

FRAME: SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

SUPPORTING A
STRATEGIC VISION FOR
HUMAN RESOURCES
DEVELOPMENT



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FRAME: SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

SUPPORTING A STRATEGIC VISION FOR HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

The European Commission has entrusted the ETF to support enlargement countries* in their human resources development (HRD) efforts. The overall objective is to assist the countries to develop the skills of their people for sustainable economic development and social cohesion in a medium to long-term perspective with particular reference to Europe 2020 and the South East Europe 2020 Strategy. The initiative will be implemented in 2013 and 2014 and be funded under the 2013 IPA multi-beneficiary envelope.

The initiative is built around four components (foresight; review of institutional arrangements; monitoring; and regional cooperation), which will lead to:

1. The definition of a commonly agreed vision and a road-map for skills 2020 in a wider human resources development context;
2. the development of a prioritised capacity development plan for the institutions in charge of HRD;
3. the development of a monitoring system to assess progress in the field; and,
4. the enhancement of regional cooperation for comprehensive long-term and forward looking policy planning and implementation, taking into account country specificities.



* Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (this designation is without prejudice to position on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence), Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey

FORESIGHT COMPONENT

OBJECTIVES OF THE FORESIGHT COMPONENT

With the foresight component, the ETF will assist the countries of the Western Balkans to formulate a shared vision for skills in 2020, with priorities and a roadmap. Skills are at the centre of the foresight component, addressing the question:

Which skills should we develop between now and 2020, and how can they be generated by the education and training system?

The ETF will work together with national policy leaders and stakeholders to define what should be achieved in the mid-term, by 2020. What are the possible, feasible and preferred options, based on resources and capacities? How should the education and training system be adapted to produce the necessary skills?

The initiative will focus on the adaptation of the education and training system in a lifelong learning perspective covering: initial and continuing vocational education and training (VET) and higher education; it also includes adult learning, company based training and the training of unemployed people.

RESULTS TO BE ACHIEVED

- A vision for skills for 2020 with priorities shared by all relevant stakeholders in the country and a roadmap to make the vision a reality.

The vision and the roadmap will be documented in the form of a short and concise 2020 skills vision put forward for endorsement by the government, and used as input for IPA 2014-2020 programming.

THE FORESIGHT PROCESS

The foresight process consists of three main phases: A preparation phase (pre-foresight) – the proper foresight phase with three workshops – and a follow up phase to ensure optimal use of the results. The timing envisaged for the whole process (without the follow-up phase) spreads over five months.

The aim of the preparation phase is to ensure commitment, a participatory approach, representativeness, and ownership.



The proper foresight process includes three workshops, and high level joint meetings in addition. Thematic inputs will be prepared by the ETF, experts and stakeholders. The first workshop will focus on scanning the horizon, identifying trends and drivers for change, from a global as well as from a national perspective. The strategic panorama of existing strategies and their relevance for skills will be reviewed. The second workshop will focus on vision building and priority setting, based on an in-depth look at the skills issue. The third workshop will be dedicated to refining the vision building and elaborating a roadmap to make the skills vision a reality.

The final version of the 2020 skills vision paper with priorities and a roadmap will be prepared by the leading Ministry (for endorsement by the government).

The components on RIA and on monitoring will build on the results of the

foresight component.

APPROACH

- A participatory approach for the future oriented development of a 2020 skills vision is necessary for ensuring policy coherence and policy relevance to the emerging social-economic challenges. The active involvement and voice of relevant decision makers and stakeholders will be ensured, with representative participation, including policy and technical representatives.
- Skills will be at the centre of foresight, but applying a comprehensive view, taking the interrelations and links between the education and training system and the labour market and economy into account.
- Vision building will be based on existing evidence. No extra research, survey, or forecast exercise is foreseen in the context of the project.
- The quality of the foresight process is as important as the result, and should enhance the adoption of a future-oriented mind-set among all stakeholders. This process does not end with the elaboration of a vision for skills; regular monitoring will ensure sustainable results and a tangible impact.
- Foresight is process-oriented, and will involve key national stakeholders. As a management process, foresight will help to develop future intelligence that can be applied for further, in-depth foresight studies.
- Information sharing and optimising synergies with the work of other international institutions supporting the development of strategic actions in different aspects of HRD in the enlargement countries will be pursued.

PARTICIPANTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The foresight process will ensure the participation of representatives from the main government institutions with a stake in the HRD sector, economic actors and civil society.

To ensure ownership and relevance as well as results for policy making, the ETF will also liaise with high level government officials, thus involving the political level of the Ministries, the Prime Minister's office and the national IPA coordinators.

REVIEW OF INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS (RIA) COMPONENT

OBJECTIVES OF THE RIA COMPONENT

The review of institutional arrangements (RIA) component aims at identifying the capacity development needs of institutions in charge of implementing the 2020 vision for skills, identified under the foresight component.

In particular, the following key question will be answered: what are the capacity needs of institutions to achieve the 2020 vision for skills? (This includes a capacity review of policy planning, implementation and monitoring and the capacity to use foresight as forward-looking policy making approach).

The review will also include a section on “budgeting capacities,” linked to the capacity of institutions to work on Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEF). The RIA methodology will also build dialogue and relationships between different actors in charge of HRD.

RESULTS TO BE ACHIEVED

- A prioritised capacity development plan (milestones) for institutions in charge of HRD is developed and shared among all relevant stakeholders.

The review and the capacity development plan will be documented in a short paper, which will then be included in the roadmap drafted under the foresight component. The dialogue among key stakeholders will also be strengthened and a shared understanding about prioritised capacity needs to implement the 2020 vision for skills will be put in place.

THE RIA PROCESS

The review will focus on the following issues: (i) governance structure of institutions in charge of HRD, in relation to policy making and policy implementation; (ii) administrative infrastructure and resources to ensure smooth policy implementation of the skills vision and related roadmap; and (iii) budgetary practices and financial management capacity to put into practice a Medium-Term Expenditure Framework and programme budgeting, in relation to HRD.

The Frame RIA methodology will cover a mix of the following actions:

The preliminary phase aims at providing a general mapping of institutional arrangements in HRD, based on the ETF multi-level governance methodology (adapted for HRD) and on the results of the Torino Process and HRD Reviews. Moreover, this phase builds on the analysis of existing HRD institutional reviews and MTEF exercises in the country.

The core of the methodology is represented by bilateral interviews, which address the strengths and weaknesses of policy planning and policy delivery in the HRD sector and drivers and constraints for implementing the 2020 skills vision. The interviews also provide input for future capacity development responses.



The preliminary results of the interviews are presented and discussed in a final workshop with national stakeholders, where the prioritised capacity development needs of institutions are agreed upon. The final report presents the findings of the different stages of the methodology and includes the capacity development plan agreed by the national stakeholders, which constitutes an integral part of the roadmap developed under the foresight component.

