



TORINO PROCESS 2016-17

ARMENIA

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Executive Summary

Introduction

In Armenia, vocational education is improving through a gradual process of change. The overall aim is to increase the size of the vocational sector and extend the range of services that it provides to businesses and individuals in both urban and rural areas.

The Armenia Development Strategy for 2014-2025¹ (ADS) adopted by the Government in March 2014 identifies as a main objective increasing employment through the creation of quality and high productivity and well paid jobs. The strategy identifies the education sector as a fundamental tool for the sustainable development of the country, and that increasing its quality, effectiveness, relevance and access at all levels are top priorities. The strategy provides a framework against which policy performance can be assessed.

The strategy covers various economic sectors and recognises agriculture and rural development as a priority for the economic development of the country and the following two key objectives are identified:

- (i) Supporting the food industry value chain, which is one of the sub-branches of agriculture with export potential;
- (ii) Increasing productivity and the creation of non-agriculture jobs in rural areas thus contributing to balanced regional development.

Between 2014 and 2016, Armenia has improved the legal framework for VET, by updating its strategy for a national qualification framework and introducing legislation to support continuous vocational training and the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

Key developments have involved steps to improve the internal efficiency of the systems, e.g., through the development of state educational standards and modular programmes, training manuals and methodological materials, provision of training. In addition, implementation has been supported through the development and introduction of the VET management information system (MIS) and the “Vocational education and training” portal (www.vetarmenia.am).

Since the last Torino Process report, Armenia has consolidated its education and labour market policies to strengthen:

- Professional orientation through career guidance centres in 22 VET educational institutions.
- Regional educational networks of regional vocational institutions led by 12 regional centres.
- Planning and performance management system models, including a training programme based on that model.
- Vocational colleges, including the provision of equipment and adaptations for people with disabilities.

Between 2014 and 2015, the activity rate from the age group 20-64 declined from 71.4 percent to 70 percent, reversing an upward trend over the previous four years. Correspondingly, the employment rate for the same age group also fell from 58.7 percent to 56.7 percent. This was mirrored by increases in the total and male unemployment rates for the age group from 18.1 to 19.1 and from 16.3 to 18.1 percent respectively. The female unemployment rate for this age group was stable at 20.1 percent. While the overall unemployment rate increased, that of young people aged 15-24 fell between 2014 and 2015 from

¹ https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/armenia_development_strategy_for_2014-2025.pdf

37.2 percent to 32.5 percent in total and from 30.7 to 28.6 percent and from 44.9 percent to 37.2 for males and females respectively.

These improvements in the youth unemployment figures were paralleled by slight falls in the numbers of young people (aged 15-24) not in employment, education and training, which fell from 38 percent in 2014 to 35.6 percent in 2015. The respective disaggregated figures fell from 37.5 percent to 36.4 percent for males and from 38.5 percent and 34.8 percent for females. As a proportion of total upper secondary education amongst males and females, there was an increase from 26.6 to 29.2 percent and from 18.9 to 22.2 respectively.

Between 2014 and 2015 the largest increases of educational attainment in the labour force were among males, which experienced a 1.4 percent increase in the proportion, who were low skilled and among females who showed a 1.2 per cent increase among the proportion who were skilled at the middle level. The aggregate level, the tertiary education share amongst 30-34 year olds was stable between 2014 and 2014 with the percentage changing only slightly from 30.7 to 30.6. Within this figure, however, there were divergences between males and females, with the male figure falling slightly from 29.5 per cent to 28.3 per cent and females rising from 31.8 to 32.6 percent.

In September 2016, the Government adopted the *State Programme for Regulation of Employment in 2017* which foresees 21 active labour market measures with a total budget of more than 2 billion AMD (+ donors' contribution). In addition, as a separate measure, training and consultancy services for job seekers with disabilities will also be provided (with a budget equal to 18.6 million AMD).

Main Findings

Vision for VET

Since 2014, policy developments in vocational education have been stable and consistent with developments being more focused on the introduction of mechanisms that are designed to support the further implementation of vocational education. These mechanisms include legislative support for continuing vocational education and the validation of non-formal and informal learning and creation of networks between vocational education colleges for the exchange of information and experience.

Since 2010, the percentage of students in upper secondary VET has increased from 15.1 percent to 25.7 percent, indicating a growing sector. The overall level of educational attainment of the labour force was stable between 2014 and 2015 with slight increase in the proportion of low and middle attainment and a slight decrease the percentage of the population with high-level attainment, which fell from 30.7 percent to 28.8 percent.

Armenia has a clear perspective for the development of VET and the labour market in its National Strategy for Sustainable Development, which sets targets and goals for the period 2014-2025. The strategy is being supported by VET measures that aim to improve the volume and quality of skills and employment over the period 2017-2020.

External Efficiency

Improved efficiency in the labour market and increasing the level of employment are key national priorities. The government aims to increase the number of employed persons and improve the employment and labour market participation rates. Employment growth in the future will be mainly associated with decrease in unemployment as the population above 16 years of age, will not change significantly in the period between 2015 and 2025.

The Armenian labour markets face dual challenges of informal employment and unemployment with the former being a characteristic of the agricultural sector and the latter being a feature of the urban sector.

There is no centralised labour market information monitoring system and the Sector Skills Councils do not currently play a role in anticipating skill needs for specific sectors. There are several means whereby skill needs are anticipated.

Skills relevance is an area of concern among employers. An ILO survey conducted in 2016 found that almost 30 percent of employers surveyed thought that school leavers were not generally equipped with the literacy and numeracy skills required by firms in the private sector. Skill shortages negatively affect businesses in the private sector according to more than 70 percent of the surveyed companies.

Entrepreneurial human capital is a strategically important area of development for the Armenian economy and the country has made significant progress since 2010, including, implementing government measures for financial literacy in upper secondary schools; developing university business co-operation; putting in place policy measures to promote entrepreneurial efforts by women; and supporting SME start-up training.

Efficiency in addressing Social Inclusion

Social inclusion measures are primarily the responsibility of the state, but there are many partnerships between the state and NGOs and various donors that support inclusion. The Government has demonstrated institutional flexibility in facilitating social inclusion initiatives with donors in relation to people with disabilities or families in need.

The geography of assistance needs in Armenia shows substantial gaps between the capital Yerevan and other areas, both urban and rural. About one third of the population lives below the poverty line, established at just above USD 90 a month.²

The State Employment Agency (**SEA**) organises CVT to support people into the labour market. New ALMPs started in 2015 include incentives for both employer and trainee in relation to work- based learning.

As a whole, the long term unemployed constituted 59.4 percent of the unemployed, with the largest part occurring in urban areas rather than rural (88.5 percent compared to 14.5 percent).³ Among the long-term unemployed, the age group 25-34 was the most affected, followed by those aged 35-44 and 45-54. For young people aged 15-24, long-term unemployment constituted 17.6 percent of unemployment in 2014.⁴ In 2014, the inactive population was equal to 36.9 percent of the working age population, which was slightly less than the figure for 2010 when it was 38.7 percent.

The incidence of young people not in education, training or employment (NEETs) appears on a downward trend, falling from 44.6 percent of young people aged 15-24 in 2010 to 35.6 percent in 2015. (See annex table 16.11).

² World Bank Country Snapshot, April 2015

³ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015,

⁴ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, Chapter 7, Unemployment, Table 7.11

Internal efficiency

The pre-service training of VET teachers is currently being reformed. The Government has introduced a teacher certification system, complemented by comprehensive professional development policies and rank-based salary differentiations.

WBL in Armenia is in embryonic stage and, in general, it functions inefficiently. The Government of Armenia is discussing the opportunities to formalize apprenticeship and to implement apprenticeship programmes in agricultural VET colleges, as pilot programmes, which can promote WBL implementation in formal vocational education and training. In 2015, the Government approved procedures for continuing vocational training and the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

The Ministry of Education and Science has been implementing a model for a sector wide VET planning and performance management system. So far national quality assurance arrangements have mainly concentrated on higher education.

The orientation of curricula content and assessment is towards an outcomes based approach. It is foreseen to establish professional orientation and career guidance support in all preliminary and middle vocation education institutions.

The national qualification framework was revised and updated in 2016 with new definitions for each level. The framework has 8 levels and follows the European Qualification Framework model. Each level is based on knowledge, skills and competences. The framework is a generic framework and is intended to cover all levels of education.

Governance and Financing

There is a system of social partnership, but the continuing challenges of improving the link between business and skill suggest that scope exist for reviewing the current arrangements.

As the result of cooperation between the government and the private sector an emerging “WorldSkills Armenia” model was designed indicating that the Government has the capacity to coordinate its activities with the private sector.

There is a system of intra-departmental and inter-ministerial accountability, but there are limited mechanisms for assessing institutions’ performance.

The main source for VET financing is the state budget. Public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP is relatively low and has fallen successively from 3.84 percent in 2009 to 2.24 per cent in 2014. Likewise, public expenditure on education as a percentage of total public expenditure has been declining, with the figures falling from 13.45 to 9.37 per cent over the same period.

Recommendations for action

The 2016 Torino Process report for Armenia identifies the progress and challenges achieved and faced in the country. It describes the priorities identified by the Ministry of Education. These support the further development and implementation of the VET reform and development of VET institutions in accordance with the socio-economic requirements of the country. Key issues for ongoing support and policy attention are listed below as recommendations for action:

1. Accelerate the implementation of the national qualification framework to improve the attractiveness of vocational education
2. Develop and implement programmes for the identification of skills needs and the tracking of VET graduates in the labour force
3. Consolidate the implementation of career guidance across vocational schools and colleges
4. Develop and pilot a national approach to work based learning to support school to work transition
5. Accelerate the implementation of entrepreneurship learning to support small business as a career option and employability
6. Update the quality assurance arrangements for vocational education to include business and social partners.
7. Initial education for teachers should be enhanced to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary for extended careers.
8. Update the institutional mechanisms for social partnership, such as sector skills councils, in VET to improve the capacity of the system to achieve its development objectives and to strengthen the links and networks between business and education
9. Review and expand the sources of funding for VET.

Section 1: Vision

1. Please provide country information and a brief update on social, political and economic developments since the preceding round of the Torino Process.

In economic terms, Armenia is a lower middle-income country with a population of 3 million and an estimated per-capita GDP of US\$ 3,898. Double-digit economic growth rates in 2002–2008 were replaced by an average 4.0 percent rate after the crisis.⁵

After expanding 7.2 percent in 2012, growth decelerated. A moderate 3.2 percent growth in 2013 was followed by 3.5 percent in 2014. The economy grew by 3.0 percent in 2015, driven by agriculture and industry as an expansion in services moderated. The slowdown was driven mainly by a contraction in investment activity, in part due to delays in implementing infrastructure projects. Weak household consumption was another constraint on growth, partly because of a slowdown in remittances, which represent approximately 18 percent of Armenian gross domestic product (GDP)⁶.

In 2015, agriculture grew by 11.4 percent, while industry excluding construction grew by 6.3 percent - construction contracted by 4.2 percent following a 4.6 percent decline in 2014. The expansion in services, which generate about half of GDP, slowed sharply to 1.1 percent from 5.8 percent in 2014. Growth in services came mainly from higher growth in information technology, finance, insurance, and recreation.⁷

The World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016 ranks Armenia 58th and 72th in the world for labour market efficiency and education and training, respectively⁸.

Between 2010 and 2014, the total population fell from 3,055,236 to 3,017,100, with the population aged 15-24 years declining from 608,100 to 472,200 and that aged 25-64 years falling from 1,718,500 to 1,648,400⁹.

Armenia experienced strong economic growth prior to the 2008-09 crisis, with an annual average GDP growth of 13.4 percent between 2002 and 2007, driven by capital inflows and remittances. Growth has occurred particularly within the infrastructure sector, with USD 3.2 billion of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the telecommunications, energy and transportation sectors between 2002 and 2012, representing 58 percent of Armenia's FDI over this period (UNCTAD, 2013). However, following a deep recession in 2009, post-crisis growth has been moderate due to falling investment activity, particularly in the construction sector, whose share in GDP reduced from 27 percent in 2008 to 9.3 percent in 2014.

The Armenian economy has strong links to the Russian market, which represents one quarter of Armenian exports – the second largest destination after the EU – and is the source of about 90 percent of remittances. Armenia was strongly affected by the recession in Russia, causing economic growth to slow to 3.5 percent in 2014 (EBRD, 2015).

The value of remittances, which represent 18-20 percent of Armenian GDP, halved with the depreciation of the rouble, causing a contraction in household spending and growth. While pre-crisis growth was driven by the construction industry, the agriculture, services and mining sectors have been gaining prominence in recent years.

