from the EU, it drew on Irish, New Zealand and Scottish insights to build its own framework also from 1995 onwards. "We started with eight levels and are now moving towards ten so there is already a translation map between the EQF and the South African



Photo: ETF/EUP Images

Greg Clarke, Director of the AQF and Quality for the Australian government.

NQF," said Samuel Isaacs, Chief Executive Officer of the South African Qualifications Authority or SAQA. For Isaacs, providing international validation is a prime function of qualifications frameworks. "Qualifications are intellectual property rights for the individual. Making sure you can be mobile with your qualification and have currency in another setting is incredibly important," he said.

### Benchmark

The United Arab Emirates is working on a national qualifications framework which can address the needs of a highly diverse population including 80% expatriates. The EQF is one source of inspiration; "details such as the number of levels or competences needed are specific to each country but the EQF

can provide the international benchmark" said Faisal Al-Bakeri, Director of the Qualifications Framework Project. The UAE is now discussing the potential for a regional framework with its neighbours in the Gulf Cooperation Council. Several representatives attended the Brussels conference. Moreover Egypt, Morocco, Jordan and Tunisia - all countries which have been working with the ETF on national frameworks - have expressed an interest in the Gulf initiative and will attend the next meeting in April. "There we will raise the possibility of an Arab meta-framework," said Al-Bakeri.

How qualifications frameworks can facilitate the recognition of learning obtained outside the formal education system and encourage adults to rejoin it was a major topic of debate at the conference.



Photo: ETF/EUP Images

Faisal Al-Bakeri Director of the Qualifications Framework Project, United Arab Emirates.

Madhu Singh, Senior Programme Specialist at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, was quick to point out that this means very different things in developed or developing countries. "In the north, lifelong learning is being reduced to promoting education for the 15% who could re-enter the education system but in the south, we are talking about much bigger numbers," she said, "in Mexico, there are 30 million people outside the education system - more than there are inside - in Africa, we are not talking about post-secondary education, we are talking about post-primary education." James Keevy, Deputy Director of International Research at SAQA, questioned whether formally recognising all forms of learning is really necessary. "With this move towards qualifications frameworks, isn't there a danger that we will focus just on formalising learning?" he asked.

The sheer number and variety of questions and comments made during the conference shows just how much interest there is in qualifications frameworks around the world. As the debate drew to a close on the second day, ETF Director Muriel Dunbar announced some steps the ETF will take to keep the discussion alive. It will organise a second global conference in two years' time. To keep up the momentum in the meantime, a dedicated newsletter will be produced to share information and a virtual community will be set up. People are invited to read the report that the ETF has started producing for the EQF Advisory Group every year. The ETF is also setting up a task force composed of experts from different continents as well as different stakeholders to help organise the next conference. ■

## What is a qualifications framework?

A qualifications framework is a single, unifying structure where all existing qualifications, whether they are gained in primary, secondary, higher, vocational or even informal education, can be slotted into place. It is based upon the outcomes of learning rather than traditional inputs such as length of study or where studies took place.

Apart from the shift to learning-based outcomes - looking at what people know and can do - a qualifications framework does not necessarily change the existing qualifications system. What it does do is make it readable, enabling people to talk about qualifications with ease and compare them.

"For many, this is the great added value of qualifications frameworks," says Christian Lettmayr, Deputy Director of Cedefop, "This increase in transparency opens up the black box of qualifications across borders, sectors and education systems."

## The power of qualifications

Some people say qualifications frameworks are strictly neutral devices, but Samuel Isaacs, Executive Officer of SAQA, is not so sure. "You can either set up your system to create opportunities and set people free or you can have systems that become overly bureaucratic and are used to exclude people," he says.

SAQA aspires to this first aim. It used the process of developing a qualifications framework to create new qualifications designed to empower people on the lowest rungs of the social ladder. "Often in poor communities, a mother will take in a lot of other children and provide a kind of crèche," says Isaacs, "here are people who didn't finish secondary school getting all of this valuable learning - how can this be taken up into the system?"

