



Assessment of tools and deliverables under the framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020)

Final Report

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ICF and Technopolis

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Glossary

Strategic Framework for Cooperation in Education and Training (ET2020) – The ET2020 strategic framework¹ was adopted by the Council of the European Union on 12 May 2009. The goal of the framework is to support policy cooperation at EU level in the fields of education and training in line with the aims of the Europe 2020 Strategy. It covers all levels of education – from early childhood education and care through school education to higher education, vocational education and training and adult learning. ET2020 is implemented making use of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), fully respecting Member States' primary responsibility for education and training systems.

Europe 2020 Strategy – The Europe 2020 Strategy is the EU's agenda for growth and jobs for the period 2010-2020.² Its main aim is smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Open Method of Coordination (OMC) – The OMC is a form of policy-making used in the EU in policy areas which fall within the competence of Member States such as employment, social protection, education and training, and youth policy. It does not result in binding EU legislation. Instead, "soft" law mechanisms such as jointly identifying objectives, establishing measuring instruments (indicators, guidelines), and benchmarking are used to help countries coordinate their policies.³

High-Level Groups – The High-Level Group on Education and Training and the groupings of Directors General for Schools, Vocational Training and Higher Education are informal meetings for senior Member States officials and the Commission to discuss European cooperation priorities and to steer the activities of the ET2020 Working Groups. The meetings usually occur twice a year.

Indicative rolling Work Plan – The ET2020 indicative rolling Work Plan provides an overview of key activities and peer learning events planned under ET2020 and is updated four times a year. It is shared with the High-Level Group and the groupings of Directors General for Schools, Vocational Training and Higher Education.

Mutual learning activities – Mutual learning activities are an important tool of the open method of coordination. They include peer learning activities (PLAs), peer reviews, and peer counselling, and they provide opportunities for European government representatives, national and European stakeholders, non-governmental organisations and international organisations to exchange information and learn from each other's experiences in the field of education.

Peer learning activity (PLA) – A PLA is a type of mutual learning activity focused on a specific policy issue. It is hosted by a Member State that has a good practice addressing a specific policy issue, which it wishes to demonstrate to other Member States. The goal is to compare and analyse different policy approaches and develop new knowledge in the relevant policy area.

Peer review – A peer review is a type of mutual learning activity focused on a country-specific challenge. It is hosted by a European country to present a good practice or a successful response to a policy challenge to a group of peer countries. The goal is to learn from the presented practice/initiative and identify aspects that can be transferred to other countries. Both representatives of Member States and independent experts can participate. The peer review was introduced as an ET2020 tool following the 2012 Joint Report.

¹ See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=OJ:C:2016:202:FULL&from=EN#d1e4373-47-1>

² See https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester/framework/europe-2020-strategy_en

³ See https://eur-lex.europa.eu/summary/glossary/open_method_coordination.html

Peer counselling – Peer counselling is a type of mutual learning activity introduced following the 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and Training (ET2020). It is focused on providing external advice to a country in the process of a policy development. It brings together a small number of professional peers from national administrations and the goal is to find a solution to a particular policy challenge.⁴

Working Groups – The ET2020 Working Groups bring together, on a voluntary basis, experts from the Member States, candidate and EFTA countries, as well as international organisations and stakeholders with the aim to exchange information and expertise on common issues in the field of education and training. The Working Groups are designed to provide the Commission with expertise to help the Member States address the key challenges of their education and training systems, as well as common priorities agreed at the European level.

Education and Training Monitor – The Education and Training Monitor⁵ is the European Commission's flagship annual publication on education and training in the EU. The Monitor reports on EU and Member States' performance on the ET2020 benchmarks, and elaborates on policy priorities and initiatives for education systems. Volume 1 of the Monitor provides cross-national and thematic analysis. Volume 2 comprises 28 individual country reports.

Indicator Expert Group on Education and Training Evidence Monitoring (SGIB) – The Indicator Expert Group on Education and Training Evidence Monitoring (SGIB) is tasked with assessing the pros and cons of a limited number of indicators and take into account the monitoring activities of other international organisations such as the UN and the OECD, as well as internal Commission monitoring activities in order to evaluate their relevance, effectiveness and potential overlap.

Joint Report – At the end of each ET2020 cycle (initially three years; then extended to five years) a joint Council-Commission report is prepared to report on progress. To date, two Joint Reports of the Council and the Commission have been prepared on the implementation of ET2020 - in 2012 and 2015. The 2012 Joint Report⁶ introduced the peer review as a new tool of cooperation and the annual Education and Training Forum as a mechanism to strengthen cooperation with stakeholders. The 2015 Joint Report⁷ made an economic case for education and training as a growth-friendly sector and proposed changes to the ET2020 tools to make them more operational and aligned with the EU political priorities. The 2015 Joint Report also introduced the ET2020 indicative rolling Work Plan, which provides an overview of activities and peer learning events planned under ET2020.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) – MOOCs are a form of distance education delivered via the internet. They are online courses usually available for free and targeted at broad audiences.

⁴ See https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/et-2020-peer-counselling_en.pdf

⁵ See http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/et-monitor_en

⁶ See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52012XG0308%2801%29>

⁷ See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52015XG1215%2802%29>

Executive summary

Aims and methodology of the study

The study was undertaken by ICF, in collaboration with Technopolis, in 2018 on behalf of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC). The study assessed the tools and deliverables under the current framework for the European cooperation in education and training (ET2020). The main objectives of this assignment were to analyse: i) the performance of ET2020 tools and deliverables in addressing the ET2020 objectives and priorities; ii) the impact of such tools and deliverables at the Member State (and EU) level.

The ET2020 framework was adopted in 2009, succeeding the Education and Training 2010 (ET2010) work programme, and is implemented making use of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC).⁸ It is based on four strategic objectives which are also expected to support the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy:

- Make lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
- Improve the quality and efficiency of education and training;
- Promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship; and
- Enhance creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

Since 2010, the ET2020 framework has been further refined, including through the 2015 Joint Report. This identified new priority areas (and concrete issues) for further work up to 2020 in order to better align ET2020 with the EU's political priorities.

The ET2020 framework has been organised through various tools and instruments. These include the Working Groups (WGs),⁹ mutual learning activities¹⁰, the Education and Training Monitor, common reference tools developed through the Working Groups and mutual learning activities, and the meetings of the High-Level Group on education and training and the Directors General for Schools, Vocational Training, and Higher Education.

The focus of the study has been on the ET2020 tools and deliverables taking place or being produced between the second half of 2015 and the end of 2017. Specifically, it covers 30 mutual learning activities and 10 deliverables (e.g. reports and guides)¹¹ plus the online platform, Yammer. The study was based on an extensive analysis of the documentation at the EU level and country reports, two stakeholder surveys (covering both stakeholders which have been directly involved in ET2020 tools and those who have not been directly involved),¹² key informant interviews at the EU and national levels¹³, 10 case studies analysing in detail the impact at the national and EU levels and

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/european-policy-cooperation/et2020-framework_en

⁹ For the period covered in this study, there have been four sector-focused working groups - schools, VET, higher education and adult learning - and two issue-focused working groups covering transversal policy issues - digital skills and competences; and citizenship and the promotion of common values.

¹⁰ Peer learning activities (PLAs), peer reviews, peer counselling.

¹¹ They are as follows: Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching; Apprenticeships & Work-Based Learning; Teachers/Trainers in Apprenticeships & Work-Based Learning; SELFIE; DigComp Educator; Financing Adult Learning; Basic Skills in the Workplace; Adult Learning Policy Analysis; Modernising Higher Education and Citizenship and Inclusive Education.

¹² Two online surveys were conducted between 29 June and 27 July 2018. In the more detailed survey targeting participants in ET2020 tools ("participants survey") 129 complete responses were received, thus representing a 19% response rate (the response rate including incomplete responses was 28%). In the shorter survey targeting those who were not directly involved in the ET2020 tools, 77 complete responses were received, thus representing a 23% response rate (the response rate including incomplete responses was 35%).

¹³ In total 87 semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted.

the analysis of feedback received from the Member State consultations¹⁴. The findings and evidence from the various sources have been systematically triangulated to arrive at the key conclusions and recommendations for the future.

The design and usefulness of ET2020 tools and deliverables in addressing the ET2020 objectives and priorities

The usefulness of activities carried out under the ET2020 framework

The ET2020 tools and deliverables developed are generally considered clearly focused and useful. The WG members and other stakeholders interviewed were in broad agreement that the critical issues addressed within the WGs reflect the main policy priorities and issues in education and training in Europe. Overall, the ET2020 activities keep a clear focus on its objectives, are efficiently structured, make good use of suitable meeting formats and involve the right type and profile of participants.

Furthermore, almost all Member States (92% of responses in the Member State consultation) consider the ET2020 framework to be useful in either preparing, testing and/or implementing reforms in education and training. Finally, almost all policy makers (high-level and technical level) in the key informant interviews reported that the activities carried out and deliverables developed under the ET2020 framework were useful for their country: for further developing participants' individual work responsibilities, for the work of their organisation/institution, as well as for providing participants with new ideas for their field of work and a better understanding of other countries' and EU policies on education and training.

Particularly useful elements of the ET2020 tools are the exchange of information (including the good practice examples), the networking opportunities (to establish contact points within relevant organisations in other countries, develop joint actions, and find out additional information about other countries' national policies and practices) and the open, informal, non-politicised and motivating environment in which these exchanges take place.

Almost all WG members and other stakeholders consider the mix of sectoral and horizontal WGs to be appropriate in addressing ET2020 objectives and priorities. In relation to the sector-focused working groups, it is generally appreciated that they are largely reflective of the governance and organisation of education and training in the Member States. However, there are some differences in opinion regarding the organisation of the horizontal WGs. This relates to whether such interdisciplinary groups should be organised in the same way as the sector-focused working groups (i.e. with permanent representation and a two-year mandate period) or whether they should adopt a more flexible approach with a more fluid membership and/or a shorter mandate period.

The range of mutual learning activities organised in the study period (including 22 peer learning activities, six peer counselling activities and one peer review) was overall considered to be useful by their participants. 92% of responses in the Member State consultation survey indicate that they have been valuable for national education and training policy making. Similarly, and based on the survey responses, participants reported that the activities kept a clear focus on the objectives (89%); the activities were efficiently structured (88%); and the meeting format (duration, mixture of sessions) was suitable (86%). The greatest value of the activities is the exchange of information, the networking aspect, and the motivating atmosphere. Several case studies also demonstrated the impact of mutual learning activities at the national level. The key success factors for such activities include the possibility of having in-depth

¹⁴ This was a consultation launched by DG EAC to which 23 Member States responded (February-April 2018).

discussions and exchange of practical examples, the open, informal and “non-politicised” environment for discussion, and good organisation and leadership of the activities.

The frequency and type of usage of the online platform, Yammer, varies widely between the WGs. Generally, Yammer tends to be used mainly for information sharing and used much less extensively for collaborative work and webinars. As such, the main added value has been that it offers an alternative to email communication and provides a repository of WG related communications and documents.