⁵ World Bank: Armenia, country snapshot, April 2016. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/armenia/overview>

⁶ <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/armenia/overview>

⁷ <https://www.export.gov/apex/article2?id=Armenia-market-overview>

⁸ <http://reports.weforum.org/global-competitiveness-report-2015-2016/economies/#indexId=GCI&economy=ARM>

⁹ National Statistical Office of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2014.

Agriculture remains the largest sector of the economy (19 percent of GDP), though processed manufacturing is increasing its share of GDP (10 percent in 2014, compared to 8.3 percent in 2008).¹⁰ Diversifying exports have become a government priority. Although it has begun declining in recent years, Armenia's unemployment rate remains high and there is some evidence of skills gaps in key economic sectors, and negative migration flows intensified after the 2008-09 crisis. Likewise, a large informal sector constrains economic competitiveness and development.

In the period 2017-2020, Armenia will continue with its strategy by focusing on improving the capacity for skills identification and matching as a means towards improving the coordination between labour supply and demand. The Government's initiatives will pay specific attention to agricultural skills and employment opportunities by consolidating the reforms undertaken in 2007-2015, within the overall VET system, in the field of agriculture as a priority sector for the Armenian government.

The overall objective is to enhance labour market efficiency and contribute to employability of VET graduates in Armenia. It continues the priorities of the National Employment Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2018.

The specific objectives are: (1) to improve the labour market intermediation and guidance services in order to ensure better access to employment both for men and women, and (2) to improve the employability perspectives of graduate students of VET agricultural institutions.

The strategy will focus on the development of agricultural and agriculture-related state VET educational standards and relevant curricula in line with the list of qualifications including the introduction of a compulsory module of entrepreneurship.

The training of teachers (pedagogical staff, including masters) of all Agricultural VET Institutions on reviewed, will be supported by newly developed and adopted standards. Implementation will focus on the development of work-based learning in Agricultural VET Institutions for selected professions/qualifications with at least 3-month duration and using newly equipped and renovated specific infrastructure.

The social partners will revise the concept on Social partnership and improving and enhancing of functions of VET Institution Management Boards. Quality Assurance will be further strengthened through the establishment of Internal Quality assurance system respecting CEDEFOP recommendations for VET and in line with local legislation in Agricultural VET institutions.

The Government will continue to support the development of career guidance capacities of VET colleges which will allow expanding collaboration with the employers in the process of vocational education and training organization and delivery, and increase employability of students. The overall aim is to increase the percentage of graduates, who studied in education system of 17 VET institutions modernized under 2010-2014 who find job according to their qualifications within one year after graduation.

2. Significant developments in education and VET

Since 2014, policy developments in vocational education have been largely stable and consistent with developments being more related to the introduction of mechanisms that are designed to support the further implementation of vocational education. These mechanisms include legislative support for the validation of continuing vocational education and the validation of non-formal and informal learning and creation of networks between vocational education colleges for the exchange of information and experience.

¹⁰ SME Policy Index SME Policy Index: Eastern Partner Countries 2016
OECD, European Training Foundation, European Union, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

In the Law on Education the following principle has been enshrined as a state guarantee in the education sector “The state in cooperation with the social partners ensures development of the VET system in line with the labour market needs, as well as guarantees balanced operation of formal, non-formal and informal education system and recognition of outcomes”. In this regard, other legislative amendments ensuring the process have also been made. As a requirement of the law “Regulation on organising and implementing supplemental educational programmes”, as well as “Regulation on assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes” have been approved by the Government Decree № 1062 on 10 September 2015.

The policy background for vocational education is the Armenia Development Strategy 2014–25, adopted by Government decree in March 2014. The strategy identifies the education sector as a fundamental tool for the sustainable development of the country, and that increasing its quality, effectiveness, relevance and access at all levels are top priorities.

The Government is progressively implementing an agenda for the sector’s development through a series of activity plans. The "VET Reforms Programme and Action Plan 2012-2016" adopted on 4th of July 2012, is the overall strategic framework for the reform process in the VET sector of Armenia.

The action plan aims to strengthen governance of vocational education through stronger social partnership, including employer involvement and modernise teaching and curriculum models and practices. The "VET Reforms Programme and Action Plan 2012-2016" is to integrate Armenia’s VET system into the European vocational education area with improvements in system efficiencies and reputation. Based on an assessment in 2015 by the European Union Delegation of Armenia’s performance in its Budget Support programme, the Ministry of Education and its stakeholders and partners, e.g., employers, and other Ministries such as Labour and Social Affairs, significant progress has been made. The action plan is being reviewed and updated in line with forecasted priorities. Significant initiatives are being prepared by the Government to support vocational education in the rural sector.

The main objectives of the Government are to build a system that is attractive to employers and to those in the labour force and which is based on active co-operation between the social partners. A key element of the agenda is to develop the sector to be accessible and relevant to the needs of the regions and to the agriculture sector. In the action plan foreseen for 2017-2020, the Government will implement an extensive range of measures targeting the agriculture sector through the implement of new programmes for work-based learning, career guidance and infrastructure development.

Main reform areas in the VET sector are in line with the Armenia Development Strategy 2014-25 and are aimed at:

- Promoting the growth and development of individual cognition and appreciation;
- Preparation of competitive professionals in the labour market;
- Development of transparent, accountable and democratic education system.

Specifically, the Government aims to increase efficiency of preliminary (artisan) and vocational education and training, including adult education system reforms, and foster its development, international integration, international recognition of awarded certificates and qualifications in the Republic of Armenia.

The process of assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes being introduced in Armenia is also aimed at international recognition of qualifications.

Preliminary (craftsmanship) and Middle vocational education is implemented through the following educational programmes:

- 1) basic (initial) craftsmanship educational programme, qualification – craftsperson,
- 2) basic (initial) middle vocational educational programme, qualification – specialist,
- 3) supplementary (continuing) craftsmanship middle vocational educational programmes by means of retraining, specialists' quality upgrade and re-qualification.

The basic (initial) Preliminary (craftsmanship) and Middle vocational education programmes offer a vocational qualification (with access to the labour market) and opportunities for a secondary general diploma (Matura), thereby providing students with the option to pursue the next level of education (higher education).

Preliminary and middle level VET are entered after basic general education (nine years) or secondary general education (12 years). Preliminary VET lasts for six months to three years (qualification level of Craftsperson). Middle VET lasts from two to five years (qualification level of Specialist).

Currently, nine years in the education system is compulsory in Armenia. In April 2015, however, the Armenian Parliament passed amendments to the Law on Education according to which secondary general, or preliminary or middle vocational education is compulsory till the 19-year-old age of the learner if this right was not executed earlier. This will promote involvement of the students in the VET system.

Preliminary VET is provided in 44 institutions (24 schools and 20 middle VET colleges), while middle VET is provided in 99 colleges, including six higher educational institutions.¹¹ By way of comparison, there are 1,437 general education schools in the country¹².

Since independence, access to preschool, secondary and higher education has improved. Armenia has achieved nearly universal enrolment rates at the primary (grades 1–4) and lower secondary (grades 5–9) levels with little geographical or socioeconomic disparity. The general level of educational attainment of the population remains relatively high, with 87.7 percent of the population having at least completed general secondary.

Educational attainment among young people is nearly universal, with as many as 99.2 percent of youth completing at least secondary education and 33.7 percent completing higher education. In 2014, nearly one half of the youth population (45.3 percent) was attending school with the likelihood of completing at a high level¹³.

Most youth have the same education level as their parents (63.7 percent the same as their father and 64.6 percent the same as their mother). Improvements over the older generation are noteworthy regarding tertiary education; of youth with higher education 51.1 percent and 56.6 percent have a higher education level than their fathers and their mothers, respectively.¹⁴

The trend in vocational education participation in recent years is mixed. With respect to preliminary VET, the number of enrolments increased marginally between 2010 and 2014 from 3,119 to 3,267 per year, while the population of preliminary VET students increased from 6,393 to 7,295¹⁵. For middle vocational

¹¹ National Statistical Service of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Table 89

¹² National Statistical Service of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Table 91

¹³ Labour market transitions of young women and men in Armenia Nicolas Serrière
Employment Policy Department. - Geneva: ILO, 2014
(Work4Youth publication series ; No. 21, ISSN: 2309-6780 ; 2309-6799

¹⁴ International Labour Organisation, Labour Market Transitions for Young Women and Men in Armenia, 2014.

¹⁵ National Statistical Service of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Table 102

education schools, the corresponding changes were a decline in enrolments between 2010 and 2014 from 11,666 to 8,470 and a slight fall in the population of students from 29,573 in 2010 to 28,483 in 2014¹⁶. In comparison, the number of students in general education in 2014 was 359,600¹⁷ while the number in higher education was 79,600¹⁸.

Those who received vocational training by middle or large sized companies is about 4.4 percent of those surveyed in 2010 and 5.5 percent in 2014. Workers with vocational qualifications equate to only 2.6 percent of those in employment.¹⁹

In 2015-2016 it is estimated that there are 13,827 students in the last year of their studies at VET institutions (respectively 11,792 in Middle and 2,031 in Preliminary vocational education institutions). This number represents 44.4 percent of all students enrolled in the VET in same academic year.²⁰

3. Co-ordination with priorities in other sectors

In the future Armenia is focusing on the further development of agricultural skills programme and employment opportunities by consolidating the reforms undertaken in 2007-2015, within the overall VET system. This will be undertaken in the context of further co-operation with the EU and will aim to improve labour market effectiveness and the employability perspectives of VET graduates through modernisation of agricultural VET via introduction of quality assurance system, professional orientation and career guidance, mechanisms of work-based learning.

The specific objectives target key programmes and organisations (or institutions) of VET in Armenia,

- Improve mechanisms to match supply and demand of labour for both men and women through an enhanced labour market information and analysis system, operating Sector Skills councils and reinforced capacity of employers to formulate labour market needs;
- Develop and improve qualification and employability of jobseekers enhanced capacity of State Employment Agency and its 51 regional centres and increased quality of lifelong learning training programmes;
- Strengthen and develop the national system of professional orientation with career guidance and research capacity in state education institutions and implement employment programmes targeting graduating VET students and vulnerable people;
- Improve mechanism to match labour supply of VET agricultural institutions with demand, increasing cooperation between employers/labour market stakeholders in VET institutions (management boards) and developing quality assurance system for agriculture VET institutions.

¹⁶ National Statistical Service of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Table 103

¹⁷ National Statistical Service of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Table 93

¹⁸ National Statistical Service of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Table 98

¹⁹ Ibid, Tables 33 and 35

²⁰ (Sources: National Statistical Service of Armenia. 2016. Social – economic situation in the Republic of Armenia in January-March, 2016; pp. 215, 221).

Section 2: Efficiency of VET and the labour market

1. What economic and demographic factors have influenced, influence, or are expected to influence the national economy and its demand for skills?

Armenia has a clear perspective for the development of its labour market in the Developments Strategy, which sets targets and goals for the period 2014-2025. Its main objective is to increase employment through the creation of quality and high productivity jobs. It recognizes agriculture as a priority sector to increase exports, diversify the Armenian economy and ensure balanced regional development. The strategy provides a framework against which policy performance can be assessed

Improved efficiency in the labour market and increasing the level of employment are key national priorities. The government aims to increase the number of employed persons and improve the employment and labour market participation rates.

A National Employment Strategy (NES) and Action Plan 2013–18 was adopted by the Government in November 2012 and has formed the platform for numerous new initiatives in the employment sectors with close links to poverty reduction, support to disabled and similar vulnerable groups, VET and social issues since then.

In 2013 the Government of Armenia approved a new Law on Employment. The new law reflects a “change of regime” as it redirects state budget funds provided annually for state employment regulation initiatives from “passive” to “active” employment measures.

According to the new law, the active measures aim at providing sustainable employment for unemployed people, including mainly people who are not competitive in the labour market. It further emphasises measures directed towards unemployed people with disabilities as well as owners of agricultural land. Both groups are eligible to receive the unemployment status and may be included in the active employment incentives. The Ministry of Labour is conducting a mid-term review of the Employment Strategy in 2016-2017 to identify the most effective elements of the strategy. The review will provide the basis of a new action plan to be implemented after 2018. The strategy aims to support labour market efficiency by providing services that improve labour market participation, including active job seekers and those who are marginalised in the labour market. Current measures cover, inter alia, training and retraining, employment subsidies, support for small business, and small agricultural and animal husbandry activities as part of activation strategies.

In addition to the review of the employment strategy, key areas for strategic development by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, include the continuing implementation of the system of professional orientation and guidance, the development of online services by the Ministry, measures to increase the awareness of the public of the services provided by the department, and projects that offer support to returning migrants.