SAQA worked with NGOs to develop a new qualification for these early child development workers, some of whom have since gone on to become fully qualified teachers. "It is very empowering for those women as this was the first time they got real recognition of their learning," says Isaacs.

Similar processes have been followed for community organisers and activists working for the electoral commission. "In some cases, what began as unpaid work became paid work, in others it was a stepping stone to something else," says Isaacs.

by Rebecca Warden, ICE

//WE WILL HAVE TO RETHINK EVERYTHING//

# FRESH FACES FOR THE ETF GOVERNING BOARD

Experts from France, Greece and the UK will represent the European Parliament



**Three new faces will be present at the next meeting of the ETF's governing board in Turin on 15 June. Stamatis**

**Paleocrassas, Jean-François**



**Mezières and Sara Parkin are three experts who were designated by the European Parliament's Employment and Social Affairs**



**Committee in March. They will sit on the board as non voting members, giving the ETF the benefit of their insights and accumulated experience.**

This new presence on the board is one of the first tangible results of the ETF's new mandate following the recast regulation approved last December. It seeks to strengthen the relationship between the two institutions by providing a human bridge between the political debates of the parliament and the operational work of the ETF.

Stamatis Paleocrassas hopes the new socio-economic agenda of the European Parliament will also feature strongly at

the ETF's next board meeting. He notes that it sets "the sustainable recovery of people" as one of its objectives as a response to the ongoing world economic crisis. "It is a huge challenge for me to see how training can reach this aim," he says, "what do we do - include a component in each programme on how to manage being unemployed or how to achieve employability?" Paleocrassas believes the crisis has turned conventional ideas and accepted ways of thinking on their heads; "we will have to rethink everything," he says.

## Project design

With over thirty-five years' experience of teaching, project management and policymaking in VET, including work as an expert for the ETF's sister agency Cedefop, Paleocrassas defines himself as an expert in VET teacher training with long experience of EU programmes. In terms of his input to the ETF, "I won't be involved in the design of projects, but I could certainly provide an independent view and useful comments," he says.

Director General of Education and Training at France's Région Centre regional council, Jean-François Mezières describes himself as an economist and manager with an intellectual interest in the economics of human capital. He believes the ETF can play a vital role by co-ordinating the interventions of various donors in the field. "A coherent approach by donors is essential in

human resources," he says, "you can't transform a system in a few months and, if you don't co-ordinate your efforts, you won't make the most of the limited time span of a project."

Mezières takes a special interest in lifelong learning. He points out that a young person leaving full-time education today may still be working in 2060. "We cannot even begin to imagine the changes in the organisation of work and the use of technology from now to 2060," he says, "people need a good set of skills and then to keep updating them because you never definitively gain a skill." For Mezières, although lifelong learning has been an official EU priority since 1995, it still has a long way to go. "We are always talking about lifelong learning but few Europeans really have access to it," he says.

Sara Parkin has been a campaigner, writer and broadcaster on environmental and sustainable development for twenty years before helping set up UK charity Forum for the Future in 1996. She began her career as a nurse, helped co-ordinate European Green Parties in the 1980s and 1990s, has advised the UK government on the science curriculum and is currently writing a book on how leaders can be sustainability-friendly. ■

by Rebecca Warden, ICE

//WE WANT TO HELP, WE WERE HELPED A LOT OURSELVES//

# ETF AIMS TO TAP INTO THE EXPERTISE OF NEW EU MEMBERS

How new Member States can pass the baton

**Five years after accession, countries such as Poland and Hungary have made good use of the lessons learnt during the accession process. The European Training Foundation now wants to tap into their expertise for the benefit of other partner countries.**

Having performed extremely well since the mid-1990s, some central European countries have a lot of expertise to share in how to use learning to boost employment and drive progress. Each country has its own background and culture, but many of the lessons they have learnt in the past decade are applicable to others and could be very useful for countries the ETF actively supports.