Success factors and challenges in designing and developing deliverables

The ET2020 deliverables are developed over a longer period, often over several years. This requires continued engagement by WG members. Consequently, the key success factors facilitating the production of a deliverable are a stable WG membership and strong buy-in from the WG members to the process of joint and collaborative working. This buy-in, in turn, depends on two crucial conditions: 1) a good working relationship among the WG members which creates the necessary atmosphere for productive work; and 2) a shared understanding that there is political will in the Member States to use the deliverables for productive policy change. The key hindering factors emerging from the analysis are, conversely, unstable membership of the WGs, making it harder to work together, and lack of interest by the Member States to adapt their policies in light of the information and recommendations provided by deliverables. Other factors include the lack of regular meeting attendance and contributions from all national representatives.

The influence of Education and Training Monitor and ET2020 evidence monitoring (benchmarks and main indicators) at national level

The *Education and Training Monitor* is the key publication analysing and setting out the progress made towards the ET2020 benchmarks. The analysis of both the key informant interviews and the Member State consultation shows that the benchmarks and indicators provide useful, high-quality quantitative evidence that should be used alongside qualitative, country-specific knowledge about the policy context and specific policy measures in each Member State. Indeed, the key step in using the data well is to make a link between the quantitative data point and the policy situation in the Member State. This should be used alongside qualitative, country-specific knowledge about the policy context in each Member State, and specific good practice examples.

The alignment and impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables

Link between the ET2020 deliverables and European and national priorities

All deliverables are directly or indirectly relevant to the key EU priorities as set out in the ‘Europe 2020’ strategy and/or the Commission’s current 10 political priorities. No contradictions with the relevant EU priorities could be identified for any of the deliverables studied.

Most deliverables are moderately aligned with the national education and training policy priorities in terms of the number of countries in which relevant policy measures could be identified. Different deliverables by the same WG tend to be reflected in national policy in the same countries. Most stakeholder survey respondents stated that the topic of the ET2020 tools and deliverables they were involved in was strongly connected with the education and training policy priorities of their institution, their country, other countries, and the European Union. Most of the stakeholders interviewed also described the tools and deliverables to be of interest for their organisation. At the same time, interview feedback points to a risk of deliverables presenting general conclusions only that may not be fully relevant to all WG members.

The impact and dissemination of ET2020 tools and deliverables at the national level

The work in ET2020 WGs in general as well as the concrete activities and deliverables achieved a considerable impact in various Member States, following an impact chain at the individual, organisational and national level. ET2020 tools and deliverables have contributed to the individual participants' capacity-building and networking, organisational planning and initiatives, as well as to changes in the national programmes and policies, in particular through in-depth discussion on national good practices.

The strongest impact, according to the interview feedback, Member State consultations, and stakeholder surveys was achieved at the individual level among the ET2020 participants. This suggests that a key benefit of ET2020 is considered to be that the framework is a forum for discussion, exchange of experience and latest practice for education and training policy makers and stakeholders. Through mutual learning and the exchange of experiences, ET2020 has created a common knowledge base, increased cooperation, and built up networks of experts across Member States and sectors of education and training that trust each other – this is a key outcome that representatives of all Member States confirm. The ET2020 process also benefits individual advocacy work by raising awareness among policy makers of policy reforms and good practices in other countries. In addition, a more profound effect is also achieved in the creation of a common language/conceptual framework on education and training policy that allows Member States to have more pertinent discussions on the topic.

Strong impact of the ET2020 tools and deliverables has also been detected at the organisational level (often at the government department or agency level). In particular, the stakeholder survey respondents highlighted that ET2020 tools and deliverables have had a strong impact on discussions within their own organisations and on planning, designing and implementing new initiatives on the topic in their own organisations (around 60-70% indicating strong and some impact). This points to a direct impact within the primary stakeholder organisations responsible for formulating education and training policies at the national level. The ET2020 tools and deliverables have also been used to support agenda setting in the respondents' organisations or within their member organisations (in the case of associations).

At the wider national (systemic) level, the study identified several examples of impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables on national policies. This varies in strength depending on whether the impact only extended to the planning or also to the implementation of new initiatives. Ultimately, the exchange of experiences and information in the framework of ET2020 can help to inform and encourage policy reforms in Member States and other participating countries. Over half of the respondents to the stakeholder survey indicated that ET2020 have had an impact on the planning, design and implementation of new initiatives/programmes at the wider country level. Interviewees stated that ET2020 tools and deliverables have mainly been used to exchange information, to raise awareness of education and training policy reforms in national and/or international debates, and for agenda-setting. Crucially, interview partners also stated they had used the activities and deliverables to launch or inform a policy action/reform in their country. Nine case studies also highlight examples of the direct national impact of the ET2020 tools and deliverables. These numbers point to a significant impact at the national level, which could however be even higher if the impact on an individual and organisational level translated more effectively into national impact. The responsibility for realising this last step towards national impact rests with Member States.

Concrete examples of national impact and follow-up could be linked in particular to peer counselling and PLAs and several deliverables across all WGs. These examples show that impact is greatest when ET2020 outputs coincide with national reform debates on the same policy issue.

Dissemination and media impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables

Most stakeholders consulted in the study have made a communication effort to disseminate the information from ET2020 activities. Almost all interview and survey participants informed other people either within or outside their organisation or both about the ET2020 activities in which they took part. However, this is not always done systematically. Factors expediting dissemination include tailored communication materials in an accessible language, and events and conferences used as communication channels. Conversely, barriers to dissemination include linguistic issues and time constraints.

The ET2020 tools and deliverables have had a varying impact on social and traditional media, and in academic literature, often – but not always - reaching the intended target groups. These results suggest that a more comprehensive and systematic dissemination strategy may lead to greater and more consistent impact for the different tools and deliverables.

Interactions between the "technical" level and the "political" level in the ET2020 process

Interactions between the "technical" and the "political" levels have been uneven depending on the thematic areas, national ministry organisational arrangements for dissemination, and the initiative and level of seniority of ET2020 participating individuals. The knowledge generated as part of the ET2020 process is not picked up by the political hierarchy on a systematic basis, based on regular knowledge exchange and stable relationships.

Key recommendations

Based on the analysis of all the data gathered for this study, ICF and Technopolis developed the following recommendations on the future development of the ET2020 framework:

1. A number of successful elements in the current ET2020 process should be maintained with minor improvements:

- The **current structure of the ET2020 WGs** should be maintained, especially in relation to the composition of sectoral groups. The most appropriate format for the horizontal groups requires further reflection. The mandates of the WGs need to continue to have a clear focus on a limited number of strategic issues of core interest to a critical mass of Member States.
- The **use of qualitative and quantitative evidence** to underpin the ET2020 processes should be further supported. This relates both to the continued use of the annual Education and Training Monitor reports and the ET2020 benchmarks and indicators, accompanied by a more qualitative analysis of the education and training systems' context. Also, good practice examples used should be further underpinned by a clear and consistent definition of what constitutes good practice in different education and training policy areas.
- As is currently the case, the **alignment of future ET2020 deliverables with EU priorities and the work of the European Commission** should be ensured by guaranteeing that the rationale for the launch of new deliverables clearly refers to a corresponding EU priority. At the same time, the launch of new activities or production of new deliverables in response to shifting EU political priorities needs to be implemented seamlessly alongside the work of the WGs to avoid potential disruption to their work.

- **Further strengthening the link between ET2020 tools and deliverables and national priorities** should continue to be driven by a bottom-up approach drawing on inputs from Member States. This should ensure that the timing of ET2020 activities coincides with the relevant policy debates and consideration of reforms and measures in the Member States. This in turn would result in greater impact of ET2020 activities at the national level.
- ET2020 tools should become even **more flexible and agile** (beyond the existing opportunities to organise ad-hoc events/PLAs/peer counselling) to be able to respond on time and in an appropriate way to emerging education and training system challenges and political priorities. Concretely, this could involve the possibility of forming sub-WGs (with members from multiple WGs or individuals/organisations not represented in the WGs) working on a concrete new issue emerging from the overall WG work, shorter mandates and blended exchange approaches including a more frequent use of the combination of face-to-face and virtual meetings, thus facilitating more cross-working across the WGs.

2. Recommendations on new actions in the future include:

- Further attention is needed to **fully exploit synergies, and improve coordination and collaboration** between the WGs, especially in cases where horizontal WGs have a direct thematic link to sectoral WGs (e.g. digital skills, migration and other cross-sector topics). In practice this could involve more frequent organisation of joint events as well as more effective dissemination of information between the WGs. Potential synergies and areas of cooperation/collaboration should be clarified at the outset of the WG mandate period and continuously monitored throughout that period.
- The **quality of membership and participation** in ET2020 tools and deliverables is critical to their success. Continuous and stable WG membership positively affects the results and dissemination of ET2020 messages and should be encouraged. Equally, it is important that delegates with the right profile attend the in-depth discussions at the ET2020 activities. Participation in the ET2020 activities should also be increasingly opened to include external experts and stakeholders to bring valuable, up-to-date and broader perspectives and experiences. This could be piloted in one WG to explore the effectiveness of such an approach. Also, the WG members need to have the capacity to gather information from the national level and share it with the group and disseminate the work done by the group on a national level.
- **Dissemination of ET2020 outcomes at the national level** should be strengthened by adopting a more systematic approach:
 - This could start with a clear communication strategy consisting of general guidelines that can be adapted flexibly by WG coordinators and members, as well as mutual learning activity participants. This should also be supported by fit-for-purpose dissemination products and channels.
 - WG members also need to have the capacity to gather information from the national level and share it with the group and disseminate the work done by the WG at the national level.
 - The issue of the translation of key messages from the ET2020 activities into national languages should also be considered as it would facilitate their dissemination.

- Information and outputs of past PLAs and other mutual learning activities should be located in a common and searchable online space where all ET2020 tools and deliverables can be accessed.
- The EC could also communicate, more clearly than heretofore, the main success stories from ET2020 activities so far.
- ET2020 tools should allow plenty of room for **interactive discussions and critical debate** to better compare the discussed policies to their own national context and to discuss strengths and weaknesses in detail, increasing the likelihood of creating an impact. 'On-demand' activities, such as peer counselling requested by Member States in line with their national priorities, could take place even more often (subject to demand from Member States). The impact of deliverables could be enhanced by continuing to monitor which priorities and interests are common across a significant number of Member States. Such a tailored approach to Member States' needs could mean further evolution of some activities towards more bespoke formats with a more limited membership.
- **Interaction between the technical and political levels of stakeholders** should be improved by binding them together more coherently in the ET2020 framework and ensuring the exchanges between the two levels are more systematic and regular.