APPROACH

- **Type of review:** in depth reviews are highly time and resource consuming. The challenge is how to manage a trade-off between investing in complex and long RIA processes and meeting short-term expectations for quick concrete results. The RIA methodology in FRAME will need to be a quick and cost-effective tool, with a reduced burden on institutions. Beyond the formal review, the methodology will also invest in dialogue and relationship building.
- **Level of capacities addressed:** the Frame RIA exercise will address two levels of capacity: (i) individual institutions and bodies in charge of HRD and (ii) their coordination mechanisms. In particular, the exercise will explore the efficiency and effectiveness of policy making and policy delivery (in particular, in achieving the 2020 skills vision). A specific discussion with national actors will be held on the targeted capacity dimension.
- **Ownership:** given the invasive dimension of this type of exercise for the institutions involved, a full commitment from the national authorities will be fundamental. Success will depend on national ownership and commitment to the change process: such commitment will be achieved only if the institution has a specific interest in the review, so as to facilitate a real joint exercise. The ETF will facilitate the exercise while committed national authorities will be in the lead of the development of the capacity development plan.
- **Stakeholder participation:** the methodology needs to be a participatory tool and needs specific techniques to enhance the participation of the stakeholders. Although the interviews are the basic tool for involving participants, their administration must be adapted to specific contexts. The stakeholders will need to actively participate in the exercise and incentives will be foreseen to achieve this goal. Adaptation to the country context is needed also in this respect.
- **Capacity development actions:** list of prioritised capacity development needs, to be directly proposed for financing. In line with SWAP, the priorities can be financed through different channels: national funds, pooling of funds administered by the partner country, capacity development support delegated to one donor. Experts will assist the national partners to define realistic capacity development targets in terms of changes in organisational outputs. A comprehensive overview of all funds available to the institution with indication of the revenue sources is fundamental before drawing any capacity development conclusions.

TARGETED INSTITUTIONS

The interviews will target key institutions and organisations involved in HRD policies at central level and their coordination mechanisms (e.g. ministries, executive agencies, consultative bodies, social partners, chambers of commerce, public employment service, statistical office, education and training providers.). Both policy makers and policy deliverers will be interviewed (on a sample basis).

In the light of the above, the following functional capacities will be assessed: policy design, planning and budgeting, implementation, and monitoring evaluation and learning. Stakeholder engagement will be addressed as a cross-cutting issue.

MONITORING COMPONENT

OBJECTIVES OF THE MONITORING COMPONENT

The monitoring component will support the development of a monitoring system, which measures progress and strengthens accountability in HRD. It aims at generating an evidence based system which:

- Supports the assessment of progress towards the vision for skills 2020, as well as the implementation of a road map for skills generation and the improvement in institutional capacity.
- Promotes a participatory approach and the active involvement of the countries, which will foster a process of mutual learning at the regional level.

The main objective of the component is to develop a monitoring system, based on a set of qualitative and quantitative indicators, in line with the national and regional strategic objectives (SEE 2020) and EU 2020 goals, and built on the results of the review of institutional arrangements and Foresight components.

RESULTS TO BE ACHIEVED

Policy makers will be provided with a tool to assess progress in relation to national targets, by mean of evidence gathered and analysed during the process.

APPROACH

The monitoring component is based on a participatory approach which involves the countries in order to create a sense of ownership of the tool. All phases of the process foresee the active participation of the countries' stakeholders, who will provide input to adapt the tool to their specific needs.

The core elements of this participatory approach are the national technical teams, accountable for the facilitation of the process at the country level, the agreement on the indicators which are at the basis of the monitoring system and the approval of national targets.

The project also foresees regional technical meetings with national stakeholders, for a more effective content discussion and to experience mutual learning at the regional level.

The approach aims to ensure the commitment and agreement of national stakeholders, on a system which brings together the EU 2020 vision and the national context regarding skills needs.

The launch of the monitoring system will be facilitated by the ETF project team, which will provide support where needed.

PROCESS

The monitoring process consists of the following phases:

- A conceptualisation phase, to agree on the monitoring methodology.

The aim of the monitoring methodology is to set out how the project participants should develop and implement a monitoring plan to assess country performance and progress towards a range of HRD- related goals.



During this phase the project team will identify the indicators at the basis of the monitoring system, which will be 'road tested' in two countries before entering the decision process involving all the project participants.

A system-development phase will actively involve all participating countries to customise the tool and build a sense of ownership.

During this phase the countries provide their feedback on the effectiveness/feasibility of the indicators in the national context and decide on national goals. Two regional technical meetings, as well as on-going bilateral work, will be used to help the countries agree on indicators and targets.

During the final phase the monitoring system will be finalised: indicators, national targets and a monitoring plan are agreed. The countries can then implement the system at the national level, with ETF support where necessary.

PARTICIPATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

Like other components of the FRAME project, the monitoring component is strongly based on the involvement of national stakeholders, through participation in national and regional meetings, as well as bilateral work with the local actors for the development of the project.

The project will involve national stakeholders at different levels, in order to guarantee representative participation in the various phases of the process. Specific roles will be played by national experts, National Statistical Offices and other agencies but the commitment of senior national officials will be critical to the success of the monitoring component of the FRAME project.

REGIONAL COMPONENT

SPECIFIC REGIONAL BACKGROUND

- The ETF and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) will continue to work together on promoting the contribution of human capital to economic and social development in the countries of the Western Balkans.
- The ETF is actively involved in the activities of ERISSE and the Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital (acting as member of the Steering Committees) by participating in all the three clusters of knowledge developed at regional level on: modernising VET, national qualifications frameworks and evidence-based policy making.
- The ETF is involved in the development of the South East Europe 2020 Strategy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE REGIONAL COMPONENT

The regional component aims at knowledge sharing, mutual learning and policy dialogue related to human resources development policies. This is key for the whole region and its EU perspective*. The objectives promoted within the component are the following:

- Enhancing regional dialogue and cooperation among the countries on HRD policies with particular reference to the development of a regional response to the South East Europe 2020 Strategy. This will be reached by facilitating knowledge sharing and mutual learning among countries to identify common challenges and actions with a focus on different governance models and long-term policy planning.
- Encouraging regional cooperation in the countries' political agenda, while ensuring complementarity and synergy.

RESULTS TO BE ACHIEVED

- A. Relevant actors in the region have improved their knowledge about the importance of holistic and forward-looking HRD policies and use methodological tools.
- B. Pertinent policy objectives, concrete implementation measures and monitoring mechanisms have been endorsed by the representatives from the region.
- C. Regional cooperation continues to be a priority: creation of a regional network of knowledge clusters defined by the project.



* Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013 (Brussels, 10.10.2012 COM(2012) 600 final) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_paper_2012_en.pdf

APPROACH

In relation to result A:

- Exchange of good practice on long-term and forward-looking policy planning and monitoring tools through a series of regional events and meetings.
- Peer learning activities on the relevance of methodologies through activities to interconnect research institutes/think-tanks for knowledge transfer in the region.

In relation to result B:

- Developing a regionally owned paper, identifying HRD potential and constraints and impediments to cross-country policy planning and solutions; major HRD milestones and relevant indicators; and exploring the potential of the skill foresight instrument as a regional planning tool for growth and competitiveness with a view to South East Europe 2020 strategy.

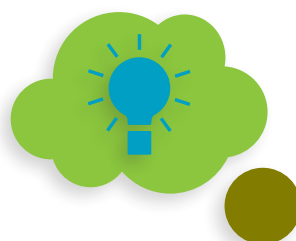
In relation to result C:

- Involving existing regional platforms and representatives of on-going initiatives and any relevant actors active in the region in identifying common challenges and solutions, aiming at synergy and complementarity.
- Developing an inventory of relevant data and sources in close cooperation with the RCC and other strategic partners, and ensuring complementarity and synergy and access for all.

A regional approach to skills development may support the enlargement process; however each country presents different characteristics that need to be carefully considered. A key question for policy makers at the regional and national level is how to provide the right conditions to generate and maintain the growth of more knowledge-intensive forms of economic activity within the context of dynamic education and training systems. For this reason, the project foresees the possibility of different country “constellations”, according to priorities, for capacity enhancement activities, while ensuring a regional flavour at all times.

COORDINATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

Coordination with on-going activities at regional level will be ensured, so that the project can also benefit from existing experience in the area. In particular, for all components, the project will liaise with bodies such as the World Bank and the OECD. Specific synergies will be sought when discussing issues and results at regional level benefitting for example from the experience of World Bank projects, the South East Europe Investment Committee (SEEIC) and other initiatives. Effective cooperation will continue and be enlarged with RCC.



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