They have also recently aligned many of their laws to EU practice. This expertise with adopting the *acquis communautaire* is an invaluable source of support to countries that are now in the middle of this process.

But making their expertise available to others is not as easy as it may seem. Many hurdles still stand in the way.

Some of these, such as the persistent lack of foreign language fluency, need time to be cleared. But others can be overcome with support and encouragement.

## Expertise

Since 2006, Mariavittoria Garlappi has organised information events about the ETF in EU countries as far apart as Estonia and Malta. She has found that partners in the new Member States do not easily take on the idea that they no

New Member States have a lot of expertise which can be shared.



Countries as far apart as Estonia and Malta are no longer at the receiving end of foreign expertise.



longer are at the receiving end of foreign expertise and that their own experiences are actually valuable.

“They seem surprised to be approached in this way, with the ETF asking them to share their expertise with current partner countries,” she says.

“Only the Estonians were totally ready to change roles. They showed a keen interest in working with Georgia, as they have a natural affinity through a partly shared past. But Polish experience could mean a lot to Belarus for example, while the smaller new Member States with lean government systems could offer very specific support to smaller countries in the Western Balkans” she says.

Hungarian governing board member György Szent-Léleky, a senior counsellor in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, also believes that his compatriots can be assets in an international context if language issues can be overcome. He thinks the real value of new Member States is their experience in assimilating foreign models and successfully adapting them to their own needs.

“Our financing has its roots in France, we use the German dual system and our qualifications are adapted from Anglo-Saxon models. The result is an all Hungarian solution,” he says.

The Hungarians have already helped other countries but only on a small scale. In the early years of the millennium, Hungarian support helped to develop national vocational qualifications in Romania, while more



Photo: ETF/A. Ramella

recently Chinese and Mongolian delegations have come to find out about specific training measures.

### Practical training

However each country must be clear about what it has to offer. In the case of Hungary, this could include its training fund, which was already attracting a lot of attention before the turn of the millennium. More recent achievements include developing innovative practical training.

“We do have a lot to offer,” says Szent-Léleky, “our integrated system covers areas such as in-service training, on-the-job training and student contracts. It was strongly supported by the government and backed by ESF funds and will be a focal area when Hungary takes over the EU presidency in 2011.”

“We want to help,” he says, “we were helped a lot ourselves but it is not so easy to get other countries interested in our work. The first thing they want to know is where the roots of our developments lie and if that’s in France, they’d rather go to France.”

In other words, there is an issue of status at stake here, and this is where the ETF can help move new actors onto the scene: by consistently involving experts from new Member States in the teams it uses to work in current partner countries. ■

by Ard Jongsma, ICE

//NEW REPORT SHEDS LIGHT ON COMPLEX SUBJECT//

# BEING EMPLOYED DOES NOT PREVENT MIGRATION

Migration and skills: Moldova, Albania, Egypt and Tunisia

A new report by the ETF and the World Bank aims to unravel the complex relationship between migration and skills. “We looked at migrants’ qualifications and what they aspire to in terms of jobs,” said the ETF’s Natalia Popova, one of the authors, “we also looked at whether returning migrants really used their skills when abroad and whether they upgraded them or lost them as a result of this experience.”