Finally, it is important not to consider the individual ET2020 tools and deliverables in isolation as separate activities, as they all form part of a "toolbox" of activities that all serve to complement each other in reaching the ET2020 priorities and objectives. The key focus should be on how the core synergies between the current activities can be more fully exploited so that ET2020 tools available to the EC and the Member States are used optimally in the evolving political and operational contexts of education and training systems.

1 Introduction

In April 2018 the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) appointed ICF, in collaboration with Technopolis, to undertake an assessment of tools and deliverables under the framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020).

1.1 Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020)

ET2020 was adopted in 2009, succeeding the Education and Training 2010 (ET2010) work programme, and is implemented making use of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC).¹⁵ The OMC is the mechanism for the EU to set common priorities in policy areas where the EU does not have the competence to act through other mechanisms, such as legislation. The OMC is based on voluntary cooperation among the Member States and relies on instruments such as guidelines and indicators, benchmarking and sharing of best practice.

The ET2020 cooperation framework is based on four strategic objectives:

- make lifelong learning and **mobility** a reality;
- improve the **quality and efficiency** of education and training;
- promote **equity, social cohesion and active citizenship**; and
- enhance creativity and innovation, including **entrepreneurship**, at all levels of education and training.

In addition to the overall strategic objectives, ET2020 is also guided by a number of performance measures or benchmarks that are expected to be achieved at the European level by 2020:

- at least 95% of children should participate in **early childhood education**;
- fewer than 15% of 15-year-olds should be under-skilled in **reading, mathematics and science**;
- the rate of **early leavers** from education and training aged 18-24 should be below 10%;
- at least 40% of people aged 30-34 should have **completed some form of higher education**;
- at least 15% of adults should participate in **learning**¹⁶;
- at least 20% of higher education graduates and 6% of 18-34-year-olds with an initial vocational qualification should have **spent some time studying or training abroad**; and
- the share of **employed graduates** (aged 20-34 with at least upper secondary education attainment and having left education 1-3 years ago) should be at least 82%.

ET2020 is also expected to contribute to the Europe 2020 Strategy, including the achievement of targets specifically related to education, namely:

- rates of early school leavers below 10%; and
- at least 40% of people aged 30–34 having completed higher education.

ET2020 cooperation is organised through various tools and instruments, including:

¹⁵ See http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/european-policy-cooperation/et2020-framework_en

¹⁶ Changed from participation in "**lifelong learning**" in 2017.

- **Working Groups (WGs)** For the period covered in this study, there have been four sector-focused working groups including schools, VET, higher education and adult learning, and two issue-focused working groups covering transversal policy issues including digital skills and competences, and citizenship and the promotion of common values¹⁷.
- Mutual learning activities including **peer learning activities (PLAs), peer reviews, peer counselling**.
- Analytical evidence and progress monitoring tools including through the **Education and Training Monitor** which, inter alia, reports on the benchmarks set by the Europe 2020 Strategy listed above.
- **Common reference tools and approaches** (including ET2020 deliverables) developed as a result of, inter alia, work carried out by the WGs or as part of mutual learning activities.
- Meetings of the **High-Level Group on education and training** and the **Directors General for Schools, Vocational Training, and Higher Education**.

ET2020 has been subject to two mid-term stocktaking exercises (in 2012¹⁸ and 2015¹⁹) to assess progress made and to help identify future priorities for cooperation in education and training at the European level. Notably, in the 2015 Joint Report it was agreed that the next ET2020 work cycle would be based on five-year cycles as opposed to the original three-year cycles. This means that the next Joint Report will presumably be in 2020 (and not in 2018 as originally foreseen).

In the 2015 Joint Report new priority areas (and concrete issues) for further work up to 2020 were identified. The new priority areas are as follows:

- **Relevant and high-quality knowledge, skills and competences** developed throughout lifelong learning, focusing on learning outcomes for employability, innovation, active citizenship and well-being;
- **Inclusive education**, equality, equity, non-discrimination and the promotion of civic competences;
- **Open and innovative education and training** including through fully embracing the digital era;
- **Strong support for teachers, trainers, school leaders and other educational staff**;
- Transparency and **recognition of skills** and qualifications to facilitate learning and labour mobility;

¹⁷ For the new mandate period (July 2018 to June 2020), a fifth sector-focused working group has been added focusing on early childhood education and care. The names of two Working Groups have also changed - the Working Group on Promoting Citizenship and the Common Values of Freedom, Tolerance, and Non-Discrimination is now called the Working Group on Promoting Common Values and Inclusive Education; and the Working Group on Digital Education is now called Working Group on Digital Education: Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

¹⁸ 2012 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) — Education and training in a smart, sustainable and inclusive Europe (2012/C 70/05). Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:070:0009:0018:EN:PDF>

¹⁹ 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) — New priorities for European cooperation in education and training (2015/C 417/04) Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/documents/et-2020-draft-joint-report-408-2015_en.pdf

- **Sustainable investment**, quality and efficiency of education and training systems.

Specific priorities for vocational education and training (VET) and for adult learning up to 2020 were also set out in the 2015 Joint Report.

The work on these priorities (and the associated concrete issues) is primarily organised through the ET2020 WGs. WGs were first established by the Commission under the ET2010 work programme as one of the OMC tools. Between 2009 and 2013, there were 11 so-called Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) – covering primary and secondary education; higher education; adult learning; VET; and transversal key competences. However, on the recommendation of the Council of the European Union²⁰ to adopt a more focused approach, the number of WGs was reduced to six in 2014²¹. As of 2016, a new generation of WGs was established, focusing on some of the priority areas and concrete issues listed in the annex of the 2015 Joint Report. The six WGs consisted of four sector-focused working groups that each represented a major sector of education and training (i.e. schools, VET, higher education and adult learning) and two issue-focused working groups covering transversal policy issues (i.e. digital skills and competences; and citizenship and the promotion of common values). The WGs are currently operating under two-year mandate periods (the most recent covering the period between July 2018 and June 2020). The 2015 Joint Report stipulates that the “mandates [of the WGs] will be proposed by the Commission and adjusted in the light of comments expressed by the Member States, in particular through the Education Committee”.

Recognising that it is not possible to cover all concrete issues presented in the 2015 Joint Report, at the same time a focused list of priorities for the WG mandates²² was proposed by the European Commission in consultation with the Member States, including through the High level Group (which is composed of high-level representatives from the responsible ministries) and the Education Committee of the Council (which also includes representatives of the education ministries of the Member States). The concrete issues, including those not covered by the WG mandates, have also been addressed through other ET2020 tools not directly linked to individual WGs, including ad hoc PLAs, thematic events, peer counselling, peer reviews or other policy learning exchanges. Indeed, during the period covered by this study, four peer review workshops were organised during the meeting of the Directors General of Vocational Training (DGVET), held on 9-10 October 2017 in Estonia. The workshops covered each of the topics addressed by the Working Group through its 12 policy pointers on supporting teachers and trainers (as set out in the ET2020 deliverable - *Teachers and Trainers Matter – How to support them in high-performance apprenticeships and work-based learning*): specifying roles and responsibilities; strengthening professional development; preparing for key challenges; and fostering collaboration. In addition, several peer counselling activities were organised (see Annex 1 for further details). Overall, the peer counselling activities and the peer review workshops account for nearly a quarter of the ET2020 tools covered in this study.

ET2020 has also been subject to an independent interim evaluation²³ which was carried out in 2014. The evaluation presented several conclusions and recommendations to make ET2020 more relevant, effective and transparent, including the following:

²⁰ 2013 Council Conclusions on investing in education and training — a response to ‘Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes’ and the ‘2013 Annual Growth Survey’ (2013/C 64/06). Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52013XG0305%2801%29>

²¹ Between 2014 and 2015, there were six working groups: school policy; modernisation of higher education; adult learning; VET; transversal skills; and digital and online learning.

²² Education and Training 2020: Working Group Mandates 2016-2018 Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups/2016-2018/et-2020-group-mandates_en.pdf

²³ Ecorys (2014), *Interim Evaluation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020)*. Available at: <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/54967d20-8cf6-11e5-b8b7-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

- streamlining the objectives and having more tightly focused priority areas;
- providing greater clarity and awareness around ET2020 processes, expected outcomes and better monitoring;
- focusing on excellence as well as modernisation, including through clustering of countries and the development of a central database of national good practices;
- ensuring closer links and better interactions between the technical and political levels; and
- improving the dissemination of outputs and learning as well as take-up of ideas at the national level.

Where relevant, this assignment assesses, among other things, the extent to which these recommendations have been translated into actions and whether they contributed to improving the effectiveness and relevance of ET2020 tools and deliverables. For example, the first three bullet points are addressed within section 3 of the current report, whilst the latter two bullet points are addressed within section 4.

1.2 Objectives and scope of the current assessment

The main objectives of this assignment are to analyse: i) the performance of ET2020 tools and deliverables in addressing the ET2020 objectives and priorities; ii) the impact of such tools and deliverables at the Member State (and EU level). Specifically, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

| Objectives | Research questions |
|---|---|
| Analyse the performance of ET2020 tools and deliverables in addressing ET2020 objectives and priorities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent were the activities carried out under the ET2020 framework (WGs, peer reviews, PLAs, peer counselling) useful for Member States? What made them useful (right choice of experts, of priorities, timing, etc.)? • How can the tools which form the basis of these activities be improved to ensure they effectively address ET2020 objectives and priorities? • Were synergies between the different ET2020 WGs properly exploited? Was the mix of sectoral and horizontal WGs the appropriate one in addressing ET2020 objectives and priorities? • Has the evidence provided by the Education and Training Monitor helped to stimulate debate and policy reform at national level? • Has the ET2020 evidence monitoring (benchmarks and main indicators) had a positive influence at national level. If yes, how? |

Analyse the impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables at the Member State (and EU) level

- Did ET2020 tools and deliverables lead to policy action/reforms in specific education sectors at national level? Were deliverables mentioned in public debates or in academic literature?
- Where an impact can be identified, did the initially expected impact match the achieved impact?
- Did deliverables reach people and organisations beyond the individuals who took part directly in ET2020 activities?
- What facilitates or hinders the dissemination of deliverables at national level?
- Was the deliverable developed in connection with an identified EU priority/need in a Member State?
- What factors have facilitated or hindered the development of concrete deliverables?
- Were deliverables discussed both at technical (e.g. WGs) and political (ET2020 High Level Group and Directors General meetings) levels?
- Did the ET2020 indicative rolling Work Plan improve the link between these levels? Is this link important in determining the impact of a deliverable at national level?

The scope of the assignment can be further defined as follows:

- *Coverage of activities and deliverables* – 30 mutual learning activities and 10 deliverables (e.g. reports and guides) plus Yammer (see Annex 1).
- *Geographical scope* – primarily focusing on the EU28 but other countries taking part in the OMC are also considered. For example, we included respondents from EFTA and candidate countries in the surveys, as well as in the interview programme.
- *Time period* – the focus of the assignment has been on ET2020 tools and deliverables taking place or being produced between the second half of 2015 and the end of 2017. For some deliverables it has been necessary to examine evidence (e.g. reports and documents related to the preparation of a deliverable) that were prepared prior to mid-2015. For example, the media monitoring has focused on the period starting 2015 but looked at previous years whenever the focus on the time period 2015-17 yielded few results.