By 2025, the Government aims to increase of non-agricultural employment by around 220 thousand people compared to 2012, of which 60 thousand by the year 2017. Targets for the labour market as part of Armenia’s development strategy include that the share of employment in agriculture will decline over time, contributing to increase in the share of the employed in the industry and construction sectors. Thus, by 2025 the share of employed (in total employment) in industry will reach 22.8% in 2025 compared to 18.4% in 2012, whereas in construction the share will reach 12% compared to 8.4% in 2012²¹.

Employment growth in the future will be mainly associated with decrease in unemployment as the population above 16 years of age, will not change significantly in the between 2015 and 2025. Informal

²¹ Armenia Development Strategy 2014-2025

employment in non-agricultural sectors amounted to around 22%, in 2014, which is twelve percentage points lower than the 2006 level²².

Formal employment aims to be 52% in the construction sector in 2017 (45% in 2010), 93% in industry (88% in 2010) and 76% in trade (71% in 2010). The aim is that the level of formalization of non-agricultural employment will reach 78% in 2017 and 83% in 2025, or respectively 6 and 11 percentage points higher than the levels assessed for 2010. Informal employment among people up to 19 years of age exceeds the same indicator for other age groups, but this is not the case for the age group of 20-24 years, while unemployment rate is extremely high among the latter age group as well.

In September 2016, the Government adopted the *State Programme for Regulation of Employment in 2017* which foresees 21 active labour market measures with a total budget of more than 2 billion AMD (+ donors' contribution). In addition, as a separate measure, training and consultancy services for job seekers with disabilities will also be provided (with a budget equal to 18.6 million AMD).

2. What is the labour market situation in the country and what are the main challenges in this respect?

Between 2011 and 2015, the working age population of Armenia decreased from 2,286,300 to 2,106,700. The economic activity rate fell from 63.0 percent in 2011 to 62.5 percent in 2015, while the employment rate fell from 51.4 percent to 50.9 percent and the unemployment rate remained stable (18.4 percent in 2011 to 18.5 percent in 2015)²³.

The figures reflect a change in trends characteristic of the previous period (2010-2013), marked by annual improvements of these indicators. This may affect the forecasts for the labour market and employment contained in the Government's Armenian Development Strategy 2014-2025, which identified improvements and efficiencies in the labour market as priorities. Despite the limited comparability, the employment rate in May 2016 is lower than the figure of 50.7 percent envisaged by the development strategy for 2016 and it may indicate a reversal in the trend of annual improvements in employment since the Global Financial Crisis of 2008. Similarly, the unemployment rate of 18 percent in May 2016 is higher than the 16.5 percent anticipated for 2016.²⁴

The Armenian Development Strategy states that between 2014 and 2025 the employment rate is expected to increase to 71.1 percent while the unemployment rate will fall to 10 percent. The labour force participation rate is expected to be 63.6 percent. However, this is based on an anticipated annual growth rate of 5-6 percent during the years of the strategy and an assumption that one percentage of economic growth will result in 0.20 percentage points of growth of the employment rate.²⁵ It is not clear that the assumptions will be met and the unemployment rate may remain over 10 percent and the employment rate less than 57 percent.

The latest comprehensive labour market figures for Armenia are contained in the 2015 annual Statistical Yearbook provided by the Office of National Statistics for Armenia. The data from the yearbook shows trends in the labour force since 2010 and outlines the structure of the labour force.

Between 2010 and 2015, the trend in the labour force was a growth in the economically active population that rose from 64.1 percent to 65.1. The growth reflected changes in the activity rates of men and women, falling over the five years slightly for men from 75.2 percent to 74.7 per cent and increasing for women from 54.9 percent to 57.3 percent.²⁶

²² National Statistical Service of Armenia. Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, Employment, Table 4.47

²³ 25 National Statistical Service of Armenia. *Socio-economic situation of RA*, January–May 2016, Chapter 1.4.

²⁴ National Statistical service of Armenia. *Socio- Economic Situation of RA*, January-May 2016, Chapter 1.4

²⁵ Armenian Development Strategy 2014-2025, page 58 (available at Faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/arm151333.pdf)

²⁶ See annex table 1

The 2015 unemployment rate of 18.5 percent is close to the 2011 rate of 18.4 percent which is an increase on the 2014 aggregate rate of 17.6 percent in 2014. The 2014 rate covers important differences between male and female rates and urban and rural rates. For men in 2014, the unemployment rate was lower at 15.8 percent with the corresponding rate for women being higher at 19.5 percent. Likewise, the unemployment rate tends to be higher in urban labour markets (24.8 percent in 2014) than in rural labour markets (6.8 percent).²⁷

Conversely, the employment rate is higher in rural areas (64.5 percent in 2014) than in urban areas (44.9 percent in 2014).²⁸

This reflects the presence of informal employment in Armenia as a major aspect of the labour market which in 2014 constituted 49.9 percent of employment²⁹ – approximately 584,000 jobs from an employed population of 1,133, 500.

The slight fall in the aggregate numbers of informal employment between 2010 and 2014 from 589,400 to 584,400 covers some diversity that may reflect a new trend in the labour force: male informal employment increased slightly (from 288,500 to 302,400). Female informal employment fell from 301,100 to 282,000; similarly, from 2010 to 2014 urban informal employment increased its share of the informal labour force from 25.1 percent to 32 percent while rural informal employment fell from 74.9 percent to 67 percent.³⁰

In broad terms the Armenia labour markets face dual challenges of informal employment and unemployment with the former being a characteristic of the agricultural sector and the latter being a feature of the urban sector.

The differences arise from the capacity of the rural sector to offer those unable to find employment, the means of ensuring their livelihood, either through self-employment or through contributing to a family company. The phenomenon is clear in the numbers of people in the agricultural sector as non-employees (415,900 persons from 420,000) as against a commensurate number in the non-agricultural sector (66,000 from 164,000)³¹.

Vocational education graduates are active, e.g. in 2014, 72.7 percent of vocational education graduates were economically active -, 41,800 out of 1,375,100. In comparison, tertiary graduates had a 74.7 percent activity rate (422,000 people) and specialised secondary education graduates had a rate of 67 percent (282,500 persons)³²

The latest youth employment figures are from the 2015 Labour Market Survey, which found that the unemployment rate for young people aged 15-24 was 32.5 per cent, down from 37.2 in 2014. However, as, the figure hides differences in gender. For males, the youth unemployment rate was 28.6 percent compared to 37.2 percent for females.³³

Further differences between the urban and rural experience emerge as the cohort ages. Whereas the unemployment rate in the agricultural sector falls sharply for the next age cohort (i.e., those aged 25-34) from 23.5 percent to 8.9 percent, in urban labour markets, the rate falls less sharply from 46.4 percent to 25.7 percent.³⁴

²⁷ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, Chapter 6, Table 7.1

²⁸ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, Chapter 4, Table 4.2

²⁹ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, Chapter 4, Table 4.46

³⁰ Statistical yearbook for Armenia 2015, National Statistical Service of Armenia, Table 48

³¹ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, Chapter 4, Table 4.46

³² National Statistical Service of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Table 35

³³ See annex table 5

³⁴ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, Chapter 7, Table 7.18

3. How are the nature and degree of mismatch in the country between skills demand and supply assessed?

There is no centralised labour market information monitoring system and currently the Sector Skills Councils do not currently play a role in anticipating skill needs for specific sectors. There are several means whereby skill needs are anticipated.

Current approaches include:

- labour market ‘barometer’ analyses conducted by the State Employment Agency based on employer surveys and unemployment records;
- annual research carried out by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSI) through interviews with employers to collect qualitative and quantitative information on labour market demand regarding qualifications;
- *ad hoc* surveys by VET institutions, employer associations and, occasionally, international institutions.

Skills relevance is an area of concern among employers. A 2016, ILO survey found that almost 30 percent of employers surveyed thought that school leavers were not generally equipped with the literacy and numeracy skills required by firms in the private sector. Skill shortages negatively affect businesses in the private sector according to more than 70 percent of the surveyed companies.

Only 3.3 percent of the companies said that school leavers were completely equipped or mostly equipped (10.7 percent) with the literacy and numeracy skills required by firms in the private sector. The majority of companies think that the average school leaver applying for work just ‘somewhat’ meets the needs of firms in the private sector (40.7 percent). The main missing competences among school leavers are analytical and conceptual skills (33.7 percent) followed by communication skills (19 percent) and interpersonal skills for 10.3 percent.³⁵

According to ILO survey findings skills shortages have negative effects on new working practices, the introduction of new technologies and the development of new products or services. Skills shortages negatively affect private sector business according to more than 70 percent of companies. Only 4.3 percent of companies think it does not have negative effects on businesses in the private sector.

Current vocational education graduates tend to have specific labour market destinations. 74.8 percent of vocational graduates work as skilled workers, craftspeople or assembly workers. Participation in preliminary VET does not appear to offer graduates a career path, but rather a link to a specific occupational role. This is reflected in data from the labour market report for Armenia, which found that 67 percent of people with a VET qualification felt that their training met the needs of their work³⁶.

Preliminary VET does not seem to lead to participants obtaining a wide range of occupational roles or development opportunities as most preliminary VET graduates worked as craftsman and are able only to perform a narrow specialised activities³⁷. The specific fitness of vocational education to craftsman occupations may reduce the attractiveness of preliminary vocational education to students who may wish to pursue an education that offers broader career opportunities, and to employers who may be seeking employees that are able to perform in a number of roles and to learn new sets of skills over time.

³⁵ The enabling environment for sustainable Enterprises in Armenia- 2016, http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/employment-promotion/small-enterprises/WCMS_465083/lang-en/index.htm

³⁶ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, table 4.25

³⁷ National Statistical Service of Armenia. Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, table 4.20

In addition, the developed state educational standards are based on the needs of the labour market, economy and industry. The Ministry of Education has focussed promoting relevance through closer relations between educational institutions and enterprises, e.g., in the telecommunications and IT areas where the ministry has established a memorandum of co-operation with employers to facilitate the introduction of industry content into curriculum.

The memorandum provides for cooperation between the state and large companies with strategic information and communication technology industry continued, ICT in education to a qualitatively new level. The purpose is to raise the quality of vocational education in the ICT sector, as well as introduce a methodology based on the companies' innovative theoretical and practical knowledge.

4. What career guidance provision is in place for VET students and graduates, for workers, and for unemployed individuals who, for whatever reason, wish to reskill with the help of VET?

Career guidance is becoming more important, with a network of career guidance services developed since 2013 in 22 VET colleges (12 Regional State Colleges and 10 other VET colleges) in cooperation with the Methodological Centre for Professional Orientation under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The approach incorporates a monitoring process to assess the viability of the network. In 2016, the Centre is updating its strategic implementation plan for the period 2016-2020, with key areas of operation to include classroom materials, occupational information, and professional support to establishing websites for career consultants and liaison and marketing. The implementation plan will be linked to Armenia's strategic plans for employment and education. The Centre is also developing a methodology for career coaching, as well as implements training of career counsellors from Higher Education Institutions and Colleges. The Centre developed also a module "Career Management" to be introduced in the curricula of educational institutions.

The Methodological Centre is creating a series of modules that will support the development of career management skills. The modules will focus on employability skills, entrepreneurial skills, how to link with the labour market as well as how to develop employability skills. The package will include 10 modules for career guidance professional. The package has been approved for use in five higher education institutions. From September 2016, discussions are underway with the Ministry of Education to include the modules in VET institutions.

In 2015/2016 the Methodological Centre conducted monitoring and evaluation of career guidance services in VET and general schools. According to the evaluation results, both experiences were positive. The results were discussed in a national forum on career guidance in October 2016 and the elaboration of a national strategy. Career Guidance will continue to enjoy support through the EU Budget Support programme "Better qualification for better job" for 2017-2020. Within this programme, it is expected to introduce an effective system of professional orientation and career guidance. For this purpose, career counsellors will be trained and retrained.

Entrepreneurship Learning

5. Do the VET authorities track self-employment and business creation

In 2012, around 290 000 people were employed by SMEs (making up 24.7 percent of total employment).³⁸ Micro-enterprises make the highest contribution to total employment among SMEs and 40 percent of SME employment is located in the regions. SMEs play a significant employment role, especially in sectors such as construction (accounting for 86 percent of jobs), accommodation and food services (88 percent), leisure (80 percent), trade (66 percent) and processed manufacturing (64 percent).

³⁸ This is a 12 percent increase over 2010, contrasting with a slight decrease in employment overall in Armenia.

The trade and processed manufacturing sectors represent around 29 percent and 13 percent, respectively, of total SME employment.