Photo:ETF/Aqueil Sallih



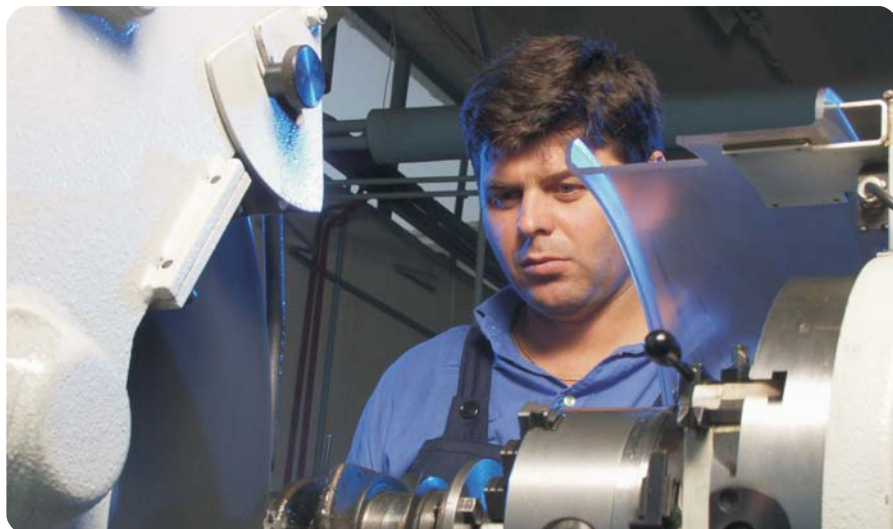
Almost half of people wanting to migrate already have a job.

The report is based upon interviews with 1,000 potential migrants and 1,000 returnees in four countries with very different patterns of migration. The field study produced an extremely rich set of data which, on its own, is a valuable

contribution to the debate. “There is a lot of literature on migration, but often the data is not good enough to show how migration selection operates,” said Johanna Avató, a migration specialist at the World Bank who also co-authored

It is important to assess the skills of migrants to facilitate their employment.

Photo: Fotolia



the report, “if you know who is coming and who wants to come, it can help you learn how to manage migration.”

The resulting analysis helps to dispel some common misconceptions about who migrates. “Migrants are usually seen as poor people, but this is not the whole picture,” said co-author Francesco Panzica of the ETF, “our survey showed that almost half the people who said they wanted to migrate already had a job but they still wanted to leave. Just being employed does not prevent migration; the key is having a decent job.”

### Job matching

It also sheds some light on the extent to which migrants find jobs that match their level of skills. There is a significant difference according to countries of origin; in the case of Albanians and Moldovans, over 60% of highly educated returning migrants had only found work abroad as unskilled labourers, but the proportion dropped to 12.5% in the case of Tunisians and just 4.5% for Egyptians. This finding also goes to show how established networks in host countries can act to

help new arrivals find their feet; “Egypt and Tunisia are traditional sources of migration with consolidated diaspora networks, language skills, and the possibility to have an organised migration; e.g. in the Gulf, that can facilitate potential access to better quality jobs,” according to the report.

There are also significant differences in how well migrants do when they return home. The study shows that the longer a migrant stays abroad, the more likely he or she is to prosper and contribute to the local economy on return. Tunisians and Egyptians spend an average of 11 years and 7.5 years abroad, while Albanians and Moldovans usually only spend around two years. “With such brief periods, it is difficult for Albanians and Moldovans to bring back capital or new skills,” says ETF expert Natalia Popova, “when they return home, their money tends to be used for survival purposes or investing in real estate. Productive investment is on a very small scale.”

### Poverty trap

The combination of short periods of migration and skill mismatch can

combine to trap people in a vicious circle of poverty. Natalia Popova gives the hypothetical example of a Moldovan architect who goes to Italy to work as a babysitter for two years, returns home but is still unable to find work in her profession and migrates once more. “This woman will never be able to work as an architect either in Moldova or in Europe and all the time her skills are going out of date,” she said.

The report shows that one of the best ways of reducing the skills mismatch, and the resulting waste of human potential, is to make qualifications more transparent across international borders. This is a subject close to the ETF’s heart and the report makes a powerful case for more work to be done in this area.

“When you consider how to manage migration, it is important how the skills of migrants are assessed and transparency can facilitate the process for everyone,” said Francesco Panzica, “what we want is a triple win situation - for migrants so that they can work in jobs for which they are prepared, for employers so they can find properly qualified workers and for sending countries because when migrants go home with enhanced skills this can benefit the local economy.”