The assessment provides the Commission with answers regarding the performance and impact of the ET2020 tools and deliverables covered by the study. The evidence for the

assessment has been collated through a combination of desk research, stakeholder surveys and key informant interviews (see section 2 for further detail).

Importantly, when assessing the ET2020 tools and deliverables, the study takes into account that the ET2020 is implemented within the context of the OMC and according to the principle of subsidiarity. This is particularly important when considering the impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables, as any impact at the Member State level is dependent on national stakeholders acting on the information and knowledge gained from the ET2020 tools and deliverables. The ET2020 tools and deliverables on their own will not be sufficient to deliver policy action/reforms at the Member State level.

1.3 Structure of the report

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 provides an overview of the study tasks as well as any challenges encountered.
- Section 3 assesses the design and usefulness of ET2020 tools and deliverables in addressing ET2020 objectives and priorities.
- Section 4 examines the alignment with the EU and national priorities, and the wider impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables.
- Section 5 provides a synthesis of the assessment and presents a series of recommendations.

The report also includes a number of supporting annexes:

- Annex 1 presents a list of ET2020 tools and deliverables covered by this study.
- Annex 2 contains the key ET2020 deliverable fiches.
- Annex 3 presents the survey analysis.
- Annex 4 contains the case studies carried out in this study.
- Annex 5 provides a list of relevant EU priorities and EC Communications and Council Conclusions.

2 Methodology of the study

2.1 Method overview

This study has drawn upon five main tools and methods: desk research, stakeholder surveys, key informant interviews, case studies and an analysis of feedback received from Member States consultations. Each of these tasks are described below together with some important conceptual considerations.

2.2 Conceptual considerations

2.2.1 Link vs relevance

In the analysis of the links between the ET2020 deliverables and EU and national policy priorities in section 4.2 we distinguish between the notion of relevance and links. We speak of relevance in regard to EU priorities since it is an explicit objective of the ET2020 framework to contribute to the Europe 2020 goals. Hence, the concept of relevance as laid down in the Better Regulation guidelines applies, whereby relevance assesses the degree to which the objectives of an intervention (such as the ET2020 tools and deliverables) address identified needs (such as a need to underpin the Europe 2020 Strategy with supporting actions). In other words, in relation to relevance we can speak of a deliberate and systematic link between specific actions under ET2020 and European policy priorities.

The same does not apply to the link between ET2020 and national priorities, which is more circumstantial. While in principle national priorities should be reflected in ET2020 Working Group mandates, we cannot make a claim that specific ET2020 actions or outputs are generally relevant to national priorities across EU Member States and beyond. We thus speak of links between ET2020 and national priorities. This does not preclude cases in which specific deliverables or activities are in fact directly relevant to national priorities in specific countries, as is the case when a country requests a peer counselling exercise, for example.

2.2.2 Conceptual understanding of impact

For the purposes of this study, impact is understood to materialise on four levels:

- *Individual level:* this includes mutual learning, exchange of experience, creating a common knowledge base and reference framework for discussions, increased cooperation among peers, awareness-raising, capacity-building.
- *Organisational level:* this often concerns national ministries, but also interest groups involved in the ET2020 process, and extends to discussions, agenda-setting within the organisation, planning, designing and implementing new initiatives.
- *Wider national (systemic) level:* this concerns more systemic impacts in specific countries and beyond more than one organisation, and includes evidence of policy measures being adopted or revised in response to a country's participation in the ET2020 framework as a whole, or in specific activities or the production of specific deliverables. The timing of the national policies should demonstrate a plausible link to activities or the publication of deliverables in order to confidently establish impact of specific ET2020 outputs.
- *In the media:* this concerns references in public debates, the media and academic literature.

It is also important to distinguish between different strengths of impact: planning a new initiative does not represent the same degree of impact as implementing a new initiative.

2.3 Methodological approach, challenges and mitigating measures

2.3.1 Desk research

The purpose of the desk research was to:

- Assess the alignment of ET2020 deliverables with EU and national priorities;
- Identify potential cases of impact of ET2020 deliverables on a national level, which were subsequently validated through interviews and survey findings; and
- Consider the visibility and perception of ET2020 tools and deliverables in the media (media impact monitoring) in the EU28.

It is important to note that the deliverables analysed here differ vastly in terms of type (from databases to reports), purpose, time of publication and target group. This means that the comparative analysis provided below is mainly useful to illustrate the diversity of deliverables produced within the ET2020 framework, but should not be used to assess the relative performance of individual deliverables against each other.

The desk research has involved three steps.

The **first step** was to develop an analytical grid for the individual deliverables (see Annex 2). This consists of a) a brief overview section summarising key factual information; b) a section assessing the relevance to EU policy priorities and providing hyperlinks to the documents in which relevant priorities are set out; and c) a section outlining relevant national policy measures in line with the key messages and/or recommendations of the deliverable for each of the EU28. Some of these measures were explored further as potential good practice examples and informed the selection of case studies. The information for section a) was obtained by reviewing the key EU strategy documents and identifying proposals or commitments therein to which the deliverables can be seen to contribute. The information for section c) was obtained from the ET2020's own compendium of relevant good practices, and the last three annual publications of the Education and Training Monitor reports, the Eurydice country reports and European Semester reports. While these sources provide a useful overview of policy measures in the area of education and training, they are by no means exhaustive. Consequently, the findings presented in the fiches for each deliverable, and the analysis in section 4.2 which builds on the fiches, should be interpreted with caution. It may well be possible that countries where our research did not identify national policy measures linked to the deliverables have indeed adopted such measures, but these were not captured in the data sources we reviewed.

The **second step** was to analyse this information comparatively across all deliverables. This involved grouping the deliverables in terms of the degree to which they are aligned with EU policy priorities, beyond being embedded in the ET2020 framework itself. In addition, a table summarising the association of the 10 deliverables with relevant policy measures in Member States was prepared, allowing countries and deliverables to be clustered.

Several issues emerged during the desk research. Firstly, three of the deliverables – *Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool*, *Online Compendium of Good Practices in Education and Training-Modernising Higher Education*, and *Online Compendium of Good Practices in Education and Training-Citizenship and Inclusive Education* - represent databases/libraries of policy measures (see Annex 2 for further details). By their nature, they do not contain very detailed and specific recommendations for reforms or measures that Member States should implement (although the *Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool* does contain a set of general recommendations). This made it difficult to establish a causal link between these deliverables and activities, and any ongoing reforms or measures in individual countries. This means that any links indicated in the summary of the desk research presented in

section 4.2 should be interpreted to mean that there is a correlation between the publication of the deliverables and measures being adopted in a specific country. While it is conceivable that a national reform or measure was implemented solely on the basis of an ET2020 deliverable (or tool), it is more likely that the ET2020 deliverables (or tools) have added urgency to ongoing debates about particular reforms or measures, accelerating them and/or keeping them more focused, or comprehensively informed national stakeholders about best practices in other Member States. This limits the explanatory power of the comparative analysis and thus mainly contextualises the information obtained through the stakeholder surveys and the interview programme.

Additionally, as part of the desk research, a media impact analysis was conducted focusing on three aspects:

- First, the *reach* of the ET2020 deliverables on the Europa website (www.europa.eu) covering the time period of 2015-18 was analysed. The total number of pageviews, typically used as an indicator of patterns in traffic, was considered the most important indicator of reach. This includes repeat views of the same page by the same user.
- Second, the *number of media references* (including social media, academic literature, etc.) of the activities and deliverables was measured. The names of the activities and deliverables were searched to identify the number of media publications in which these were referred to. A variety of key words were used to maximise search results. In order to generate valid results, the search was limited to the official (full or partial) English title – and, if available, the official translation of the title – of the ET2020 tools and deliverables.
- Third, the frequency and type of usage of the collaboration platform *Yammer* were assessed, using quantitative indicators such as the number of active members and the number of messages read, and qualitative indicators such as the quality and regularity of information exchanges.

A methodological challenge was that not all media outlets refer to ET2020 tools or deliverables by their official (full or partial) name, especially in non-English speaking media. This means that the numbers reported can be considered as a low estimate of the actual number of media references.

2.3.2 Stakeholder surveys

The purpose of the stakeholder surveys was twofold:

- collect the experience of those stakeholders which have been directly involved in ET2020 tools (participant survey), including in relation to conceptual and organisational issues (such as the topic selection and its fit with stakeholder needs) and impact issues (e.g. effects triggered with participants, within participants' organisations or within participants' countries); and
- get a view from a broader set of ET2020 stakeholders that have not participated directly in ET2020 tools and deliverables (wider stakeholder survey) on the extent to which the tools and deliverables are known, relevant and connected with developments in Member States.

Two online surveys were conducted between 29 June and 27 July 2018. The more detailed survey targeting participants in ET2020 tools ("participants survey") was sent to 687 participants whose email addresses were gathered from the attendance lists provided by the European Commission. 129 complete responses were received, thus representing a 19% response rate (the response rate calculated on the total number of received responses – complete and incomplete – was 28%).

The shorter survey targeting a broader set of ET2020 stakeholders (wider stakeholder survey) was sent to 338 stakeholders whose email addresses were gathered from stakeholder mailing lists provided by the European Commission. To further boost the number and type of stakeholders reached by the surveys, it was also distributed to the members of two academic networks, NESET II and EENEE, via the coordinators of each network (NESET II has 52 members, and EENEE has 25 members). Additionally, a sticky-button link to the wider stakeholder survey was placed on the following ET2020-related europa.eu webpages:

- the overview page of the ET2020 strategic framework;
- the Education and Training Monitor page;
- the main ET2020 WGs page; and
- each of the six WG home pages (WG Schools, WG Higher Education, WG VET, WG Adult Learning, WG Digital Skills and Competences and WG Citizenship).

77 complete responses were received, thus representing a 23% response rate (the response rate calculated on the total number of responses received – complete and incomplete – was 35%).

While the surveys are not representative in a statistical sense, the geographical, sectoral and institutional affiliation profile of the respondents shows that the surveys gathered the opinions of a wide variety of ET2020 stakeholders. In terms of the geographical coverage, the responses from the two surveys cover all EU Member States, EFTA countries, and EU candidate countries (the only exceptions being Luxembourg, Liechtenstein and Montenegro). Further details on the survey results are provided in Annex 3.

A key challenge in implementing the two online surveys was that the online surveys came on the heels of the Member State and stakeholder consultations conducted by DG EAC (see section 2.3.5). Indeed, some of the recipients of the survey invitation had participated in the DG EAC consultations in April 2018 (e.g. Ministry officials who had been asked to contribute to the DG EAC Member State consultation) felt that they had already given their opinion on ET2020.

