



## Governance and effective Vocational Education and Training (VET) policies: the role of evidence

### A [‘Torinet’](#) Initiative

23-24 November 2011 Turin, Italy

#### **Background**

The new ETF initiative [‘Torinet’](#) aims to contribute to increased soundness and efficiency of policy development in vocational education and training in ETF partner countries. The ETF’s Torinet initiative responds to the complexity of evidence-based work. It supports leaders in vocational education and training throughout the policy cycle and across thematic areas to deliver better policies through addressing the following issues.

- What experiences and lessons learnt are available and could be shared to enhance the role of evidence in policy making?
- What needs are there in countries to efficiently and effectively create and use evidence throughout the policy cycle?
- What tools, actors or networks should be developed and strengthened to build an evidence approach to policy making?

To take informed decisions, and to be able to foresee their impact, you need the right information at the right time. This applies also to policymaking in the area of human capital development. When we talk about policy development, effectiveness and efficiency of education reforms, starting a discussion from a basis grounded in evidence is the pre-condition for achieving robust, sustainable results.

Evidence is key to sound policy making at all levels of governance, from national to regional to provider level, and in all phases of the policy cycle, from identification to evaluation. In many countries, the creation, communication and use of evidence call for a more in depth reflection and exchange of experiences and lessons learned on the role of evidence in enhancing the effectiveness of VET policies.

In 2011 under the ‘Torinet’ initiative ETF has conducted a number of joint activities with a network of countries from across ETF partner regions: (Croatia, Kosovo<sup>1</sup>, Serbia, Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Egypt, Tunisia),.. These activities, including workshops, researches and applied studies have highlighted the importance of governance as a key element impacting both on the effectiveness of VET policies and the management of evidence. Institutional and functional assessments, as well as vision, capacity and tools and mechanisms to manage evidence have emerged as being critical areas of concern and focus in ETF partner countries for effective policy making. These concerns have brought the debate around evidence based policy making to focus on the relationship between governance models, and in particular multi-level governance structures and effectiveness of policies in education and training.

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<sup>1</sup> under UNSCR 1244/1999

In the light of this development, the ETF has organised an international workshop bringing together partner countries engaged in Torinet, EU Member States and experts to discuss the interaction between governance and effectiveness of VET systems, and the role of evidence.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of the two days workshop on 'Governance and effective VET policies: the role of evidence' are to (1) clarify governance models, institutional arrangements and functional responsibilities for improving the effectiveness of VET policies, (2) exchange experiences, lessons learned and challenges on governance mechanisms and evidence based policy making in different functions of the VET system among ETF partner countries and the EU, and (3) share the progress made under the 'torinet' network in 2011 including activities aimed at supporting creation, communication and use of evidence, and launch capacity development and networking activities within and among torinet countries.

## **Thematic areas**

The workshop will start with a reflection on evidence based policy making and its relevance for VET policies and systems drawing on EU<sup>2</sup>, partner country and international experiences. In this context some thematic areas emerge as having impacted the work in the EU as well as the debate and work in ETF partner countries. The workshop will cover the following thematic areas:

### **A. Governance – Institutional settings and VET policy making**

What is governance and how does governance influence performance of VET systems? Which are the functions of a VET system to ensure sound policy making? What institutional settings have developed in recent years in different countries and proven successful for evidence based policy making? What are the steps and the issues related to a better focus on governance mechanisms for the use of evidence as a key principle for policy making in VET? The session dedicated to governance will bring the focus on international debate and knowledge, practices and case studies especially focusing on multi-level governance and its added value for improving the performance of education and training systems.

### **B. Evidence and its management in VET policy making**

What is evidence and how is it used for policy making? How quantitative, qualitative evidence as well as research are supporting policy making in VET in countries? How creation, communication and use of evidence are contributing to the performance of VET systems? What is the value of moving to evidence based approach to policy making? And what are the tools and practices available? This session will take stock of EU and countries' current debates and experiences in various functions related to VET, share lessons on creation, communication and use of evidence in a peer learning context.

### **C. Processes and challenges towards improving the effectiveness of VET policies**

This session will focus on key processes countries have faced and are experiencing in moving towards an evidence based approach, linking change processes in governance and management of evidence for improving the performance of VET systems. How a regional perspective improves performance of VET systems? How international, regional and thematic networks bring value to policy making in education and training? What is the role of research and how the gap between research and policy and practice is filled? What is the role of capacities in the process of moving to a new governance of VET and improved evidence based policy making? Examples and experiences from ETF partner countries and the EU will trace the trajectory of developments and opportunities to support change processes for improved performance of VET systems.

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<sup>2</sup> As regards EU experiences the Workshop will in particular take stock of developments in the EU deriving from the 2007 initiative on Knowledge and Action in Education and Training launched under the German Presidency in 2007

**Methodology**

The workshop will follow a peer learning approach where all participants will be asked and welcome to contribute and interact for the benefit of the debate. The results of the workshop will be used to select key topics for the Torinet initiative in 2012 and the debate will be continued online through updates, webinars and opportunities for exchange, research and exchange of practices and results.