The report *Migration and skills: Moldova, Albania, Egypt and Tunisia* will be available from the ETF website: [www.etf.europa.eu](http://www.etf.europa.eu)

by Rebecca Warden, ICE

## //YOUNG PEOPLE CAN MAKE MORE INFORMED CHOICES ON FUTURE LEARNING//

# KOSOVO EMBARKS ON CAREER EDUCATION

Ministry of Science and Technology supports pilot activities

**Kosovo is on the move - and in the area of support services for young people attempting to better manage the difficult transition from education to work it is a similar story. An EU funded project (KOSVET) supporting the development of vocational education and training in Kosovo was successfully completed in March 2009. It included a career guidance component aiming to prepare young people and graduates for their future jobs and to enable them to make more informed decisions for their professional life.**

The innovative project established a National Career Guidance Resource Centre (NCGRC) in Pristina focusing on piloting career education in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade ('orientation year') in line with most recent EU principles on fostering career management skills. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) and supported by an EU expert from Slovenia, Sasa Niklanovic, the pilot was implemented in 34 schools throughout the country in 2008. In each pilot school, at least one 9<sup>th</sup> grade class participated (some schools had more classes that wished to participate on their own) and in total 16 teaching hours were delivered per class in one semester.

### Elective subject

Career education was taught as an elective subject without major additional costs as it was one of four such

subjects each school could opt for. Career education was delivered by teachers selected by the MEST who were teaching civic education and were interested in guidance. Those selected had also had some training on career guidance prior to the start of the pilot.

Career education immediately became one of the most appreciated subjects by students and one in which they are highly active and engaged. The content of the subject includes information on the labour market, how to choose the right profession and help on discovering one's own interests and talents as well as employing methodologies that activate students, such as role-playing.

A recent evaluation of the project confirmed the success of the pilot both in terms of implementation and lessons learned for further improvement. It showed positive results and high satisfaction levels with the new subject

from both teachers and students. Moreover, it triggered new demand even from classes which were not covered by the pilot in the same schools.

### Extension

As a result, the MEST decided to continue and extend the pilot to other classes and schools in 2009-2010, while also aiming to prepare a curriculum framework for career guidance in grades 6 to 13 in schools in Kosovo.

Apart from the commitment of the MEST to this project, one of the key factors for success was the remarkable dedication of career education teachers to this newly introduced subject. The EU KOSVET project has trained 80 teachers to deliver the subject. Of these 80, some six career education teachers got further training to train their colleagues in the future.

Ms Sebahate Reqica, one of those career education teachers who received training states that ‘personally I enjoy teaching career education because it is an attractive subject for students. They also like tests about skills, and personal qualities and characteristics. This subject helps them make decisions about choosing a profession in time. The role of the career education teacher is very important because during the visits to different companies or institutions the students become aware which professions are demanded on the labour market and which profession would be suitable for them. The circumstances surrounding the implementation of the pilot were not easy, but the enthusiasm of us career education teachers and our positive energy to help students helped to overcome many problems’.

### Project implementation

The project was designed some years ago by the EC Delegation with ETF technical support led by the former ETF country manager for Kosovo, Anthony Gribben. During the implementation of the project the ETF was asked by the MEST and the EU to analyse the feasibility of future career guidance interventions, possibly supported by the next round of the EU IPA programme for Kosovo. The analysis was prepared by the ETF Senior Human Capital Development Specialist, Helmut Zelloth, with the support of local expert on

career guidance, Lumnie Mehmetaj, and its findings were shared with national stakeholders at a seminar in Pristina in February 2009.

It pointed out the high potential for career education and its cost-efficient approach (calculations based on the pilot and the average teaching cost in Kosovo demonstrated costs of only €2 per pupil per year) but also a number of teething problems and shortcomings linked to the pilot experience.