2.3.3 Key informant interviews

The purpose of the key informant interviews was to complement the desk research and the stakeholder surveys by collating more detailed stakeholder perceptions and views on the ET2020 process, and the relevance, effectiveness of the implementation and impact of activities and deliverables from:

- EU level stakeholder organisations, as well as Commission officials from DG EAC and other DGs;
- high-level national policymakers (such as members of different advisory committees or directors' committees) who are less likely to respond to an online survey;
- technical-level policy makers and other national stakeholder organisations;
- persons directly involved in the design of the deliverables being assessed; and
- academics and experts.

Overall, 88 interviews have been carried out. The table below presents the number of interviews carried out by stakeholder type.

Table 1. Number of key informant interviews by stakeholder type

| Stakeholder type | Number of interviews |
|--|----------------------|
| EC officials and EU level stakeholder organisations | 20 |
| Persons directly involved in design of deliverables | 10 |
| National high-level policy makers and other national stakeholder organisations | 24 |
| National technical-level policy makers | 26 |
| Academics and experts | 7 |
| Total | 87 |

The table below provides an overview of the WG/sectoral affiliation of the individuals interviewed. This highlights that there has been a balanced spread across the sectoral and horizontal/transversal WGs.

Table 2. Number of interviews by WG/sectoral affiliation

| WG/ sectoral affiliation | Number of interviews |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Schools | 17 |
| Higher education | 17 |
| VET | 14 |
| Adult learning | 16 |
| Digital skills | 11 |
| Citizenship | 11 |
| Other (cross-sectoral) | 1 |
| Total | 87 |

The mailing and participation lists of the WGs and conferences, provided by the European Commission, proved very valuable in identifying suitable interview partners. Moreover, more detailed contacts of the persons involved in the design of the deliverable were provided. Additionally, interview partners recommended further contacts, including many technical-level policy makers less directly involved in the ET2020 tools and deliverables. Survey respondents were also asked whether they would be willing to be contacted for an interview and whether they had any suggestions for relevant national stakeholder organisations in their country that could be contacted.

2.3.4 Case studies

The purpose of the case studies was to gather more detailed evidence about cases in which an ET2020 tool or deliverable has been particularly influential in stimulating national debates on the topic and/or resulting in a policy change/reform. More specifically, the case studies have served to analyse the success factors and hypotheses about the effectiveness of the ET2020 tools and deliverables.

- The unit of analysis is a good practice example of the ET2020 tools and deliverables being used in a specific country (e.g. a country which has used the outputs from a mutual learning activity to inform and/or influence its

education and training policy). In addition to these national level case studies, one of the case studies also covers an EU level good practice example (i.e. the influence of the ET2020 deliverable "20 guiding principles for high-performance apprenticeships and work-based learning" on the subsequent European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships).

The case studies were selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- Where desk research, surveys and/or interviews showed clear evidence of influence of the ET2020 WGs and related tools and deliverables in a given country; and
- Need to ensure balanced thematic and country coverage.

10 case studies were taken forward and cover all ET2020 WGs to a similar degree and have good country and geographic coverage (see Table 3).

Table 3. Overview of the ten case studies

| Case study | Working Group | Country |
|---|------------------|------------|
| Lifelong Learning Labs | Adult Learning | NL |
| Digitalisation of basic education via Massive Open Online Courses | Adult Learning | AT |
| Performance-based funding in higher education | Higher Education | SI, CZ |
| Graduate tracking | Higher Education | PL |
| European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships, together with national experiences: dual learning framework (BE) and introduction of dual professional education (RO) | VET | EU, BE, RO |
| Pre-school education reforms | Schools | BG |
| Teacher' education and career reforms | Schools | LT |
| SELFIE pilot | Digital Skills | IT |
| Integration of Roma through Education | Citizenship | SK |

2.3.5 Analysis of feedback received from Member States' consultations

In the spring of 2018 DG EAC conducted a survey to collect Member States' reflections on the existing ET2020 framework, as well as on how the framework can be improved in the future to provide more focused support and generate more effective impact. The survey questionnaire was distributed on 7 February 2018 to all 28 Member States via the Council Secretariat of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council configuration. The consultation request was sent to a variety of different contacts for each Member State - often a combination of officials in permanent representation to the EU and the national education ministry. The deadline to submit responses was 30 April 2018. The survey contained 11 questions covering the overall ET2020 framework, its effectiveness, the appropriateness of its strategic objectives, and the links between the technical and political levels, in addition to questions on the ET2020 tools and outputs. A total of 23 Member States responded to the survey (including two Belgian responses – Belgium (NL) and Belgium (FR)), corresponding to 82% of the Member States²⁴.

²⁴ AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK

2.3.6 Analysis and triangulation

Whilst each of the main tasks for this study (as presented above) have been analysed separately (see annexes for further information), the subsequent sections of this report combine the evidence and findings from all the different sources (i.e. desk research, stakeholder surveys, interviews and case studies) to answer the specific research questions set out in section 1.2. In general, the quantitative trends and indicators are presented first and then complemented with more nuanced and detailed statements based on the findings from the informant interviews, case studies and desk research.

3 The design and usefulness of ET2020 tools and deliverables in addressing ET2020 objectives and priorities

Key messages

- The ET2020 WGs and the mutual learning activities conducted within their mandates are generally considered clearly focused and useful by stakeholders in the Member States and other participating countries. Overall, the activities are considered to be efficiently structured, make use of suitable meeting formats and involve the right type and profile of participants.
- The activities are considered particularly useful for further developing participants' individual work responsibilities and the work of their organisation/institution, as well as providing participants with new ideas for their field of work and a better understanding of other countries' and EU policies on education and training.
- WG members and other stakeholders particularly highlight the exchange of information (including the good practice examples), the networking opportunities and the open, informal, non-politicised and motivating environment in which these exchanges take place as being useful elements of the ET2020 tools.
- Almost all WG members and other stakeholders consider the mix of sectoral and horizontal WGs to be appropriate in addressing ET2020 objectives and priorities, although there are some differences in opinion regarding the organisation of the horizontal WGs.
- A stable WG membership facilitates the design and development of ET2020 deliverables, enabling good working relationships and strong buy-in. Factors that hindered the design and development of ET2020 deliverables include the lack of regular meeting attendance of all national representatives and lack of policy interest from the Member States.
- The Education and Training Monitor/ET2020 evidence monitoring (benchmarks and main indicators) provide useful, high-quality quantitative data that should be used alongside qualitative, country-specific knowledge about the policy context in each Member State and specific good practice examples.
- The frequency and type of usage of the online platform, Yammer, varies widely between the WGs. Generally, Yammer tends to be used mainly for information sharing and used much less extensively for collaborative work and webinars. As such, the main added value has been that it offers an alternative to email communication and provides a repository of WG-related communications and documents.
- There are a number of improvements that could be made to ensure that the ET2020 tools and deliverables effectively address ET2020 objectives and priorities, such as maximising the synergies between the WGs, ensuring stable and appropriate participant membership, and for certain topics or themes having more flexibility in the structure and implementation of activities.

3.1 Introduction

This section presents the key findings emerging from the assessment of the usefulness of activities carried out under the ET2020 framework, including the WGs and the mutual learning activities. It also examines the factors that have facilitated or hindered the development of ET2020 deliverables. It then looks at whether the evidence provided by the annual publication of the Education and Training Monitor has helped stimulate debate

and policy reform at national level and if, and how, the ET2020 evidence monitoring (benchmarks and main indicators) has had a positive influence at the national level. Finally, it presents the main findings in terms of how the tools and deliverables can be improved to ensure they effectively address ET2020 objectives and priorities.

This section has been informed by a combination of sources, comprising the desk research, stakeholder surveys, interviews, case studies and an analysis of feedback received from the Member States consultations.

3.2 Usefulness of activities carried out under the ET2020 framework

Across the various ET2020 tools and deliverables, stakeholder feedback is very positive. For example, most stakeholder survey respondents were satisfied with the organisation of the ET2020 activities they attended. Almost all respondents (more than 90%) strongly or somewhat agreed that participants were well informed about the content before the activity took place and that the objectives of the activity were clearly communicated to participants. Most respondents (between 80-90%) strongly or somewhat agreed that activities they were involved in kept a clear focus on its objective, the meeting format was suitable, the activities were efficiently structured, and the right type and profile of participants took part in them. Furthermore, almost all Member States (92% of responses in the Member State consultation) consider the ET2020 framework to be useful in either preparing, testing and/or implementing reforms in education and training.

Insights from the key informant interviews also concur with the above. For example, almost all interviewed policy makers (high-level and technical level) reported that the activities carried out and deliverables developed under the ET2020 framework were useful for their country. Around half of the interviewees stated that the activities and deliverables were useful to a great extent, whilst most of the remaining interviewees reported that they were useful to a medium extent or they described the usefulness in a more qualitative way. Notably, several interviewees highlighted the usefulness and value of good practice examples which are often included in ET2020 activity reports and deliverables. Several interviewees also noted that they appreciated the networking aspects of ET2020. In particular it was reported that ET2020 provides opportunities for WG members and mutual learning activity participants to establish contact points within relevant organisations in other countries. Such contacts have subsequently been used, in a few cases, to develop joint project proposals (including Erasmus+ Key Action 3 – Policy experimentation projects and projects co-funded by the European Structural and Investment Funds) or simply to find out more about policies and practices in these countries and/or to gain additional contact details.

The results of the assessment of the usefulness of each of the various activities organised through ET2020, including the WGs and the mutual learning activities, are assessed below. Where relevant and possible, a distinction between the various types of mutual learning activities (i.e. PLAs, peer reviews and peer counselling activities) has been made.

3.2.1 The usefulness of ET2020 Working Groups

3.2.1.1 Number, focus and structure

Since ET2020 was established in 2009, the number of WGs has decreased from 11 TWGs to 6 WGs (although since July 2018 this has increased to 7 WGs). This reduction from 11 TWGs to 6 WGs (particularly the new generation of WGs from 2016) has been appreciated by the stakeholders interviewed. Specifically, it was noted that the new generation of WGs has a more tightly defined focus and makes it more manageable for the Member States to allocate representatives to each of the WGs. Indeed, a few interviewees mentioned that if there are too many WGs it will be harder and more resource-intensive for the Member States to be represented in each of the WGs.

The interviews and the analysis of the feedback from the Member State consultation confirm that there is almost universal support for the current sector-focused working groups. The sector-focused working groups are largely reflective of the governance and organisation of education and training in the Member States. Thus, there is a good match between the focus of the WGs and the organisation structure of national ministries and other education authorities. In terms of potential improvements, two Member States in the Member State consultation mentioned that they would welcome the (re)introduction of a specific group on early childhood education and care (ECEC). Notably in this regard, a fifth sector-focused working group focusing on ECEC was added to the current mandate period (July 2018 to June 2020). One Member State also proposed a change to the name and focus of WG Adult Learning to Continuous Learning to reflect the changes in working life that require continuous learning at all ages. This point was also picked up in several interviews which called for a focus on continuous learning and smoother transitions between educational sectors.