Entrepreneurial human capital is a strategically important area of development for the Armenian economy and the country has made significant progress since 2010, including, implementing government measures for financial education in upper secondary schools; developing university business co-operation; putting in place policy measures to promote entrepreneurial efforts by women; and supporting SME start-up training. In all these areas, the government has successfully put together its own institutional support systems and resources, and engaged international development assistance in order to achieve faster, more sustainable progress towards these policy targets.

The Ministry of Education and Science is a major player in the implementation of lifelong entrepreneurial learning programmes in Armenia. It has previously developed and approved a “Lifelong Learning Concept” for Armenia, introduced the mandatory subject “Social science”, and implemented by the Junior Achievement of Armenia programme. In the future MoES plans to introduce modules on entrepreneurship in the VET curriculum.

6. Is entrepreneurship as a key competence included in VET schools’ curriculum in integrated learning outcomes format?

Over the last assessment period, the government has moved swiftly to implement elements of key entrepreneurship competence in formal education. “The National Strategy on Financial Literacy Action Plan (2014-2019)” has been adopted and is expected to cover all levels of pre-university education.

The subject of applied economy is offered in secondary schools as an optional introductory course, covering free market relations and the basics of economics, while a course on entrepreneurial and civil learning for young people is also taught. Armenia has structured policy partnership arrangements for the design and implementation of financial education programmes within the formal school system.

The Government is maintaining its focus by introducing a module entrepreneurship key competence across all levels of formal education. Since 2015, the National Centre for Vocational Education and Training Development has initiated the development of a module for entrepreneurship that will become a compulsory model in all vocational education programmes. The module will cover a series of skills relevant to starting a business, e.g., organisation, planning, budgeting, knowledge of law and accounting. The module is intended to be integrated across the curriculum rather than as a stand-alone module.

Integration of entrepreneurial learning outcomes into the national curricula, offering experiential entrepreneurial learning, and teachers training are all important elements of the support system.

7. To the extent that career guidance is available, does it promote entrepreneurial career choice and self-employment of VET graduates?

In 2015 SME Development National Centre’s Start-up business support program with its CEFE methodology adopted and integrated into VET curricula as an entrepreneurial module. SME DNC certified trainers with experts from NCVETD and teachers from VET colleges developed and piloted entrepreneurial modules for VET students from four selected colleges, which prepare graduates for wine, tourism and precise engineering sectors. The designed cooperation involved ToT measures delivered by SME DNC certified trainers for VET teachers who have the comprehensive knowledge, skills and experience for design and developing of the modules and their further transformation into curricula, as well as in preparation and assistance of the students.

Entrepreneurship curricula might cover issues such as generating innovative business ideas, business and strategic planning, finance, marketing, and the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) to achieve better business results. The concept of “entrepreneurial learning” needs further support with strong focus on innovative approaches.

Section 3: Social Inclusion

1. What factors have dominated the social inclusion agenda since the preceding round of the Torino Process, and did they have an impact on VET demand and provision?

The effect of the global economic crisis on poverty in Armenia was dramatic— the national poverty rate increased from 27.6 percent in 2008 to 35.9 percent in 2009 and fell to 30 percent in 2014. About one third of its three million population lives below the poverty line, established at just above USD 90 a month.³⁹

Before the crisis, the bottom 40 percent enjoyed an annual growth in mean consumption of 4.29 percent, which was above the national average of 3.50 percent, but after 2009 their consumption was reduced by 7.54 percent a year – a contraction worse than that of the economy as a whole. Between 2010 and 2014, the mean consumption of the bottom 40 percent grew at 2.86 percent, below the 3.50 percent growth enjoyed by the total population.⁴⁰

The geography of poverty in Armenia shows substantial gaps between the capital city Yerevan (25.6 percent), rural areas (31.7 percent), and other urban areas (39.4 percent). Income from labour markets, in combination with remittances and public transfers – such as well-targeted social expenditure and pensions – have contributed substantially to poverty reduction amidst lower economic growth since 2009.⁴¹ The State Employment Agency (**SEA**) organises CVT for a number of unemployed persons through a competitive process enabling schools to provide CVT. New ALMPs started in 2015 include incentives for both employer and trainee in relation to work- based learning.

The slight fall in the aggregate numbers of informal employment between 2010 to 2014 from 589,400 to 584,400 belies some diversity that may reflect a new trend in the labour force: male informal employment increased slightly (from 288,500 to 302,400) while female informal employment increased more substantially from 147,800 to 187,200; similarly, from 2010 to 2014 informal urban employment's share of the informal labour force rose from 25.1 percent to 32 percent while rural informal employment's share fell from 74.9 percent to 67 percent.⁴²

The incidence of young people not in education, training or employment (NEETs) appears on a downward trend, falling from 44.6 percent of young people aged 15-24 in 2010 to 35.6 percent in 2015. (See annex table 16.11)

As a whole, the long term unemployed constituted 59.4 percent of the unemployed, with the largest part occurring in urban areas rather than rural (88.5 percent compared to 14.5 percent).⁴³ Among the long-term unemployed, the age group 25-34 was the most affected, followed by those aged 35-44 and 45-54. For young people aged 15-24, long-term unemployment constituted 17.6 percent of unemployment in 2014.⁴⁴

In 2014, the inactive population was equal to 36.9 percent of the working age population, which was slightly less than the figure for 2010 when it was 38.7 percent.

In 2014, the largest part of the 804,500 did not seek employment due to family circumstances, followed by students (15.2 percent) and people with disabilities (15 percent). Discouraged workers account for 11.4 percent or approximately 92,000 persons. This group may be more amenable to being returned to the

³⁹ World Bank Country Snapshot, April 2015

⁴⁰ World Bank Country Snapshot, April 2016. This average growth rate included a slightly higher growth in the mean consumption of the bottom 40 percent.

⁴¹ *ibid*

⁴² Statistical yearbook for Armenia 2015, National Statistical Service of Armenia, Table 48

⁴³ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015,

⁴⁴ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, Chapter 7, Unemployment, Table 7.11

labour force, e.g. through better targeted employment services from the State Employment Agency, i.e., through skills and job matching)⁴⁵.

Between 2012 and 2014 within the scope of USAID-funded Livelihood Improvement through Fostering Employment (LIFE) for People with Disabilities Program, Save the Children in cooperation with the Professional Education Reforms NGO worked with 44 TVET institutions of Yerevan, Ararat, Gegharkunik, Lori and Shirak Marzes and ensured the capacity building of 880 teachers and administrative staff in adopting the modern principles of delivering inclusive education and ensuring inclusive environment for students with disabilities.

As a result of the “Fostering Vocational Education in Armenia” component implemented within the LIFE Program around 900 persons with disabilities had a chance to go through either long-term or short-term vocational education courses to acquire marketable vocational skills and more than 200 of them passed their internship at different work settings.

Between 2016 and 2017, people with disabilities are being supported through the Social Innovations for Vocational Education and Employability (SIVVEE) of Young People with Disabilities project being implemented by Save the Children under the funding from the European Commission and in partnership with the Professional Education Reforms NGO. The project closely cooperates with the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Armenia, members of the DPO Network (DPON) and Network of Social Enterprises and Employers (NSEE), established within the scope of LIFE Program as well as Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions.

The Projects’ overall objective is to promote social innovations in the technical vocational education sector in order to create equal employment opportunities and generate shared growth through:

1. Improvement of the access of YPWD to 46 Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions, providing socially innovative and market driven vocational education.
2. Enhancement of the capacity of 5 TVET institutions to pilot social enterprises through a jointly established incubator for scaling up. In terms of the State Employment Agency, services and programmes are well developed and include:
 - Partial salary compensation to the employer if he/she hires non-competitive people, containing two new elements:
 - Promotion of seasonal employment through agricultural support provision;
 - Small entrepreneurship support;
 - Partial salary compensation to the employer hiring people in need for work-place training;
 - Vocational training of unemployed people and those being at risk of dismissal;
 - Support for acquisition of professional experience to those newly entering into labour market by the acquired specialization (positive discrimination towards job-seekers with competences in high demand on the labour market);
 - Support in alternative employment in case of unfilled vacancies (unfilled for more than a month);
 - Organization of job fairs and public paid works.

⁴⁵ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, Chapter 3, Economically inactive persons, table 3.15, 3.18

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is developing and implementing a network integrated services delivery centres. The focus is currently on the regions outside of Yerevan. The centres are designed to link different services from the department that are normally isolated from each other by different organisation routines of administrative practices. The services will co-locate different services in a common location and depending on client needs integrate the different services in a single package of assistance for the client. Presently, these services include community health assistance, disability services assistance, Veterans' affairs support, and assistance. In the future, the services may be extended to include career guidance and employment services. 25 Centres will be developed by the end of 2016 and 50 in total by the end of 2017.

2. What arrangements are in place for promoting and facilitating the access of learners to the system of formal VET provision (including CVET)?

In Armenia the principle of inclusive education was recognised as a primary prerequisite for the state policy, and the system of inclusive education is expected to be introduced in general education sector by 1 August 2025. It is based on the social model, which is followed by pedagogical-psychological support for those who need special education.

On the other hand, the state ensures accreditation of secondary (three levels -12 years) compulsory education in three types of institutions, i.e. general schools, colleges or craftsmanship schools. The efforts and resources related to the introduction of inclusiveness are still directed to the general education, but some activities are being carried out to introduce it in the VET system, too. It requires not only methodological, but also environmental, technical and specialised work activities. The comprehensive model of inclusive education has already been piloted for educational programmes in the region of Tavush.

Between 2014 and 2016, by the recommendation of RA Ministry of Education and Science and RA Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the "Bridge of Hope" NGO has implemented the project "The Right to a Decent Life" with methodological advice and participation of the National Training Fund. Within the frameworks of this project 70 trainers in VET institutions in the region of Tavush have been trained and the skills necessary for the provision of inclusive education have been improved. 50 business sector specialists and VET providers have been trained and acquired methodological skills for providing vocational training (short-term courses) for people with disabilities. Then they provided vocational training for 120 young people on 8 occupations. The aim of the project was to promote the education of people with disabilities and their access to the labour market in the region of Tavush. In the result of the joint work with the specialists, 45 business plans were developed, 4 of which were launched by individual entrepreneurs.

Section 4: Internal Efficiency and VET

Teaching and learning

1. Please describe the mechanism for evaluation and appraisal of teachers and trainers in VET, and the link to their careers.

Qualification requirements for VET teachers and for trainers are increasing, but there is still scope for developing professional development opportunities. Initial education for teachers needs to be enhanced to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary for extended careers. In-service training for VET teachers and trainers is not always fully adapted to their needs, while incentives and opportunities to carry on updating their skills throughout their professional lives could be strengthened. However, teacher training is a continuing key priority of the Government with a range of measures available

2. What are the opportunities and incentives for continuing professional development for teachers and trainers, and how do you assess their effectiveness

As regional activity, six months International Leadership Training (ILT) “Master Trainer in TVET” in Germany has been offered to participants from Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan.

The ILT jointly provided by GIZ Academy for International Cooperation and Otto-von-Guericke University in Magdeburg. Within the training programme the competencies of participants from various institutions were upgraded in the field of TVET. Until the mid of 2017 the participants through developed transfer projects will contribute to work in processes in their sending institutions and act as multipliers to share their knowledge and skills among their colleagues.

Five participants from Armenia are dedicated to pursue their career as future TVET teachers and managers in TVET institutions. They are mandated to and competent to initiate change processes in their TVET institutions, follow through those processes over a longer period of time, and actively display their competencies in a national teacher training system.

3. Are there shortages of VET teachers or trainers in the VET system in your country, and, if so, what are the underlying reasons¹⁴? What is the social status of VET teachers?

The number of teachers in middle vocational education schools increased from 2,961 to 3,270 between 2010 and 2014 with a small increase in the number of teachers with higher education⁴⁶. In preliminary vocational education, the number of teachers also increased (from 822 to 914) but with a small decline in the proportion of teachers with higher education⁴⁷. The number of students graduating in pedagogy declined between 2010/11 and 2014/15 from 918 per year to 501 per year⁴⁸. VET teachers have the lowest salary of the teaching profession when compared to teachers in the secondary education sector and the higher sector and there is potential for a shortage emerging as the current generation teaches retirement age.

⁴⁶ National Statistical Service of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Table 106

⁴⁷ National Statistical Service of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Table 99

⁴⁸ National Statistical service of Armenia Yearbook 2015, 103

4. The methods of teaching and learning in VET. Are there any planned or actual improvements in this area, such as student-centred pedagogy, digital and online learning, group work, project work, collaboration between teachers, practical skills workshops, modelling, problem solving, coaching, application of theoretical knowledge, etc.?