### Donor support

The preparation and training of teachers for the new subject was insufficient, the teaching and learning materials need to be improved and there is a risk that career education as an elective subject is crowded out by other stronger subjects. Overall there is still a need for further donor support in order to sustain current achievements and to boost further development in career guidance and career education in Kosovo.

Among the key ETF recommendations for priorities are the development of a career guidance profession and a critical

mass of well trained staff through a solid competence development programme, the gradual mainstreaming of career education in all schools (in the long-run to move career education from an elective to a compulsory subject in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade), to explore synergies with entrepreneurship education, the development of quality career information and the establishment of a National Career Guidance Forum to improve co-ordination and networking.

The present ETF country manager for Kosovo, Lida Kita, confirms this. ‘The need for young people in Kosovo to receive support that enables them to make more informed choices on their future learning and working pathways is huge. It is the right time now to start with career guidance in Kosovo. This is particularly true in view of the recent EU Council Resolution on *Better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies*, adopted under the French EU Presidency in November 2008’.

by Helmut Zelloth, ETF

Career education is an attractive subject for students.



# INFORM

## ETF launches policy briefings

**The ETF has launched a new way of communicating the results of its work to policy makers and experts around the world. Up to ten policy briefings a year will support broader and more convenient access to information that until now could only be accessed through often bulky specialist reports.**

Demand for ETF expertise is increasing and those seeking it come from more varied backgrounds than ever before. In order to respond to this demand and to better serve a broader target group with access to key conclusions of ETF activities and studies, the agency has launched a new series of condensed policy briefing publications named *INFORM*.

With an average length of just four to five pages, *INFORM* will summarise progress in current topics in human capital development, targeting policy makers as well as international experts.

The first policy briefing will cover networking for education and labour market reform in transition economies. It details ETF experience with the development of education and labour market monitoring mechanisms for informed decision making.

The ETF has supported national observatories and observatory functions since the 1990s and much of the work that it currently supports in the Mediterranean region in particular can be of great benefit to other countries that are setting up similar human capital development monitoring systems.

The second issue of *INFORM* will cover ETF studies on the role of vocational education and training in poverty alleviation in rural areas. Based largely on recent projects, studies and experience from Central Asia, this paper too has a wider application outside that region.

Issues of *INFORM* will be grouped together and accessible from the ETF website ([www.etf.europa.eu](http://www.etf.europa.eu)), from which it will also be possible to subscribe to them. ■

**by Ard Jongsma, ICE**



# PUBLICATIONS



## **Comparative Analyses: Work-based learning programmes for young people in the Mediterranean region**

A MEDA-ETE project report examining programmes for youth that combine learning in classrooms with participation in work in ten Mediterranean countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The report will be available summer 2009 in both electronic and paper formats. It will be published in English and French and, at a later date, Arabic.



## **MEDA-ETE Thematic Studies**

### **Qualifications that count: Strengthening the recognition of qualifications in the Mediterranean region**

This report on the internal and international recognition of qualifications in the Mediterranean area analyses why this has become an important issue on policy agendas and looks at how Mediterranean – and other – countries are responding to the challenges they face in this area. Available this summer, the report will be published on paper and electronically in English and French.

# EVENTS

## **May 25 2009, Torino, Italy**

ETF Editorial Board meeting

## **May 26 2009, Durres, Albania**

Post-secondary VET in Albania, policies and perspectives



Photo: ETF/A. Ramella

## **June 3-5 2009, Minsk, Belarus**

NQF workshop for “beginners”

## **June 7-12 2009, Rome, Italy**

Migration project study visit to Rome

# NEW FACES



Madlen Serban  
New ETF Director from 1 July 2009



Rutger Wissels  
European Commission Representative to the  
ETF Governing Board



Lizzi Feiler  
ETF expert in labour market and employment

Photos: ETF/A. Ramella

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