The issue-focused working groups are also considered relevant as they reflect interlinkages in education and transversal challenges that are more appropriately addressed through interdisciplinary and horizontal cooperation. There is, however, some disagreement on whether they should be organised in the same way as the sector-focused working groups (i.e. with permanent representation and a two-year mandate period) or whether they should adopt a more flexible approach with a more fluid membership and/or a shorter mandate period. There are also those that are of the opinion that the transversal or horizontal issues should be integrated within the sector-focused working groups (i.e. not through specific issue-focused working groups) and/or be represented through ad hoc cross-cutting activities or joint sessions of two WGs. Regardless of how they are organised, there is, however, agreement that the mechanisms for interacting with other WGs need to be strengthened (see section 3.2.1.4 for further detail).

The main **concrete issues** that have been addressed through the WGs were set out in the WG mandates and reflect the priorities and critical issues presented in the annex to the 2015 Joint Report. The WG members and other stakeholders interviewed were in broad agreement that the critical issues that have been addressed within the WGs reflect the main policy priorities and issues in education and training in Europe. In addition, it was noted by several interviewees that it is important that the structure of the WGs and the critical issues to be addressed within the WG mandates continue to reflect a thorough assessment of the main policy priorities and critical issues. In other words, the structure and focus of the WGs should reflect a bottom-up process rather than a top down approach. The two-year mandates of the WGs are important in this regard as this facilitates a process in which the priorities and issues covered by the WGs can be reviewed and updated on a frequent basis.

Several interviewees mentioned that it is important that the WG mandates remain focused and tightly defined, as covering too many policy priorities and critical issues potentially weakens the policy messages coming out of the WGs. As such, the decision not to reflect all policy priorities and critical issues presented in the 2015 Joint Report in the WG mandates was appreciated by the stakeholders interviewed, although some interviewees would like to see an even tighter focus in the WGs.

3.2.1.2 Membership composition and meetings of the WGs

The WGs bring together, on a voluntary basis, representatives from Member States, candidate countries and EFTA countries and relevant EU bodies or agencies (e.g. Cedefop, ETF, Eurydice), as well as representatives from education and training associations and European social partners (e.g. ETUC, BusinessEurope, UEAPME, CEEP, ETUCE and EFEE)²⁵.

²⁵ They participate as members to the Brussels meetings and are invited under certain conditions (in particular relevance for the topic addressed) to the PLAs.

Whilst the stakeholders interviewed have not commented extensively on the **membership composition** of the WGs, it was noted among the small number of stakeholders that did comment, that WG membership was considered to be inconsistent across the WGs and that not all relevant stakeholders are represented. Civic society organisations, in particular, were mentioned as rarely being represented in the WGs. There were also some concerns from independent experts that it can be difficult as an expert to be invited to, and participate in, WG meetings and mutual learning activities. This, however, largely reflects the fact that experts are not formal members. Instead, experts are invited to make contributions (in WG meetings or mutual learning activities) to specific topics that are of particular importance to the work of the WGs. Such views should, however, be weighed up against those that consider the WG membership to be too extensive, at least for the purposes of having face-to-face meetings. In summary, while arguably a restriction to the number of experts attending WG meetings is needed for these meetings to be efficient, an approach that is too restrictive may reduce stakeholder buy-in and undermine later dissemination efforts and hence impact of the results of such meetings.

In terms of the **meetings of the WGs**, members particularly appreciate the open and informal nature of the meetings as well as the networking aspects of them. There are, however, also some views that the WG meetings (which take place in Brussels) are too long and involve too many individuals/countries. In contrast to the mutual learning activities they also, according to some interviewees, have a tendency to focus more on presenting information rather than giving members opportunities for in-depth discussions. In order to streamline the WG meetings, a few of the interviewees mentioned that it may be possible to share some of the information beforehand so that there is less focus on presentations and more time for interactive sessions. A few high-level and technical level policy makers also noted that the flow of information through the WGs can be overwhelming at times for individual members. As such, it is important that the information that is shared with WG members is suitably tailored and streamlined.

3.2.1.3 Deliverables of the Working Groups

The **deliverables** of the WGs have been varied (see Annex 1), which largely reflects the expected outputs set out in the WG mandates. For example, some WGs have focused more on developing specific tools and operational support (such as DigCompEducator²⁶ and SELFIE under WG Digital Skills and Competences), whilst others have focused more on policy analysis and guidance (such as the WG Schools' guide on policies to improve initial teacher education; and the 20 guiding principles of high-performance apprenticeships and work-based learning under WG VET). WG Higher Education and WG Citizenship have also contributed with good practice examples for the online compendium of good practices in education and training. The alignment of deliverables with EU and national priorities and examples of their impact on a national level are examined more closely in section 4.

In addition to the deliverables designed and developed within the WGs (see Annex 1 for further detail), the mutual learning activities are also an important output of the WGs (see section 3.2.2 for further detail).

3.2.1.4 Synergies between the Working Groups

The Member State consultations and the stakeholder interviews highlight the need for greater cooperation to fully exploit potential synergies between the WGs and to help address cross-sectoral/thematic issues such as inclusive education in schools or digital skills in adult learning. Whilst the 2016-18 WG mandates highlighted the need for such synergies, the concrete details on the expected synergies were not fully developed (with the exception of WG Schools which referred to specific opportunities for opportunities for cross-sector dialogue and cross-WG PLAs – namely, on issues such as critical thinking skills

²⁶ Whilst DigCompEdu was discussed in the WG and covered by a dedicated session, it should not be considered as a "direct deliverable" of WG Digital Skills and Competences.

and community learning eco-systems with WG Higher Education; or learning environments to foster active citizenship and integration with WG Citizenship). This lack of precision is not necessarily negative as long as the mandates provide enough flexibility and incentives to allow for joint events or other cross-working to happen. In practice, the stakeholder feedback suggests that the lack of coordination and cooperation between the WGs has in some cases led to a lack of coherence across the WGs and also has the potential to lead to contradictions and duplication.

Notwithstanding the overall view that synergies have not been fully exploited, the interviews highlight a few examples where synergies have been achieved between the WGs (most notably, at the national level, but also at the EU level). For example, cross-sectoral national taskforces or groups have been set up in a few countries (including Austria, Denmark and Serbia) to share information and learning from all WGs. It also appears according to some of the interviewees that the cooperation between the WG coordinators has been good. Naturally, the issue-focused working groups have made some efforts to spread information and contribute to the discussions in the sector-focused working groups, although this has largely been restricted to presentations and document sharing. Such information and document sharing has also been evident from the sector-focused working groups. Whilst useful to get an overview of the work of the other WGs, interviewees note that information and document sharing is not sufficient to fully exploit synergies. Instead, joint WG meetings and mutual learning activities, while rare and possibly requiring more preparation, are endorsed by several Member States.

The Member State consultation survey also highlighted a few potential opportunities for collaboration between WGs. For example, WG Schools and WG Citizenship could cooperate on language learning for migrant children. Similarly, as WG VET and WG Adult Learning work on similar challenges, but in different age groups, there is scope for greater collaboration. It was also noted that digital issues should be addressed in all WGs.

3.2.1.5 Success factors

A number of important success factors increasing the usefulness of ET2020 have been highlighted in the Member State consultations and the interviews. These include having the most appropriate individuals present at the meetings. It is not always about the structure of the WGs; more often it is about having well-motivated and knowledgeable individuals participating. It is therefore important that the European Commission and Member States work together to identify the most appropriate individuals to be members of the WGs. Notably, as the incentive to get involved is likely to be higher the more clearly defined and focused the topics are, the greater the focus should be on ensuring this happens in future.

3.2.2 The usefulness of mutual learning activities

With regard to the mutual learning activities, there are three principal types of activities used within the context of ET2020:

- Peer learning activities (PLAs);
- Peer reviews; and
- Peer counselling.

These are usually conducted within the mandate of the WGs but can also be organised outside these structures. The most common mutual learning activity within the context of ET2020 is peer learning activities (PLAs). Indeed, out of the 30 mutual learning activities covered by this study, 22 are PLAs.

Peer reviews were introduced following the 2012 Joint Report, and have, according to the 2015 Joint Report, proved useful in the context of the informal Directors General meetings. Notably, only one peer review is included among the 30 activities covered by this study,

namely the high-level peer reviews supporting teachers and trainers at the Directors General of Vocational Training (DGVT) meeting. This reflects the fact that the peer review format has been used much less frequently than the PLA and peer counselling formats.

A new type of mutual learning activity – peer counselling – was also introduced following the 2015 Joint Report, with a view to increasing the focus on supporting Member States' national policy development. This format is similar to the Mutual Assistance Projects and Peer Support activities organised by DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. Specifically, the peer counselling tool aims to assist a Member State to develop or implement a particular national policy/reform agenda with inputs from experts from a small number of countries. It is intended to go beyond information-sharing and provide a forum for finding solutions to national challenges in a participatory workshop. Another unique feature of this type of activity is that the participants meet on several occasions and not as part of a single event. As part of this study, six peer counselling activities are covered.

The general feedback from participants and other stakeholders regarding these mutual learning activities has been positive. The mutual learning activities organised in the context of ET2020 are universally recognised as valuable – 92% of Member State responses in the Member State consultation survey indicate that they have been useful for national education and training policy making. Similarly, based on the survey responses, participants reported that:

- the objectives of the activities were clearly communicated (92% of respondents strongly agree or agree);
- they were well informed about its content before the activities (90%);
- the activities kept a clear focus on the objectives (89%);
- the activities were efficiently structured (88%);
- the meeting format (duration, mixture of sessions) was suitable (86%); and
- the right type and profile of participants took part in the activities (82%).

The respondents to the participants survey also reported that the activities were useful for further developing participants' individual work responsibilities (88% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed), the work of their organisation/institution (82%), and their country's education and training policy agenda (65%²⁷). The activities also provided participants with new ideas for their field of work (90%) and how ideas that they already had could be effectively implemented (77%). They also provided the participants with a better understanding of other countries' and EU policies on education and training (89% and 85%, respectively).

While the Member State consultations, the survey findings and the interviews confirm that the ET2020 mutual learning activities are considered useful, several Member States highlight that it is difficult to draw a direct connection between a mutual learning activity and a national policy reform (although some examples are presented in section 4 of this report). The greatest value of the activities is the **exchange of information**, the **networking aspect**, and the **motivating atmosphere**.

Only a few of the stakeholders interviewed that have participated in more than one type of activity. As a result, it has been difficult to compare the different types of activities against each other. In fact, they are all suitable to different situations and thus should be selected on the basis of the specific topic being discussed, the type of participants, and the desired outcomes of the activity. Whether they participated in one or not, several interview partners consider the addition of the peer counselling activity to be a particularly useful

²⁷ As more than 12% responded don't know/not applicable to this question, this is likely to be an underestimate.

complement to the PLAs. More evidence on the impact of specific activities covered by this study is discussed in section 4.3.2.