The pre-service training of VET teachers is currently being reformed. The Government has introduced a teacher certification system, complemented by comprehensive professional development policies and rank-based salary differentiations.

Teachers' specialised education (for general education schools) is provided by the State Pedagogical University and a Set of guidelines was approved in relation to hiring, assessing and rewarding / penalising secondary and general school personnel, under the title: "Guidance on assessment and possible replacements / rewards, financial incentives of teachers and school principals".

MoES, NCVETD of the National Institute for Education and the National Training Fund are responsible for the induction of VET teachers. A certification system for educational institutions' directors has been introduced to ensure development of their management capacities. The qualification / profession of 'VET teacher' does not appear in the 2011 Classification of Occupations.

Since 2013, MoES in cooperation with the Methodological Centre for Professional Orientation and with the ETF support has been implementing works targeted to establishment and operationalisation of professional orientation and career guidance centres in 12 Regional State colleges.

With the support of ETF, a 40-hours training for 22 career counsellors from those 12 RSC and 10 other colleges were implemented in 2013-2014.

Within the Save the Children's project "Social Innovations for Vocational Education and Employability of Young People with Disabilities" (LIFE) funded by the USAID, a training programme on professional orientation and career guidance for the people with disabilities was implemented in the Yerevan Regional State colleges № 1 and № 2.

The Methodological Centre for Professional Development has designed a modular programme "Career Management" (approved by the MCPO Board) targeted to the improvement of graduates' competitiveness in the LM and development of self-employment skills. At present introduction of that programme as an optional module in the educational institutions is being discussed.

Within the EU Budget Support Programme for 2017-2019, it is foreseen to establish professional orientation and career guidance centres in all preliminary and middle vocation education institutions.

In the framework of cooperation between the Skolkovo Education Development Centre and ILO, an interactive course was developed with a purpose to increase the quality of VET management and promote the labour market. In 2014, a training of VET system managers, education institution directors was organised in the [Moscow School of Management Skolkovo](#). Then the programme was adapted and translated into Armenian, and experts were trained

In 2015-2016, with use of a computer tool "Managing TVET Institutions" developed by the Moscow Management School "Skolkovo", another training for 65 directors and managers of preliminary and middle vocational institutions from Yerevan and regions was organised

In 2015 MoES and Moscow Management School "Skolkovo" signed a Memorandum of Intentions according to which the School has developed tools targeted to the professional development and strengthening management competences.

The National Centre for Vocational Education and Training Development (NCVETD) of “National Institute of Education” CJSC was established by the decision of National Institute of Education of Ministry of Education and Science in 2008.

The Centre acts under the EU state budget support to Armenia. The mission of NCVETD is to increase the efficiency of preliminary and vocational education and training, including adult education system reforms, to foster its development, international integration, international recognition of awarded certificates and qualifications in the Republic of Armenia.

Between 2008 and 2016 the worked across multiple sectors and focused on four main themes:

METHODOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES

- 167 state educational standards and their respective modular programs and curricula for preliminary and middle vocational professions have been developed,
- 60 educational standards and modular plans have been reviewed after some years of implementation in vocational institutions,
- results monitoring has been implemented in VET schools from 2010-2016,
- 92 manuals and handbooks for preliminary and middle vocational education have been developed and published,
- about 23 surveys, legislative papers and projects on VET sector have been organized and implemented,
- VET reforms results assessment model has been developed and has been implemented in 40 VET schools,
- More than 3000 pages of materials on advanced VET sectors of European countries have been translated into Armenian.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

- Trainings were implemented for more than 9000 experts, trainers, sectorial committee members, VET teachers and masters, directors and deputy directors of VET schools, members of managerial boards and other employees in VET sector were implemented.

PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

- The website www.mkuzak.am has been built and filled with proper information on VET,
- VET portal www.vetarmenia.am has been established to enhance cooperation between VET schools
- 12 numbers of the magazine “Vocational Education” have been published up to now,
- TV programs and social videos have been produced within the PR Package, which were shown on Armenian TV channels and published in the Centre’s website,
- different competitions, round table discussions, expos and other events have been organized within the framework of PR package of NCVETD.

SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- The Republic of Armenia joined “World Skills” international organization in 2012 and NCVETD represents Armenia in this organization. Within the framework of this organization the national competitions were organised in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015. The winners of the national competitions had the opportunity to participate in the competitions of Leipzig, Germany, 2013 and Sao Paulo, Brazil, 2015.
- Cooperation has been established between NCVETD and several local and international organizations such as GIZ, ETF, DVV International, ILO, and the British Council.

Effective teaching and training requires updated vocational and pedagogical skills, as well as transversal skills, such as the ability to work in a team and to cooperate with a variety of professionals (e.g. guidance counsellors, new training professions emerging in enterprises...), public institutions and the world of work. The introduction of methods and tools of distance education, including the application of ICT in VET in Armenia will improve the quality of provided educational services, strengthen social partnership and ensure competitive advantages of VET qualification offers in the labour market.

Training has been conducted with the objective to increase flexibility and quality of educational qualification offers through e-learning and blended learning approaches and their influence on strategical and organizational levels in VET.

Since 2014-2015 human capacity development activities for VET managers and teachers (91 participants) were organized for strategic areas of vocational schools development with focus on social partnership, didactics and instructional design, content development and tutoring.

Fourteen e-courses in a range of sectors, including mechatronics, network administration, web design, accounting in tourism, winemaking, brand development, cooking, hotel management, city tourism management, maintenance of tourism complexes and more.

The formats of the e-courses (online, offline, blended, self-passed, tutored and etc.) were based on developed VET institution strategies and target groups. In 2015-2016 VET institutions were coached in below mentioned directions for successful piloting of developed courses:

- Completion of resources;
- Identification of target group;
- Specification/testing of content;
- Identification of the start and end of pilot course, establishment of a time table;
- Identification of methods and tools of course delivery;
- Organising and supporting meetings with employers.

Between 2015 and 2016, with a financial support from DVV international, the National Training Fund developed and published a guide and manual “Supplementary and Continuing Education” for continuing VET providers. Then the project “The Philosophy for Continuing and Life-long Education as a precondition for strengthening the capacity of the VET sector” has been implemented with a purpose to strengthen the capacity of organising and implementing supplementary educational programmes for VET institutions, business organisations, employment services and other VET stakeholders in accordance with labour market needs, through raising awareness on the existing policy. Within the framework of the project, 210 stakeholders representing the VET providers and social partners in all RA regions have been trained and certified from the.

Learning conditions

5. What have providers and the authorities done to improve the learning and training environment of VET providers?

As part of the EU funded Budget support programme for Armenia, the Ministry of Education and Science has progressively been upgrading equipment and facilities at colleges and schools. New access facilities for disabled students were put in place in 2015 at two colleges. Further construction work are done in seven craft schools in Yerevan and the regions and also in 2015, the Ministry of Education procured new equipment for 17 professions being offered in five craft schools.

6. How do you assess the policy and provision in terms of the learning opportunities in place in VET within a working environment (work-based learning) for both young people and adults? What are the main driving factors and obstacles for work-based learning? Which are the main policy options for work-based learning in VET? What types of work-based learning are most appropriate in the country context, and why?

WBL in Armenia is in embryonic stage and, in general, it functions inefficiently. The internship (praktika) is the only type of WBL widely used by VET colleges. Duration of internship may last from 2 week to one month, depending on the specialization. This situation can be explained by the fact that sectoral associations, social partners and chamber of commerce are not actively involved in VET work-based learning processes and employers are not properly motivated to get involved in vocational education and training processes. However, it should be noted that the Government of Armenia is discussing the opportunities to formalize apprenticeship and to implement apprenticeship programmes in agricultural VET colleges, as pilot programmes, which can promote WBL implementation in formal vocational education and training. These opportunities are also discussed within the framework of EU Budget Support Programme “Better Qualifications for Better Jobs”.

As already mentioned, the only formal work based learning type in Armenia is internship (praktika), which is included in all specialization of VET colleges and universities. Non-formal and informal work-based learning is more typical for Armenian reality. Particularly, these types of work-based learning are common for large enterprises, which may even allow themselves to organize in-house training centres and adopted special procedures of work-based learning to ensure generation change of employees. Non-formal and informal work-based learning is also typical for clinics and hospitals, as well as commercial banks and other financial institutions, which provide special funds for professional development of their employees and interns – ensuring specially designed work-based learning programs. Historically, apprenticeship is also common type of work-based learning; however, it is not counted as formal work-based learning and is used mainly for craftsmanship and it has not relation to formal vocational education and training.

The main types of work-based learning can be found both in IVET and in CVET. In this context, the following types of work-based learning have been studies in Armenia:

1. Formal Apprenticeship/Dual Education
2. On-the-job-learning
3. Informal Apprenticeship
4. Alternance / Cooperative Education
5. Internship (Traineeship, Placement)
6. Virtual Firms (Training Firms)
7. Real Firms attached to VET institutions (companies in schools)

8. Schools in Companies
9. Job Shadowing
10. Work experience as part of career orientation and guidance

Although the cooperation of VET colleges with private sector enterprises does not provide desired results, however recent reforms in VET sector allowed business and employers actively involving in the management of VET colleges through representations in management boards of those colleges. Such cooperation, where private enterprises and VET colleges agree upon formal work-based learning, is mainly typical for 12 regional colleges, where all necessary infrastructure and management settings are in place thanks to EU budget support programmes implemented since 2004. Both career centres and management boards support to the efficient collaboration between VET colleges and businesses. However, this collaboration does not described the overall VET sector and sometimes businesses require financial compensation from VET colleges to implement work-based learning. In such cases, VET colleges decline such requirement and try to find more informal ways for organizing work-based learning, which does not ensure desired results.

Non-formal and informal work-based learning is also typical for clinics and hospitals, as well as commercial banks and other financial institutions, which provide special funds for professional development of their employees and interns – ensuring specially designed work-based learning programs.

Formal apprenticeship can also be implemented and developed in Armenia, if one finds how to motivated employers and businesses to get involved in formal apprenticeship programmes, to find out how WBL is organized and which structures in VET sector and social partners' network are involved in this process of organization. It is very important to reveal which sectors and occupations are more actively involved in work-based learning and what kind of best practices are in place to seed and commence systematized work-based learning practice in these sectors and occupations.

According the study, which aimed at identifying constraints and opportunities of Dual System Elements Implementation in Armenia, the following sectors and occupations are more actively involved in WBL – food processing, metalworking, sewing and garment design, hairdressing, cooking and catering.

The analysis of the abovementioned legislative acts (Labour Code, Law on Education, Law on Preliminary VET and Middle VET, Law on Higher Education and Post-Graduate Education) show that the only regulatory act, which covers WBL issues is the RA Law on Preliminary VET and Middle VET. In that, the legislative definition of WBL is similar to production practice or internship (literal translation), which does not fully reflect the essence and content of WBL according to ETF definitions. The Law on Preliminary and Middle VET defines the principles of public policy in VET sector, socio-economic, organizational and legal relationships of legal and physical entities. The Law defines major terms used in VET, especially it defines the following types of internship or practice (here is the literal translation of the terms): educational or academic internship, educational-production practice, production or industrial internship, technological internship, pre-diploma internship. The law defines that such types of internships or practices are organized on contractual basis with enterprises or businesses. These types of internship are also included in the educational criteria of VET defined by this Law. The Law also defines that both state and government bodies, which are responsible for sectorial policy implementation shall ensure formal internships and production/industrial practices of VET students.

Besides, recent amendments in the article of 201.1 of Labour Code of RA define the mechanisms of learning and training organized by the employer. According to this article, the employer can organize work-based learning at the workplace or outside the workplace for apprentices or new employees with maximum 6-month duration, and it is allowed that employer pays special stipend to this apprentice or new employee

instead of salary/wage. This regulation allows the employer to avoid paying personal income tax, which can be seen as tax incentive for employers.

In summary, the Law on Preliminary and Middle VET provides the basic regulatory premises for WBL implementation, but it lacks concrete mechanisms and by-laws, which will ensure WBL efficient implementation in the real life. Currently, Ministry of Education and Science discusses with respective partners how to define the formal apprenticeship in the law and list the pilot specializations (e.g. agricultural and related specialization), which should be implemented under specially designed apprenticeship programmes.

“Current Situation Analysis of Constraints and Opportunities of Dual System Elements Implementation in Armenia”, emphasises the embryonic forms of WBL efficient implementation in the training courses organized by means of State Employment Agency (such trainings are financed by state budget) for job seekers. VET colleges actively participate in such tenders, win and successfully implement those trainings, part of which can be classified as WBL, because such trainings are conducted together with businesses and implemented directly on job places.