**Participants**

The workshop will host in Turin around 60 participants from the ETF countries covered under the Torinet initiative, including representatives from Ministries of Education, Labour, VET agencies, Ministries of Economy and Statistics, Researchers and Social Partners, EU member states, representatives of the EU institutions, researchers and practitioners in the field of governance, evidence based policy making and VET institutional building. Participants will be invited to contribute to the workshop through the preparation of case studies as well as through active participation in the discussion.

# AGENDA

## Tuesday 22 November

17:15 – 18:15	Introduction session for the ETF Governing Board members
20:00 – 22:00	Welcome evening dinner, Cabiria Café, Mole Antonelliana

## Wednesday 23 November

**Sermig** – Piazza Borgo Dora, 61, Torino

08:45 – 09:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Welcome coffee</li><li>▪ Welcome to Sermig</li></ul>
09:00 – 10:15	<p>Evidence based policy making – an added value for VET systems <i>Chair: Madlen Serban, Director, European Training Foundation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Jerzy Wiśniewski</i>, ETF Governing Board member, on behalf of Polish Presidency of the EU</li><li>▪ <i>Robert Fouchet</i>, Director, Institute of Public Management and Local Governance, Université Paul Cézanne Aix Marseille III</li><li>▪ <i>Manuela Prina</i>, ETF: The Torinet initiative and its pillars towards evidence based policy making, a review of 2011 activities: the vision, institutional and functional settings, capacity development and tools and technologies</li></ul>
10:15 – 11:30	<p>Multilevel governance, regional development and human capital: a functional perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Luc Van Den Brande</i>, Member of the Committee of the Regions, Commission for citizenship, governance, institutional and external affairs</li><li>▪ <i>Jean-Francoise Mezieres</i>, Director general for Education and Training, Central Region Committee, France: Multi-level governance, an example of evidence based policy making at regional level</li><li>▪ <i>Gabriela Ciobanu</i>, Director National VET Centre in Romania: from policy to action, an example of evidence based implementation from Romania.</li></ul>
11:30 – 11:45	Coffee break

11:45 – 13:00	<p>Governance, regional development and evidence based policy making, experiences in partner countries <i>Chair: Manuela Prina, ETF</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Charles White</i>, International Relations Officer - Europe, Neighbourhood, Africa, DG Regio, European Commission</li> <li>▪ Experiences from Serbia, Tunisia and Egypt</li> </ul>
13:00 – 14:30	<p>Lunch break For those who wish to visit the Sermig a tour is organized at 13:45, the meeting point will be out of the lunch room. The visit will cover the Professional Training centre for fine arts restoration</p>
14:30– 15:30	<p>Regional development and evidence based policy making, experiences in partner countries (<i>cont.</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Vladimir Gasskov</i>, VET Expert - Example of evidence-based policy making: the case of optimisation of regional VET in Ukraine</li> <li>▪ Experiences from Kazakhstan and Moldova</li> </ul>
15:30 – 15:45	Coffee break
15:45 – 17:00	<p>Discussion in groups on burning questions related to vision and institutional and functional set ups <i>Is there a shared vision for VET policies? How governance is influencing VET policies and their effectiveness?</i></p>
17:00 – 17:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Towards a vision and functions for evidence based policy making, the experience of Croatia</li> <li>▪ Conclusions of day one</li> </ul> <p>Manuela Prina, ETF</p>
17:30	Cocktail

**Thursday, 24 November**  
**Sermig – Piazza Borgo Dora, 61, Torino**

08:30 – 09:00	Welcome coffee
	Opening of Day 2 – Peter Greenwood, Head of Evidence Based Policy Making Department, ETF

09:00 – 11:15	<p>Processes and challenges towards the effectiveness of VET policies <i>Chair: Peter Greenwood, ETF</i></p> <p>9:00 – 10:20 Theme 1: Bridging research, policy and practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eric Mangez, project coordinator Know &amp; Pol, Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium</li> <li>▪ <i>Froukje Wartenbergh – Cras, ResearchNED, Netherlands</i></li> <li>▪ Experience from Kosovo<sup>3</sup> and Tajikistan</li> </ul> <p>10:20 – 11:15 Theme 2 : Tools for management of evidence and added value</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Janice Tripney - Evidence Informed Policy in Education in Europe</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Ian Cumming (ETF) – Knowledge management and evidence based policy making</i></li> <li>▪ Experience from Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine</li> </ul>
11:15 – 11:30	Coffee break
<p><i>After the coffee break the workshop will make use of tools of knowledge management in the context of policy and decision making. The tools will be introduced by experts and used for discussion on topics covered in the two days.</i></p>	
11:30 – 13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>David Gurteen, Knowledge management expert: introducing a tool for knowledge management – the knowledge café</i></li> </ul> <p>Discussion in the knowledge café <i>What issues are there (in term of capacity and tools for evidence) that would need to be tackled to improve effectiveness of policy making?</i></p>
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 16:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Michael Cheveldave, Knowledge management expert, Cognitive Edge: making sense of complex issues for evidence based policy making. Introduction to the tool</li> </ul> <p>Discussion in small groups – <i>manage complexity for decision making</i></p>
16:00 – 16:15	Coffee break
16:15 – 17:30	<p>The way ahead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Torino Process and ToriNet 2012: a NETwork of actions <i>Manuela Prina and Jens Johansen, ETF</i></li> </ul> <p>Conclusions: <i>Madlen Serban, Director ETF</i></p>

<sup>3</sup> under UNSCR 1244/1999