Overall, the most commonly reported success factors contributing to making these mutual learning activities useful include the following:

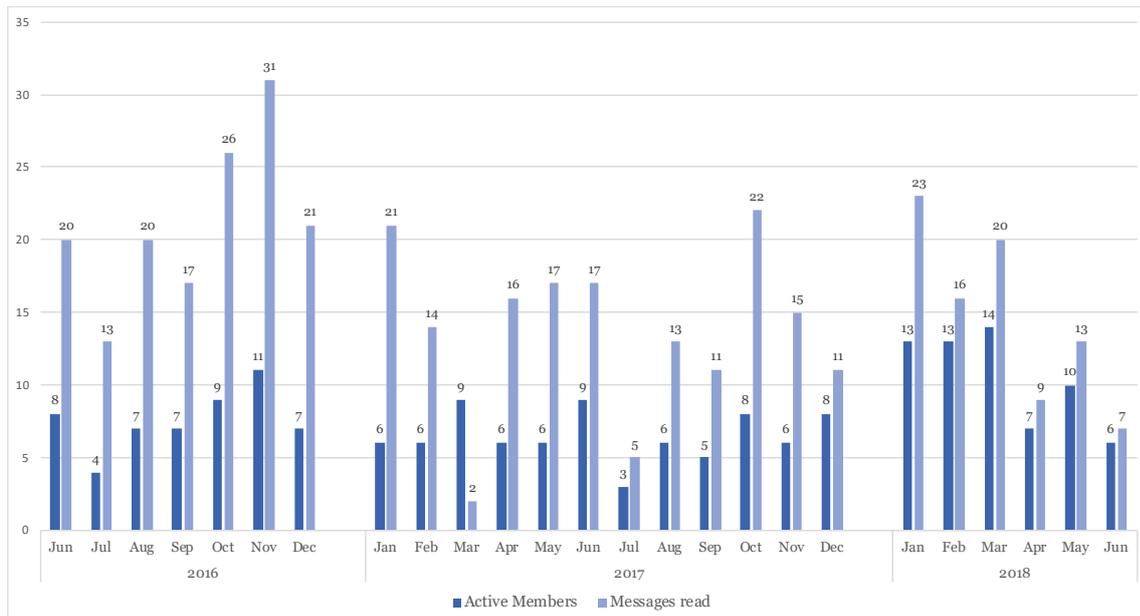
- **In-depth discussions and exchange of practical examples.** The opportunity to exchange information on a detailed, technical level, engage in discussions between the countries and ask in-depth follow-up questions contributed to the success of the mutual learning activities.
- **Providing an open, informal and “non-politicised” environment for discussion.** Several stakeholders commented that the creation of an open, informal and “non-politicised” environment for discussion was a key asset of the ET2020 process. PLAs are considered particularly instructive by focusing on a specific policy issue. The inclusion of good practice examples also enables an understanding of what works in other countries and enables countries to transfer relevant aspects to their national contexts.
- **Good organisation and leadership of the activities.** This includes strong facilitation enabling in-depth discussions; appropriate selection of technical experts; clearly defined scope and focus; distribution of background information in advance of the activity; and timely information and support before and during the activity. Several Member State responses mention the importance of preparing for the event and arriving with prior knowledge about the topic as making participation in mutual learning more useful.

3.2.3 The usefulness of Yammer

In the framework of ET2020, the Yammer platform is primarily used for the exchange of information within the WGs. In total, there are 19 ET2020 groups on Yammer; 12 of these groups are explicitly linked to one of the WGs (e.g. Schools, Higher Education). Additional groups are set up for various purposes, e.g. for editorial purposes in the context of Adult Learning, Collaborative Learning and Initial Teacher Education. The quantitative analysis, including on the number of active members and the number of messages read, was completed for the period June 2016 – July 2018 as there is no statistical data dating back more than two years. Furthermore, the data analysis feature in Yammer did not allow any insights into the composition of the platform’s members (e.g. country of residence), which is why particularly active Member States cannot be identified.

First of all, the overall participation (see figure below) does not indicate particularly prominent patterns. The number of active members appears to have decreased slightly in 2017 compared to 2016, from an average of 7.5 active members daily to 6.5. In 2018, however, the number increased significantly to 10.5 active members per day on average. A similar pattern is reflected in the number of messages read. Nonetheless it should be noted that, given the overall number of members (800), the degree of engagement on the platform can be considered to be relatively low.

Figure 1. Number of active members and messages read (daily average)²⁸



Source: Yammer.

The groups differ greatly in their level of activity. Among the most active groups, for example, is the Yammer group “Adult Learning 2016-18”. In the last 12 months, the group has had a total number of 73 active members – out of 123 members altogether – as well as 184 posted, 10 211 read, and 620 liked messages, suggesting a high level of activity. The activities comprise the sharing of updates on reports and deliverables by the group, other group-related information and information related to adult learning (e.g. reference to toolkits on financing adult education or theme-relevant events). Communication occurs regularly, i.e. at least weekly or every two weeks. Although a majority of the messages are posted by the group administrator, frequent exchange occurs in the comments on the posts. Hence, the group can be considered to use Yammer actively as an exchange and collaboration tool with more than half of the group being active members. Other groups, e.g. 2016-18 Higher Education, demonstrate a substantially lower level of activity. In the WG Higher Education, among 137 members, only 41 were counted as active in the past year. The number of posted messages, with only two messages in 2018, as well as the number of read and liked messages indicates that the group is rarely used for meaningful exchange.

Overall, it appears that Yammer is mostly used as an information sharing platform. Initially it was also expected that Yammer would be used for collaborative work and webinars, although from the interviews conducted it does not appear that it has been used extensively for such purposes. As such, the main added value has been that it offers an alternative to email communication and provides a repository of WG related communications and documents.

²⁸ A person is counted as active in the group if they posted, read, or liked a message from the group during the selected period. The indicator “messages read” includes the number of group messages that were read during the selected period. See: <https://support.office.com/en-us/article/view-group-insights-in-yammer-73f9fa6d-d442-4f25-9194-d5317c9328ab> (last accessed: 13.08.2018).

3.3 Success factors and challenges in designing and developing deliverables

Unlike mutual learning activities, deliverables are developed over a longer period, often over several years. This requires continued engagement by WG members. Consequently, the key success factor facilitating the development of a deliverable is buy-in from the WG members. This buy-in depends on two crucial conditions: 1) a good working relationship among the WG members which creates the necessary atmosphere for productive work; and 2) a shared understanding that there is political will in the Member States to use the deliverables for productive policy change. The key hindering factors emerging from the analysis are, conversely, unstable membership of the WGs which makes it harder to work together, and lack of interest by the Member States to adapt their policies in light of the information and recommendations provided by deliverables.

Further to the above, and based on the views of experts directly involved in the production of the deliverables within the study scope, the following success factors were mentioned:

- Leaving it to WG members to define their own objectives helped create stakeholder buy-in and ensured the long-term commitment of members to work on a deliverable, even if it meant that initially members spent more time than anticipated on agreeing the objectives.
- Keeping the purpose of a deliverable – and its intended audience – in mind when designing it will increase its usefulness and take-up.
- A stable membership in a WG creates mutual trust necessary for open discussions to take place. A few interviewees mentioned that creating a community spirit and good working relationships with other WG members created favourable conditions for strong involvement of all members.
- Preparatory meetings/background information (shared in advance of WG meetings) in combination with PLAs worked best in keeping the WG focused and engaged. However, this requires sufficient interest among members in the topic, which is not a given. As mentioned above, to guarantee sufficient interest among members, it is important to have a stable WG membership composed of the policy-makers and experts with expertise and knowledge matching the topic of the deliverable.
- More time for interactive sessions – meaning more discussion, more hands-on activities – and less time spent on passive presentations is understood to catalyse the work on the deliverable.

Conversely, factors hindering the development of a deliverable include:

- A lack of regular meeting attendance by all national representatives. Some Member States rotate the officials who attend the meetings and that makes it hard to create long-term good working relationships, which is one of the key identified factors for success.
- A lack of evidence base for discussion (e.g. through survey data, background papers) diminishes the quality of deliverables.
- A lack of buy-in or engagement from Member States due to changing policy priorities at the EU or Member State level. This can, in part, be mitigated by ensuring that the deliverables are developed using a bottom-up approach. This relates both to which deliverables that are taken forward and how they are developed.

In summary, this suggests there is a trade-off between the rapid launch of an ET2020 deliverable, combined with less ownership by WG members, and a slower initial process of

reaching a common agreement around the purpose of the ET2020 deliverable, combined with stronger commitment by WG members to see the process through to the end.

3.4 Influence of Education and Training Monitor and ET2020 evidence monitoring (benchmarks and main indicators) at national level

The *Education and Training Monitor* is the key publication analysing and setting out the progress made towards the ET2020 benchmarks. The analysis of both the key informant interviews and the Member State consultation show that the benchmarks and indicators provide useful, high-quality quantitative evidence that should be used alongside qualitative, country-specific knowledge about the policy context and specific policy measures in each Member State. Indeed, the key step in using the data well is to make a link between the quantitative data point and the policy situation in the Member State.

All interviewees who commented on the benchmarks and indicators found them to be useful for their work. The principal ways in which they use the evidence provided in the Education and Training Monitor are as a comparative reference point (i.e. to understand where their country stands relative to other Member States) and as crucial evidence when making arguments in discussions with national policy-makers and stakeholder organisations. The benchmarks and indicators are used to raise awareness and stimulate debate on policy topics, to make budgetary spending justifications, and to provide reliable information for reports and presentations. The majority of examples of how the indicators are used comes from cases in which the particular Member State is underperforming on one or more of the indicators (e.g. early leaving from education or training); but, it should be noted that, the indicators are not only used by “underperformers”.

Interviewed stakeholders confirmed that a robust evidence base is essential for critical reflection, although ultimately, the usefulness of benchmarking depends on the attitude and aptitude in using the data and information for policy making purposes.

Member State consultation results confirms the interview findings according to which the comparative data of the benchmarks and indicators is appreciated, but Member States would like to see it interpreted more carefully, considering the different social, economic and educational context in each country. Thus, the Member State consultation results show a certain leaning towards a more “nuanced” interpretation of the benchmarks.

Most Member State responses in the Member State consultation (62.5%) indicate that the ET2020 benchmarks have been effective and/or useful. That said, around a third of Member States would like to keep the number of indicators and benchmarks limited. Indeed, there is wide consensus against the introduction of new benchmarks. There were also views expressed that the indicators should be used in a more nuanced way, supported by more qualitative analysis of key national contextual trends. Specifically, two Member States cautioned against using the benchmarks as a ranking system.

Many Member States suggest adjusting the age groups of some benchmarks (e.g. ECEC; and early school leaving (ESL)) to match the age requirements in the different education systems. However, adopting this suggestion would make the cross-country comparisons more difficult. Several Member States indicate that the benchmarks in some fields such as higher education and ECEC are easier to define and measure compared to the benchmarks on lifelong learning, for example.