There have also been changes in the incidence of work-based learning provided outside the public vocational sector. According to a national survey of middle and large size companies offering vocational training, the number of trainees increased from 16,411 in 2010 to 20,055 in 2014. Most of this training was provided in the workplace rather than in an educational institution 69 percent of recipients in 2014 as against 64 percent in 2010. Males were the largest recipients with 63.5 percent of trainees as against 36.4 percent of women in 2010 and 59.6 percent of men in 2014 and 40.4 percent of women in 2014. Of those who received training, 27 percent were under 30 in 2010, however, this increased to 38.5 percent.

The figures for males under 30 receiving training was largely stable between 2010 and 2014 (from 15.7 percent to 17.8 percent), but the figures for women under 30 increased more sharply from 11.5 percent in 2010 to 17.5 percent in 2014. The training was mainly related to upgrading existing qualifications and requalifying existing workers, rather than developing new qualifications in a related profession.⁴⁹

Apprenticeships were only small element of this work-based learning constituting 3 percent in 2013 and 2 percent in 2014.⁵⁰

From the total number of companies surveyed by the ILO⁵¹, 56.7 percent do not have a department or a person responsible for training and 64.3 percent of companies do not have a training budget compared to only 15.7 percent that do. Regarding the financing of training, 64.3 percent of companies do not have a training budget compared to only 7.3 percent that do. Most of the companies do not undertake regular need analysis (57 percent), 13 percent undertake it and 5 percent plan to do it in the future. Ultimately, half of the companies said that there were no government-funded trainings available to firms, in contrast to 8 percent that said such trainings were available, 4 percent believe such trainings will be available in the future.⁵²

Internship has the following general characteristics:

- Nature: compulsory internship (“praktika”) as part of VET curricula
- Incentives for company: No incentive,

⁴⁹ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, Table 9.1

⁵⁰ National Statistical Service of Armenia Labour market in the Republic of Armenia, 2015, Table 9.2

⁵¹ The enabling environment for sustainable Enterprises in Armenia- 2016

http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/employment-promotion/small-enterprises/WCMS_465083/lang-en/index.htm

⁵² The enabling environment for sustainable Enterprises in Armenia- 2016

http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/employment-promotion/small-enterprises/WCMS_465083/lang-en/index.htm

- Payments to learners: No payment,
- Monitoring of learning: Foreseen visits of VET teachers.

In the period 2017-2020, Armenia will develop an updated apprenticeship system, initially based on agricultural professions and then in other sectors.

Quality assurance

7. How do you assess the availability and adequacy of quality assurance arrangements, measures and practices at central and provider.

The Armenian National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance (**ANQA**) which was established in 2008 and became operational in March 2009, is responsible for both VET and HE. The criteria of external quality evaluation developed by the Centre were approved by the Government in 2011 as criteria for accreditation of professional⁵³ education. In the same year Regulation on the state accreditation of educational institutions implementing professional education and the professions (curricula) offered by them, was also approved.

So far ANQA has mainly concentrated on higher education, however, since 2014 a new phase of cooperation with VET institutions has been commenced. During 2014, meetings and discussions with the managers of the 12 Regional State Colleges were organised, a feedback on the applicability and the experience on implementation of the accreditation standards and criteria was ensured.

In 2005 ANQA organised and carried out trainings for employers of the Regional State Colleges on the topic of internal quality assurance and expertise. In the result, in the 12 RSCs officers responsible for internal quality assurance were appointed. They implemented self-analysis of their institutions in 2016. At present a process of mutual assessment is being piloted in those 12 colleges.

In addition to the RSCs, employers of other 32 colleges were trained on the topic of “Introduction and development of internal qualification system.

Since 2015, the Ministry of Education and Science has been implementing a model for a sector wide VET planning and performance management system, and providing trainings developed based on that model.

In order to establish partnership, to promote development of educational and cultural relations, regional educational networks of public VET institutions were established in the regions led by the 12 regional centres of excellences. Bilateral and trilateral cooperation agreements were signed between 35 preliminary and middle VET institutions. The measures related to the management and operations of the regional networks which are defined in those agreements were included in the business plans of the 12 Regional VET centres, and they periodically submit reports on the above measures networks. A “Vocational Education and Training” portal (www.vetarmenia.am) was established as an e-tool for serving the educational networks and launched in 2015.

The process is targeting quality of management, teaching, cooperation with local employers, performance management systems, and implementation of training in each college and school. The 12 regional colleges connect with international partner institutions for student exchanges, exchange of materials and approaches. The twelve regional colleges now provide counselling on career development and student professional orientation.

⁵³ Includes both VET and HE.

These centres will co-operate with the VET colleges and institutions in the region (Marzes) and will act as mechanism for the exchange of information, materials and practices. The network has the potential to accelerate the implementation of the modernisation process – both in terms of planning and delivery.

Learning outcomes

- 8. Please outline the ways in which the quality of learning outcomes of VET students, in particular key competences as defined in national regulations and strategies, are being evaluated and assessed, in both IVET and CVET. Is there scope for improvement of assessment arrangements and practices? Where available, what do the results of these evaluations and assessments suggest about the quality of outcomes currently produced by the VET system?***

The orientation of curricula content and assessment is towards an outcomes based approach. NCVETD in co-operation with Sectoral Committees (SC) has developed nearly 160 competence-based training standards according to the labour market requirements. The standards are organised in learning modules with learning outcomes and performance criteria and are structured on the basis of general subjects, core skills, and general vocational skills for the sector and specialised vocational skills for the profession, including theory and practice.

The National Centre for Labour and Social Research (NCLSR), which has been involved in re-defining 160 occupational profiles, participates in SSC meetings, which should ensure that future occupational profiles would form the basis for the development of qualification standards by NCVETD.

In terms of content and vocational focus, arts and design subjects are declining in Middle VET, while economics, machine technologies and services are increasing⁵⁴. One of the biggest changes has been an increase in IT graduates from 68 to 228 over the four years. In middle level VET, the increases have been in economics and the decline in pedagogy.⁵⁵

Qualification Frameworks

- 9. Is there a national qualification framework (NQF) in place?***

The Armenian proposal was adopted in 2011 regarding an NQF that closely mirrors the structure of the European Qualifications Framework. Development of the NQF is underway but progress is slower than anticipated. A stronger degree of agency coordination is required to advance the NQF, develop assessment tools, develop sectoral frameworks, support the involvement of stakeholders and organise training for capacity building.

Establishment regulations govern Armenian National Qualifications Framework (ANQF) – related developments. The ANQF (adopted in 2011) follows the structure of EQF and Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) assess & validate qualification standards. The social partners along with MoES, NCVETD and VET institutions are responsible for the revision of qualifications as part of the implementation of the ANQF.

MoES has recently set up a working group to review the national classification of qualifications. Piloting of a Credit System for VET starting from the school year 2014-2015 has taken place in some Regional State Colleges

In 2015, the Government approved the procedures for continuing vocational training and the validation of non-formal and informal learning. According to the above mentioned decree, RA Ministry of Education and Science was assigned to develop the procedure for keeping national training records and input it in an available electronic system.

⁵⁴ National Statistical Service of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Table 102

⁵⁵ National Statistical Service of Armenia, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Table 103

The National Training Fund (NTF) will implement the system of validation (assessment and recognition) of non-formal and informal learning outcomes. The NTF is developing an implementation plan that will draw resources mainly from international organisations, and the private sector and on a fee for service basis. The NTF requires resources and if it is to realise its potential, partnerships need work in partnership, e.g., with the network of VET colleges, employers' organisations and the State Employment Agency. Considerable scope also exists to link the system with migration services⁵⁶.

The decision contains significant potential to promote further participation in training and recognition of skills and the growth of a new dimension of the VET system.

The policy implemented by the Ministry of Education ensures pathways from general education to preliminary and middle VET in terms of the skills, slight opportunities for permeability. Middle VET enrolments were constant in 2014 whereas preliminary VET enrolment increased, reflecting a slight upward trend that commenced in 2009.

The national qualification framework was revised and updated in 2016 with new definitions for each level. The framework has 8 levels and follows the European Qualification Framework model. Each level is based on knowledge, skills and competencies. The framework is a generic framework and is intended to cover all levels of education. According to the new framework, the levels of VET are defined as follows:

- 3rd level of NQF - Preliminary VET without Secondary General Education (without Matura);
- 4th level of NQF - Preliminary VET with Secondary General Education (with Matura)⁵⁷;
- 5th level of NQF - Middle VET⁵⁸.

Each sector is expected to develop its own framework that will fit into the generic national framework. The Higher Education sector is expected to follow the framework for qualifications in the European Higher Education Area.

Programmes in the vocational education are developed based on learning outcomes. A stakeholder working group identifies a qualification specification that contains the knowledge, skills and competencies for the vocational area. From the specification a vocational package that includes a skills profile, assessment criteria and a curriculum outline. Employers are involved at the development level through participation in the stakeholder working groups; at the strategic level, employers are involved through the National Council on Vocational Education.

Presently the qualification framework process is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Education and Science. In the future as the framework develops the framework may be managed by a specialised agency.

⁵⁶ The system of validation of non-formal and informal learning was identified as a Migration Support Service (MISMES) in the report developed by ETF for Armenia as a part of the EaP process.

⁵⁷ The Secondary General Education (Matura) refers to the same level.

⁵⁸ Includes Matura *a priori*.

Section 5: Governance and Finance

1. Has there been any change in the distribution of functions and responsibilities for governing the VET system since the preceding round of the Torino Process? If yes, what are the changes and why were they necessary?

Institutionally, the trend continues to be towards European models of education management and policy.

The governance structure for vocational education underwent significant changes between 2010 and 2014. Reform initiatives include adapting national governance structures so as to ensure more coherent policymaking and monitoring, e.g., since 2012, the Ministry of Education has consolidated policy coordination by taking over responsibility for VET from the Ministries of Agriculture, Energy, Culture and Health and by bringing VET schools into a single VET structure.

Whereas in the past vocational institutions were managed by the line department responsible each vocational sector, the VET Department within the MoES is now responsible for defining the vision and strategy of VET and for monitoring national VET policies. The MoES is also in charge of the network of providers and of planning, along with the Ministry of Finance, budget for vocational schools.

The National Council for VET Development was set up to provide advice to the MoES, thereby facilitating the preparation of VET sector development programmes, promoting the effectiveness of reforms implementation in the sector and further deepening social partnership.

A National Centre for VET Development is responsible for methodological reforms, development of modular state educational standards and corresponding curricula and teacher training. The NCVETD sends reports to the MoES twice a year and submits reports to the National Council at the end of each year.

The MoES is also in charge of the network of providers and of planning, along with the Ministry of Finance, budget for vocational schools.

The MoES has overall accountability and submits quarterly, semi-annual and annual reports to the Government.

The main pieces of legislation in relation to VET are:

- Law on Education;
- Law on Preliminary and Middle VET;
- Law on Licensing;
- Law on State Non-commercial Organisations;
- Law on language;
- The Civil Code, and
- The Labour code.

The 2005 Law on Preliminary Vocational (Craftsmanship) and Middle Vocational Education, and the corresponding strategy, were developed to create a system for producing qualified specialists to meet the needs of the economy and the labour market.

1. Law on Preliminary Vocational (Craftsmanship) and Middle Vocational Education (2005):

- Definition of practice in enterprises,
- Description of several types of internships: educational or academic internship, educational-production practice, production or industrial internship, technological internship, pre-diploma internship.
- Obligation for State and government bodies responsible for sectorial policy implementation to ensure formal internships and production/industrial practices of VET students

2. Labour Code (2004):

- Possibility to organise work-based learning at the workplace or outside the workplace for apprentices or new employees for up to 6-months, with the payment of special fee to this apprentice or new employee instead of salary/wage, – this allows the employer to avoid paying personal income tax.

In addition, the following legal acts were adopted in the past two years:

- Regulation on the organisation of certification exams for acquiring preliminary vocational (craftsmanship) and middle vocational educational institutions management right, on certification, on formation and operation of the certification committee.
- Regulation on selection of organisation providing training for acquiring preliminary vocational (craftsmanship) and middle vocational educational institutions management right and on training procedures.
- Regulation on the (re-)training of the teachers and practical trainers of the educational institutions implementing preliminary vocational (craftsmanship) and middle vocational educational programmes.
- Regulation on the election of the directors of preliminary vocational (craftsmanship) and middle vocational education institution.
- The exemplary procedure for implementation of credit system in the sphere of preliminary vocational (craftsmanship) and middle vocational education (it has already been piloted for certain qualifications).
- Regulation on the organisation and implementation of additional educational programmes (Continuing education and training) and for the assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes.

