



GEMM FOCUS

FINDING SOLUTIONS TOGETHER

When young people cannot find jobs or when 40 year-olds cannot update their skills, there is probably something wrong in the way education and training are governed. Until recently this was our assumption. The recent round of the ETF's Torino Process provided us with evidence that governance is crucial in the reform of education, training and labour markets.

In the countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean, vocational education and training (VET) is not responsive enough to the needs of learners or to labour market demand. If it is to be addressed, the focus should be on building systems that are more participative, responsive, transparent, accountable and inclusive.

That is why multi-level governance is at the core of the GEMM project. We aim to support the development of governance systems that work better because they genuinely involve all stakeholders. We will create vertical links between central and sub-national levels of VET actors, and horizontal links between authorities, social partners and civil society. VET systems are complex, which is why we must remain focused by concentrating on specific functions. VET governance in terms of planning and management, quality of training and financing are key pillars for relevant and sustainable VET systems.

Nowadays, the policy making environment is complex. There is no single omniscient actor capable of effective top-down governance. Every actor, every stakeholder group has an important contribution to make: learners as the final beneficiaries of education and training, teachers and trainers as key shapers, ministries of education and labour define standards, employers' organisations know what the labour needs are, employees' associations can better facilitate decent working conditions and lifelong learning opportunities, while local governments and civil society are familiar with real needs. In a networked society, staying connected is crucial. All actors need to work together to provide relevant, high-quality education and training.

Madlen Serban, Director, ETF



MAPPING VET GOVERNANCE

Most countries in the southern and eastern Mediterranean have very centralised education and training systems. Social partners and other players are rarely involved which serves to widen skills mismatches. The need for coordinated and comprehensive reforms, bringing together all actors involved in human capital development is putting the issue of VET governance centre stage.

The GEMM project maps VET governance systems in the countries of the region in order to identify good practice and areas for improvement. In particular, the mapping will focus on three functions: 1) planning and management, 2) financing and funding, and 3) quality assurance.

The information will be gathered using specific data collection and self-assessment tools and in direct cooperation with VET stakeholders in each country. The results will help design capacity building actions tailored to real needs.

[Learn more about GEMM mapping](#)



This project is funded by
the European Union



WHAT IS GEMM?

Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean (GEMM) is a new regional project, which the ETF carries out on behalf of the European Commission. Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia benefit from the initiative (EU cooperation with Syria is currently suspended).

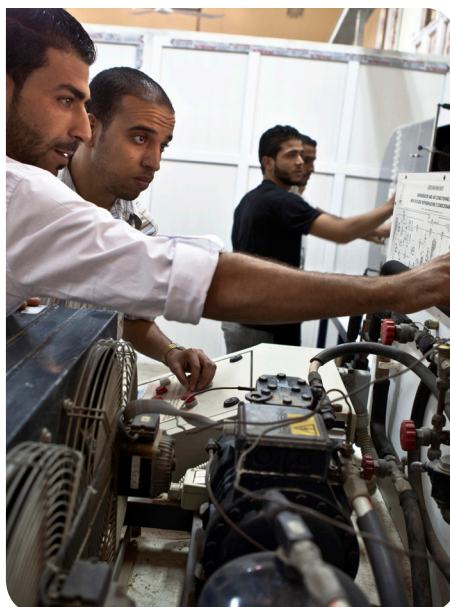
The three-year project is based on evidence that suggests that the way education and training are governed has a decisive impact on the employability of young people. Therefore, involving employers or local authorities in decisions relating to training, performance-based financing of education institutions, or reinforcing the capacity of education actors will ultimately improve young people's chances on the labour market.

THE CONTEXT

The countries of the region suffer from high unemployment and a deficit of decent jobs, especially for young people and women. The skills needed by the labour market and those provided by the education and training systems do not always match. Education and training systems in most countries are very centralised, with the state providing and financing vocational education and training (VET). Social partners and other players are rarely involved, which places the issue of the governance of training systems centre stage.

THE FOCUS

The governance of vocational education and training is addressed at two levels – national and sub-national. At national level, policy makers, authorities and



social partners are involved, while sub-nationally the project targets schools and those working on skills development locally. The aim is to boost the relevance of VET, improve quality and upgrade the capacities of different stakeholders. The key to modernising training is to allow business and civil society stakeholders to be engaged in its planning, delivery and monitoring.

Quality assurance and financing have been selected as priority areas for reform. Improving the quality of vocational education and training implies tackling the system as a whole - from planning to evaluation. The emphasis must be on outcomes: adequacy of skills, dropout and completion rates, access and equity, employment rates and the types of jobs that graduates find. Diversifying

funding and optimising allocation and management are also important areas for reform.

Pilot projects – one in each country - will address the quality and relevance of VET especially in terms of the employability of women and young people. Issues will be mainly tackled at local levels in an attempt to even out local development and reduce disparities between regions. All pilot projects will be selected on the basis of their probable impact on the employability of young people and women, as well as territorial disparities.

Building the capacity of governments and employer and employee organisations at national levels and civil society is vital. Study-visits, exchange of good practice through conferences and national workshops will contribute to their abilities to assume their roles in the design and implementation of effective policies. GEMM also addresses the capacity of training providers and other stakeholders on subnational levels.

See GEMM leaflet for more details

SAVE THE DATE!
GEMM REGIONAL
CONFERENCE, BRUSSELS
4-5 MARCH 2014

VET QUALITY - CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries have young populations. More and more young people enter the labour market each year. Governments recognise this demographic pressure and acknowledge the important role of quality vocational education and training (VET) in addressing youth employability. Nevertheless, there are considerable policy challenges when aiming for VET excellence:

- How should VET quality be approached in a policy perspective and how can we ensure that quality is embedded holistically in all phases of the policy cycle?
- Which stakeholders need to be engaged in VET quality improvement and how?
- What data are needed for evidence-based policy and how can they be obtained and used?
- How can a VET quality culture that goes beyond quality control be developed?

International co-operation for policy-learning can help support and even speed up reform. What does it take to make effective policies for quality VET and what do the region's countries want with EU and ETF support?

Find the answers in this article.