The lists of VET professions (qualifications) have been reviewed (approved by the Government in 2015) in correspondence with the labour market needs, National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the UNESCO classification (ISCED).

2. How do you assess the level of autonomy at provider level? For example, are providers free to shape the curriculum, take funding decisions, decide on the allocation of funding, design assessments, and take staffing decisions?

VET institutions have shared autonomy with MoES e.g., enrolment in an institution is based on MoES orders drawing on the state quota system that defines enrolment rates for VET and higher education. Regional colleges develop 3-year business plans and coordinate their own market research at all regional colleges.

A college is licensed by MoES for the delivery of training for a specific profile. License is provided based on evidence about, for example, teachers' competence, facilities, and labour market demand for qualifications.

The collegial management bodies of the educational institutions, i.e. Management boards comprising teachers, students' representatives, social partners' organisations, local institutions, employment offices, etc., operate with variable effectiveness in all VET colleges. Employers co-operate, whenever possible, in the organisation of practices and participate in the final examination where they assess students' practical knowledge.

The State Inspectorate of Education of the Republic of Armenia, in the cases foreseen by the law, carries out oversight functions and monitoring in the sphere of general and preliminary vocational education, controls and monitors implementation of educational policy, programs, and educational standards.

The state educational standards (SES) for craftsmanship and middle vocational education sector are to ensure:

- 1) VET quality and bases for its evaluation,
- 2) uniformity of vocational educational policy in the territory of the Republic of Armenia,
- 3) comparability and adequacy of bases for mutual recognition of VET qualifications and graduation documents with foreign countries.

The Standards include:

- 1) general requirements to the basic (initial) VET programmes,
- 2) requirements to mandatory minimum content of basic (initial) VET programme, their implementation conditions, including theoretical teaching, class-, field- and pre-graduation practices and forms of overall attestation of graduates, level of preparation of graduates by each speciality,
- 3) timelines of organisation of educational process within basic (initial) VET programmes; and the number of credits (in case of availability of the credit system),
- 4) Minimum and maximum educational load of the learners.

MoES authorisation and licensing standards define minimum requirements for the teaching and learning environments for the VET providers.

As regards planning, enrolment in VET is based on the number of free of charge seats issued by the Government, which takes into consideration school capacities and information on possible labour market demand received by other institutions such as Ministry of Labour and the State Employment Agency.

The National VET Council provides supervision and guidance in relation to these activities. A network of sector skills councils is gradually being developed to support the Ministry of Education with planning and to link the education sector more closely to the business community

- 3. How do you assess the coordination of state actors in defining and implementing VET vision and policy, ensuring VET relevance and effectiveness?**
- 4. How do you assess the participation and contribution of non-state actors (social partners, employers, civil society, and teacher and student organisations) in and to the governance of the VET system and the shaping of VET policy? For example, is the participation regular and formalised, for instance through sector/regional skill councils or other coordination mechanisms?**

Alternatively, is it informal and ad hoc in specific thematic areas/projects? Overall, are there incentives, whether financial or otherwise, for participation by non-state actors?

In Armenia, the foundations for effective social dialogue are in place, i.e., there is a legal framework regulating collective bargaining and tripartite consultation and a Tripartite Commission for consultation between the government and the social partners. The national tripartite agreement was renewed in 2012.

In the VET sector, social dialogue is well defined in the official documents, and the participation of social partners in working groups and advisory boards is ensured to meet this requirement. Social partners' representatives participate in the meetings of the National Council for VET, which is a tripartite structure, and sit on the governing boards of VET colleges. Sectoral Committees are involved in the approval and validation of qualification standards.

Further, social partners' organisations such as the Republican Union of Employers of Armenia and the Chamber of Commerce continue to participate actively in all activities organised at central and local level, and appoint their representatives to the Sector Skills Councils. There is therefore a system of social partnership, but the continuing challenges of improving the link between business and skill suggest that scope exist for reviewing the current arrangements. A reviewed concept of social partnership in VET would improve the capacity of the system to achieve its development objectives.

The Sectoral Committees are responsible for reviewing and validating the educational standards. The National Institute for Labour and Social Research (NILSR) is assessing social needs by interviewing 1,000 households. It has been involved in redefining 120 job profiles, and the decision on the roles to be re-examined was based on NILSR's research on labour market needs. NILSR has started working with MoES and attends sector skills council meetings. This should make sure that future occupational profiles act as the basis for qualification standards upheld by NCVETD

To support participation in VET, public information campaigns have been developed, through radio and TV programs, the development of promotional advertisements, video materials for broadcast as well as development and distribution of information material are also ongoing.

Marketing of new VET programmes is closely linked with modernised renovated facilities and modernised equipment. On regional college level, brochures and other promotional materials are available and widely distributed. As for 12 Regional VET colleges, cooperation with employers is extensive mainly through internships and college management board activities.

5. How do you assess the distribution of functions and responsibilities for shaping and implementing VET between state and non-state actors? Is it adequate, transparent and clear to all involved, without overlaps or gaps in responsibilities? In particular, is the distribution of responsibilities adequate to meet the expectations of VET as laid down in the strategic documents referred to in Building Block A?

VET governance in Armenia is a mixed centralised system with strong leadership from the government and progress towards a more participatory approach. At national level, MoES is in charge of preliminary (craftsmanship), middle VET and continuing education, and so mainly responsible for education. NCVETD is responsible for methodological reforms, and for developing standards, modular curricula and teacher training.

VET legislation and new reforms are discussed at National Council for VET development meetings. To make VET more effective and more relevant to regional and local needs, management boards operate in all VET colleges, comprising representatives from the student body, social partner organisations, local self-governance bodies, employment offices and other stakeholders. The boards approve budgets, strategic programmes, and tuition fees, and elect a director. According to the constitutions of the educational

institutions, they meet at least four times a year, and their effectiveness seems to depend on the personality and dedication of the director, who is the key player in terms of fostering motivation and commitment in everyone involved.

Can you identify which sectors of the economy are most active in the shaping of and participation in the planning and implementation of skills provision through VET?

Several sectors are strong in participation in VET. Prominent sectors include, agriculture, retail, tourism, and information technology.

6. How do you assess the distribution of roles and responsibilities for the implementation of VET across governance levels? Is the cooperation between national, regional, sectoral and provider level of governance effective? For example, does it lead to result-oriented dialogue and coordination between levels?

There is a system of intra-departmental and inter-ministerial accountability. But there are no mechanisms for assessing institutions' performance. The Armenian National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA) has taken the first steps to defining quality assessment standards and criteria. Focusing on higher education, it has defined a three-step process: self-assessment; external assessment; and a written report.

Four groups of institutions/major players, who can influence on WBL implementation either in policy-making level or in implementation level are (1) Policy makers and Strategy Implementers, (2) Vocational Education and Training Providers, (3) Employers, Social Partners and other Stakeholders and (4) International Donor Organizations.

The structure of the mentioned groups is presented as follows:

Policy Makers and Strategy Implementers:

- ✓ Ministry of Education and Science
- ✓ Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- ✓ State Employment Agency
- ✓ National Centre for VET Development

Vocational Education and Training Providers:

- ✓ VET Colleges
- ✓ Private training agencies
- ✓ Large enterprises

Social Partners and other stakeholders:

- ✓ Sectoral committees (Similar to Sector Skills Councils)
- ✓ Republican Union of Employers of Armenia
- ✓ Chamber of Commerce of Armenia
- ✓ Confederation of Trade Unions

International Donor Organizations:

- ✓ EU Delegation

- ✓ European Training Fund
- ✓ UNDP Armenia
- ✓ UNIDO,
- ✓ GIZ,
- ✓ ILO
- ✓ Other International Donors

7. How do you assess the participation in VET governance of sectors and stakeholders at local level (sub-regions, municipalities, communities)? Is there a policy of proactive support of partnerships for development of skills at local level?

8. Is public–private partnership promoted? Which tools and mechanisms are in place? Are there incentives for public–private partnership at local, provider, sectoral and national levels?
Financing of VET

As the result of cooperation between the government and the private sector an emerging “WorldSkills Armenia” model was designed and may implement continuous reforms in VET and have its significant input in the economy ensuring growth of competitiveness and promoting harmonious development, both, at national and international level.

By support from GIZ since 2012 Armenia became associated member of WSI and successfully participated with a team of chosen professionals at the international competition WorldSkills 2013 in Leipzig, Germany and WorldSkills 2015 in Sao Paolo. Since 2016 Armenia became the full member of WS International, the membership was paid from state budget. The further steps for implementation of the WSA model were ordered by Minister of Education and Science.

The support and advice to WorldSkills Armenia (WSA) was focused not only on preparation and participation at the international competitions, but also on the adaptation of achieved results into Armenian VET standards afterwards. Further development of WSA model and its functions serves as potential platform between government and the private sector with regard to the further modernization of VET qualifications based on WSI criteria and standards and improvement of Armenian VET image on the international level. The aim of WSA is act as centralized body, without specific economic interests and with the clear goal to promote different vocational professions and their importance for the national economy in selected sectors.

The preparation phase and participation WorldSkills Armenia (WSA) Team in WorldSkills International 42nd and 43rd Competitions Trade Experts involved jointly the National Center for VET Development (NCVETD) with revised State Educational Standards (SES), curriculums and modules for “Jewellery”, “Network Administration”, “Cooking”, “Web Design” and “Mechatronics”. The SESs were revised based on WS International skills technical descriptors and assessment mechanisms by Private Sector Experts, who participated in whole process. The revision was organized and done by NCVETD budget and changes were implemented in colleges from February, 2016.

9. Do resource shortages influence the findings presented in the previous sections of this report?
Are the allocation decisions for VET consistent with the policy reform objectives for VET?

The main source for VET financing is the state budget. Middle VET has been financed also privately (through enrolment fees), and international donors are also important. Donors have helped improve the system. The EU donated around EUR 40 million from 2007 to 2015. EU help has focused on innovation, and on refurbishing colleges which have gone on to become models for developing the system nationwide. EU

support has also included technical help for preliminary VET schools, and funding to validate non-formal and informal learning and career guidance, among other initiatives. Until 2013, the United Nations Development Programme helped VET reform through support from the Danish Government.

MoES plans the budgets for vocational schools. But VET institutions are in charge of managing school budgets. So they have some autonomy for allocating funding. Also, as middle VET has until now been also privately financed, college principals have had autonomy in employing teachers, using student numbers as their main criterion.

Budget Costs 2014-21018 (AMD Millions)⁵⁹

			Mid Term Projected Costs		
Education	Cost 2014	Cost 2015	Cost 2016	2017	Cost 2018
Total	115004.1	124605.3	129428.0	134463.1	140202.0
Middle and Preliminary VET Education	7458.5	11365.5	11378.4	13051.6	14293.9

In the 2015-2016 academic year, the 97.9 percent of students enrolled in State Preliminary professional education institutions and about 52 percent of those in Middle level professional education institutions were studying without tuition fees⁶⁰.

With the extension of free compulsory education from 9 to 12 years, all IVET will be financed accordingly by the State budget for students enrolled in the education and training system after basic general education. Middle VET has been until now mainly privately financed through enrolment fees. Funding is on a per capita basis. When compared with 2010, the state budget (2014) for preliminary VET has increased by 49 percent and by 96 percent for middle VET (since 2012, the number of free seats in educational institutions providing middle VET programmes has increased by 50 percent).⁶¹

There is no special financial or non-financial incentives for employers to ensure their involvement in WBL schemes. The only tax incentive for employers to get involved in WBL schemes is stipulated in recent amendments in the article of 201.1 of Labour Code of RA. This article defines the mechanisms of learning and training organized by the employer. According to this article, the employer can organize work-based learning at the workplace or outside the workplace for apprentices or new employees with maximum 6-month duration, and it is allowed that employer pays special stipend the apprentice or new employee instead of salary/wage. This regulation allows the employer to avoid paying personal income tax, which can be seen as tax incentive for employers.

⁵⁹ Ministry of Education of RA, 2016

⁶⁰ Ministry of Education of RA, 2016

⁶¹ Ministry of Education of RA, 2016

Annex 1. TRP 2016-17, statistical annex⁶²

TRP16.01 Activity rate age group 15–64, by sex [%]

Age	Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
15-64	Total	61.6	64.1	66.0	65.5	66.4	65.6	65.1
15-64	Male	71.3	75.2	75.3	74.7	74.9	75.3	74.7
15-64	Female	53.5	54.9	58.4	58.0	59.3	57.9	57.3

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

Notes: ETF calculations

Age	Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
15-75	Total	59.2	61.2	63.0	62.7	63.4	63.1	62.5
15-75	Male	69.0	72.3	72.7	72.1	72.8	73.2	72.6
15-75	Female	51.0	52.2	55.3	55.2	55.9	55.2	54.3

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

Age	Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
20-64	Total	69.5	71.6	72.6	71.8	72.2	71.4	70.0
20-64	Male	81.7	85.8	84.1	83.0	83.2	82.9	81.5
20-64	Female	59.4	60.2	63.4	63.1	72.2	62.4	60.8

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

Notes: ETF calculations

TRP16.02 Employment rate age group 20–64, by sex [%]

Age	Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
20-64	Total	57.0	57.9	59.1	59.3	60.3	58.7	56.7
20-64	Male	68.2	71.2	69.5	69.3	71.2	69.6	66.9
20-64	Female	47.8	47.3	50.7	51.4	51.8	50.3	48.7

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

Notes: ETF calculations

⁶² Last update 05/12/2016, when the ETF internal peer review of the report took place.

Age	Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
15-75	Total	48.1	49.6	51.4	51.9	53.2	52.0	50.9
15-75	Male	56.7	59.9	60.1	60.2	62.3	61.6	59.8
15-75	Female	40.9	41.1	44.4	45.2	45.8	44.5	43.8

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

TRP16.03 Employment rate of recent graduates (age group 20–34) by sex and programme orientation [%]

Missing data

TRP16.04 Unemployment rate (age group 15–64 or 15+) by sex [%]

Age	Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
15-75	Total	18.7	19.0	18.4	17.3	16.2	17.6	18.5
15-75	Male	17.8	17.0	17.3	16.5	14.4	15.8	17.6
15-75	Female	19.8	21.2	19.6	18.2	18.1	19.5	19.5

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

Age	Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
15-64	Total	19.6	19.8	19.3	17.9	16.9	18.1	19.1
15-64	Male	18.4	17.6	17.9	16.8	14.9	16.3	18.1
15-64	Female	21.0	22.3	20.6	19.1	18.8	20.1	20.1

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

Notes: ETF calculations

TRP16.05 Youth unemployment rate (age group 15–24) by sex [%]

Age	Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
15-24	Total	40.9	38.9	39.2	35.4	36.1	37.2	32.5
15-24	Male	36.0	31.9	34.9	31.5	31.8	30.7	28.6
15-24	Female	47.1	48.0	44.9	40.7	41.5	44.9	37.2

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

TRP16.06 Youth unemployment ratio (age group 15–24) by sex [%]

Age	Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
15-24	Total	13.0	13.3	14.6	12.5	13.2	14.1	12.9
15-24	Male	13.2	12.7	15.1	13.1	12.8	13.2	12.7
15-24	Female	12.8	13.8	14.1	12.0	13.5	14.9	13.2

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

Notes: ETF calculations

TRP16.07 Participation in training/lifelong learning (age group 25–64) by sex [%]

Missing data

TRP16.08 Tertiary educational attainment (age group 30–34) by sex [%]

Age	Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
30-34	Total	23.5	21.7	25.3	26.5	29.8	30.7	30.6
30-34	Male	21.5	19.3	25.0	26.6	28.6	29.5	28.3
30-34	Female	25.2	21.7	25.3	26.4	30.9	31.8	32.6

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

Age	Sex	2011
30-34	Total	27.8
30-34	Male	26.9
30-34	Female	28.7

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Census 2011

TRP16.09 Low achievers in PISA (15-year-olds) by programme orientation [%]

Not Applicable

TRP16.10 Early leavers from education (age group 18–24) by sex [%]

Missing data

TRP16.11 Persons not in employment, education or training (NEETs) (age group 15–24) by sex [%]

Age	Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
15-24	Total	47.0	44.6	42.1	36.8	37.2	38.0	35.6
15-24	Male	52.6	41.8	39.4	34.3	34.9	37.5	36.4
15-24	Female	42.6	47.3	44.7	39.3	39.6	38.5	34.8

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

Notes: Participation in education in the week prior to the survey is considered.

TRP16.12 Students in vocational programmes as a percentage of total upper secondary students by sex [%]

Sex	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	13.0	15.1	23.3	24.4	22.8	25.7	M.D.
Male	15.9	18.7	27.4	28.5	26.6	29.2	M.D.
Female	9.9	11.3	19.1	20.3	18.9	22.2	M.D.

Source: Unesco Institute of Statistics

TRP16.13 Students in combined work- and school-based training (total and as a percentage of total upper secondary students) by sex [%]

Missing data

TRP16.14 Educational attainment of active population (aged 25–64) [%]

Age	Educ. level	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total							
15-75	Low	8.2	7.8	7.5	6.6	4.1	5.1
15-75	Medium	68.9	66.8	67.1	66.8	65.2	66.0
15-75	High	22.9	25.4	25.4	26.6	30.7	28.8
Male							
15-75	Low	9.6	9.1	8.8	8.6	4.9	6.3
15-75	Medium	69.4	67.1	67.2	65.7	66.3	66.8
15-75	High	21.0	23.8	24.0	25.7	28.8	26.9
Female							
15-75	Low	6.7	6.4	6.2	4.6	3.3	3.9
15-75	Medium	68.4	66.4	66.9	67.8	64.0	65.2
15-75	High	24.9	27.2	26.9	27.6	32.6	30.9

Source: National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey

Notes: ETF calculations

TRP16.15a Public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP [%]

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	3.84	3.25	3.14	3.07	2.65	2.24	M.D.

Source: Unesco Institute of Statistics

TRP16.15b Public expenditure on education as a percentage of or as a percentage of total public expenditure)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	13.45	12.40	12.59	13.70	11.14	9.37	M.D.

Source: *Unesco Institute of Statistics*

TRP16.16 Proportion of teachers who have followed CPD in the last 12 months [%]

Missing data

TRP16.17 Total population, as of the beginning of the year

	2009	2010	2011*	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	3076851	3055236	3018900	3021376	3026879	3017079	3010598	2998577
Male	1476396	1465845	1448100	1449473	1451645	1443497	1439148	1429042
Female	1600455	1589391	1570800	1571903	1575233	1573582	1571450	1569535

Source: *National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia*

*According to the Population Censuses.

TRP16.18 Relative size of youth population (age group 15–24) [%]

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	26.9	26.7	24.4	23.8	22.0	22.2	21.2

Source: *National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia*

Notes: *ETF calculations (on LFS)*

TRP16.20 Incidence of self-employment [%]

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	43.2	43.1	44.4	43.5	42.8	44.2	42.8

Source: *National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia; Labour Force Survey*

TRP16.21 Skill gaps [%]

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total	22.9	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	6.4	M.D.	M.D.

Source: *OECD Statistical Database*

Annex 2. Benchmarking

EU2020 targets in education and employment		ARMENIA		EUROPEAN UNION		EU 2020 objectives
		2010	2015	2010	2015	
Headline targets	Early leavers from education and training (% aged 18-24)	m	m	13.9	11	< 10
	Tertiary education attainment (% aged 30-34)	21.7	30.6	33.8	38.7	≥ 40
	Employment rate (% aged 20-64)	57.9c	56.7c	68.6	70.1	≥ 75
Other targets	Lifelong learning (% aged 25-64)	m	m	9.1	10.7	≥ 15
	Underachievement (% aged 15)	Reading		a	a	< 15
		Mathematics		a	a	< 15
		Science		a	a	< 15
	Employment rate of recent graduates (% aged 20-34)	m	m	77.4	76.9	≥ 82

Sources: Eurostat - online database; OECD PISA database, National Statistical Service of Armenia

Notes:

a: not applicable

c: ETF calculation

m: missing data

Underachievement data for 2010 refers to 2009

Annex 3. Process assessment report

Country	Republic of Armenia																				
National coordinator	Armenuhi Poghosyan, Torino Process coordinator for Armenia, Head of the policy and strategy development of primary and secondary vocational education division at the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Education and Science.																				
Country desk	Vincent McBride																				
Working group members	Mr Ashot Arshakyan /Ms Armine Poghosyan Ministry of Education Director Dr Arman Sargsyan National Institute of Labour and Social Research Mr. Gagik Makaryan Chairman Republican Union of Employers of Armenia Women's Entrepreneurship Network of Armenia Tatevik Gasparyan Director National Centre for Vocational Education And Training Development State Employment Agency Mr. Vahagn Hovhannisyan National Statistics office																				
Process implementation	<p>The TRP in Armenia has been implemented with a mixed ETF led and country self-assessment approach under the coordination of the Ministry of Education, with the following activities and schedule:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">2016</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>February</td><td>Training for TRP coordinators in Torino</td></tr> <tr> <td>April</td><td>Launching event in Yerevan</td></tr> <tr> <td>April-May</td><td>Data and info collection</td></tr> <tr> <td>August</td><td>First draft of the report</td></tr> <tr> <td>September</td><td>Consultation on First Draft</td></tr> <tr> <td>September</td><td>ETF peer review Second draft of the report with integration of ETF peer review comments</td></tr> <tr> <td>October</td><td>Translation into Armenian Formal validation event in Yerevan</td></tr> <tr> <td>November</td><td>Regional validation in Tbilisi Finalisation of the report in Armenian and English</td></tr> <tr> <td>February</td><td>Finalisation of Report by Country Desk</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	2016		February	Training for TRP coordinators in Torino	April	Launching event in Yerevan	April-May	Data and info collection	August	First draft of the report	September	Consultation on First Draft	September	ETF peer review Second draft of the report with integration of ETF peer review comments	October	Translation into Armenian Formal validation event in Yerevan	November	Regional validation in Tbilisi Finalisation of the report in Armenian and English	February	Finalisation of Report by Country Desk
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November	Regional validation in Tbilisi Finalisation of the report in Armenian and English																				
February	Finalisation of Report by Country Desk																				
Working group	The working group has been regularly consulted to provide data and contribute to the answers of the analytical framework..																				
Use of local expertise	n/a																				
TRP principles	<p>Evidence (Level 2) Evidence is created and available but little use in support to policy analysis.</p> <p>Holistic view of VET (level 2/3) VET is considered as a priority and linked to the socio economic development of the country. Recognition of need of LLL for young people and adults. Cooperation is at an early stage.</p> <p>Ownership: (level 2/3) High awareness of the stakeholders to move forward but challenged mainly by resources issues.</p> <p>Participation: (level 2/3) Stakeholders are aware of need of cooperation, but the issue of coordination is challenging.</p>																				

Evidence	Evidence has been gathered through regular consultation In September a meeting was held with the national statistics office
Participation	Participation from all the stakeholders involved in the Torino Process in Yerevan is variable and depends on the presence of ETF staff.
Ownership	High ownership of the TRP first of all by the Ministry of Education who coordinates the process and is heavily involved in the implementation of the VET Strategy supported by the EU Sector budget support
Holistic view of VET	The Torino process in yerevan has been implemented considering VET in a comprehensive way and keeping into consideration the 6 objectives identified in the VET Strategy and core part of the EU Sector Reform Contract.
Use of TRP support package	The TRP support package has been used in all phases of the process, from the analytical framework to the tools for facilitating the whole process, including the launching and validation events.
Contribution of evidence to policy accountability and transparency	Not clear
TRP added value	Not clear

Annex 3: Correspondence table for Education Classification: ARMENIA

Broad education category		National Classification (Source: LFS publications)	ISCED 1997		ISCED 2011	
			(Source: UNESCO)		(Source: UNESCO)	
LOW					ISCED 01 - Early childhood education	
		Primary and lower	ISCED 0 - Pre-primary education		ISCED 02 - Pre-primary education	
			ISCED level 1 - Primary education		ISCED level 1 - Primary education	
		General basic	ISCED level 2 - Lower secondary education	General	ISCED level 2 - Lower secondary education	General
				Vocational		Vocational
MEDIUM	General	General secondary	ISCED level 3 - Upper secondary education	General	ISCED level 3* - Upper secondary education	General
		Vocational		Vocational		Vocational
		Secondary specialised	ISCED level 4 - Post-secondary non-tertiary education	General	ISCED level 4* - Post-secondary non-tertiary education	General
				Vocational		Vocational
HIGH		Tertiary, post-graduate	ISCED level 5 - First stage of tertiary education	5A - General	ISCED level 5 - Short-cycle tertiary education	General
						Vocational
						Academic

			5B - Vocational	ISCED level 6 - Bachelor's or equivalent level	Professional
				ISCED level 7 - Master's or equivalent level	Academic
		ISCED level 6 - Second stage of tertiary education (leading to an advanced research qualification)		ISCED level 8 - Doctor or equivalent level	Professional
					Academic

Note

**Slightly different content between ISCED 1997 and ISCED 2011*