Just over 40% of the Member State responses in the Member State consultation indicate that the evidence provided in the Monitor has stimulated national debates, whilst 20% say that it has stimulated policy reforms. A quarter of the Member States appreciate the comparative perspective provided by the Monitor and say they use it as an evidence-based tool for policy-making.

While there is a difference in the enthusiasm for the benchmarks and indicators that individual policy-makers reveal in the interviews and as part of the official positions from

the Member State consultations, there is a unified conclusion coming through both that there is no desire for more indicators, but that the data provided by the existing indicators should be used more effectively.

3.5 Potential improvements to ensure ET2020 tools and deliverables effectively address ET2020 objectives and priorities

A number of ideas for future improvements to ensure ET2020 tools and deliverables effectively address ET2020 objectives and priorities have been identified and highlighted from the Member State consultations, stakeholder surveys and interviews.

In terms of the **mandate for the WGs**, there is a clear call amongst the stakeholders to continue to ensure that the mandate for activities remains clear on the focus and expected outputs from the WG. This will not only help identify suitable permanent members to the WGs but can also be expected to result in better outcomes. However, there is also a need for greater flexibility within the current structures to allow for revisions and adjustments to reflect political development and/or urgent issues that arise. To provide for this flexibility, it would be useful to allow for the possibility of having short-term constellations (or sub-groups) in the existing WGs in order to deal with specific issues. These smaller groups may not involve all Member States and can be composed of members from different WGs, depending on the subject (e.g. migrant education). This is to an extent already achieved through the PLAs, but in some cases further restrictions in terms of numbers is needed for PLAs to be as efficient and effective as possible. Moreover, implementing “cross-cutting sessions”, i.e. sessions that bring together horizontal and sectoral groups on specific issues, may be helpful in sharing knowledge and exploiting synergies. Such smaller, and potentially more agile, constellations could have a narrower scope and a shorter mandate period so that a stronger focus can be given to a specific area.

Another suggestion put forward by some stakeholders (9) is that horizontal groups could be more flexible thematically so that specific challenges can be tackled more quickly, while the sectoral WGs remain constant in their mandates. Other interview partners, however, stressed the importance of continuity in a WG’s mandate to be able to work effectively towards shared goals.

Several interviewees highlighted that the competence and preparedness of the WG coordinators was critical to the quality of the work produced by the WGs.

In relation to the **frequency of activities**, the current mutual learning activities should be intensified. This would further strengthen a more regular and systematic exchange of experiences and ensure the continuum and momentum of discussions and the necessary follow up between the meetings. This was strongly supported in the stakeholder consultations undertaken for this study. The ET2020 participants’ survey respondents agreed that ET2020 tools should be offered more frequently: 67% strongly or somewhat agreed mutual learning activities should be offered more frequently. The possibility to hold virtual meetings should be considered for some ET2020 exchanges.

As for **broadening the WG membership and participation in ET2020 tools and deliverables**, a key consideration is whether to open up and/or strengthen the WG membership and participation in ET2020 tools and deliverables in relation to non-governmental stakeholders. This would ensure a broader knowledge base being available, wider ownership of ET2020 tools and deliverables at the national level and broader dissemination of ET2020 outputs at the national level. The potential risks relate to jeopardising the “safe space” for discussions between government representatives about effective and less effective solutions and thus less open and detailed discussions. Stakeholder feedback is divided on this issue. Around 40% of the ET2020 participant survey respondents suggested including more representatives outside the national ministries, such as universities, experts, employers’ and trade unions, learners and families. This is confirmed by interview feedback according to which the WGs and PLAs

should be broadened out to include more non-governmental stakeholders. A way forward could be a gradual opening to non-governmental stakeholders depending on the issue discussed in the WGs and type of exchanges (e.g. dividing the meetings into open and closed sessions to the government representatives). This approach could also be piloted in one WG to explore how effective it is in achieving the WG's set goals.

Linked to the above, there are calls for the ET2020 tools to allow for **more interactive and in-depth discussions**. Member States prefer more interactive formats for the mutual learning activities with more time for discussion and reflection and more small-group work. There is a resounding consensus that the value of the mutual learning activities lies in the informal discussions and exchanges with colleagues, not in the formal presentations. Even the coffee breaks and the evening activities (such as dinners) are seen as very valuable as they facilitate networking and informal exchanges.

Another key aspect for future improvements is the **specialist and stable membership composition** which plays a key role in ensuring the success of ET2020 tools and deliverables. Participating stakeholders need to be further encouraged to send specialists in the subject matter covered by ET2020 tools and deliverables rather than officials from EU/international cooperation units in the organisations. In the latter case, the success of ET2020 tools and deliverables is at risk if participants are not well prepared, do not fully understand the topic under discussion and cannot contribute effectively in the WG activities. Fluctuation and change in the membership can also lead to discussions being broken up and reducing the quality of WG outcomes. A continuous membership over the two-year mandate period of a WG is thus preferable. An exception to this is if the priorities of the WGs change. In such circumstances, it may be necessary to introduce changes to the membership to ensure that the members feel competent.

There is a need to **ensure that synergies are better exploited** through greater cooperation and collaboration, as well as jointly organised activities, where this is relevant and reflects the nature of topics. This was identified as a continuing need by a significant number of countries in the Member State consultation survey (13 out of 24 responding countries), pointing to the need to ensure better linkages between the WGs, sharing of expertise and outcomes, and organisation of joint activities where necessary. Interviews also highlight the need for greater cooperation and collaboration, as well as joint meetings and activities between WGs. This would assist in making the activities more coherent and reducing the potential for overlaps/duplication (mentioned by eight interviewees). For example, it was mentioned by one interviewee that it is not clear whether digitalisation in adult learning (which is considered an extremely important topic) should be dealt with by WG Adult Learning or WG Digital Skills and Competences (or jointly). Similarly, it was noted by another interviewee that it is not clear whether media literacy in adult learning should be dealt with by WG Adult Learning or WG Citizenship (or jointly). Notably, the PLA that was organised in the Netherlands in April 2016 (*Strengthening media literacy and critical thinking among young people as a tool to prevent and combat violent radicalisation*), focused specifically on young people. In some Member States, there are also country-specific contexts that means that WG mandates might be perceived to overlap. For example, in Sweden, and in relation to higher vocational education, there was a perception that the mandate of WG VET can sometimes overlap with WG Higher Education.

Several interview partners highlighted the need for **more effective dissemination of information** across the WGs. In the ET2020 participant survey, only about half of participants in ET2020 activities agree that they are adequately informed about the results from the sector-focused WGs (Schools, VET, etc.) and the issue-focused WGs (Digital Skills, Citizenship), and other mutual learning activities which they did not attend. Furthermore, only around a third of respondents agreed that they were adequately informed about the results from the expert groups such as the Indicator Expert Group on Education and Training Evidence Monitoring (SGIB). It is however important to stress here

that it is not necessarily about more information being shared or sharing the information more frequently. It is more about having effective tools for sharing the information. This can be in the form of an online compendium of good practices which has been used in some WGs. The need for a wider ET2020 dissemination tool within the ministries has also been mentioned by several Member States. Some Member States suggest a closed platform/portal that contains all meeting dates, agendas, event reports, etc., while others envision a more open tool that is accessible by stakeholders, social partners and education providers that are not formal members of the WGs.

Finally, there is a need to ensure that the **key challenges** facing the education and training systems across Europe continue to guide and focus the European cooperation in education and training (during the remainder of ET2020 and beyond). In the Member State consultation survey, there is a distinct interest in continuing working on the new urgent challenges facing the education and training systems – in particular capitalising on the opportunities offered by digitalisation and responding to the challenges of migration. Another set of topics repeated in the national government responses is the need to focus on mobility and lifelong learning, the promotion of common European values and identity, and ensuring equity and social inclusion. So far, these issues have to some extent been addressed through the digital skills and citizenship WGs hence it is important to consider their future operation. In the ET2020 participant survey, only 37% of respondents indicated that different topics should be considered in future activities, which seems to indicate that the current topic coverage is sufficient.

Finally, it is important not to consider the various ET2020 tools and deliverables as separate activities. They all form part of a “toolbox” of activities that complement each other in reaching the ET2020 priorities and objectives. So instead of considering whether more or less should be done regarding certain activities, the more important issue is to ensure that synergies between activities are properly exploited.

4 Alignment and impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables

Key messages

- All deliverables are relevant to the key EU priorities as set out in the Europe 2020 Strategy and/or the current Commission's 10 political priorities.
- Most deliverables are moderately linked with national priorities in terms of the number of countries in which relevant policy measures could be identified. No clear geographic patterns could be identified. Different deliverables by the same WG tend to be reflected in national policy in the same countries.
- The work of the ET2020 WGs in general as well as the concrete activities and deliverables achieved a considerable impact in various Member States, following an impact chain at the individual, organisational and national level. ET2020 tools and deliverables have contributed to individual capacity-building and networking, organisational planning and initiatives, as well as changes in the national programmes and policies, in particular through in-depth discussion on national good practices. Peer counselling and PLAs and several deliverables have turned out to be particularly interesting examples of national impact and follow-up.
- Regarding the dissemination and reach of the ET2020 tools and deliverables, most participants interviewed/ surveyed for this study have made an effort to communicate key messages and results of the activities they have been involved in. However, this is often not done systematically. Factors facilitating dissemination include tailored dissemination materials in an accessible language, and events and conferences as communication channels. Conversely, barriers to dissemination include linguistic issues and time constraints.
- The ET2020 tools and deliverables have had a varying impact in social and traditional media, and in academic literature, of reaching the intended target groups. These results suggest that a more comprehensive and systematic dissemination strategy may lead to greater and more consistent impact for the different tools and deliverables.
- Interactions between the technical and political levels has been uneven and need to be further supported on a more systematic and regular basis.
- Interactions between the technical and political levels has been uneven and need to be further supported on a more systematic and regular basis.

4.1 Introduction

This section presents the key findings from the assessment of the relevance of the ET2020 deliverables to EU priorities and explores links to national priorities (see section 2.2 for further detail on the conceptual differences between relevance and links). It then examines the impact of the ET2020 tools and deliverables at the individual, organisational and national levels. The section also assesses the impact of specific (types of) activities and deliverables, drawing on both stakeholder feedback and evidence collected through the case studies. The section then looks at the factors facilitating and hindering dissemination of ET2020 outputs and their impact in the media. Finally, the interactions between the technical and political levels in the ET2020 framework is explored.

4.2 Link between deliverables and European and national priorities

The question of links with Europe 2020 Strategy's priorities is particularly important, given that ET2020 was initially set up to support policy cooperation at EU level in the fields of education and training in alignment with that strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

4.2.1 Relevance to EU priorities

All 10 deliverables covered by this study are relevant to the key EU priorities as set out in the Europe 2020 Strategy and the current Commission's 10 political priorities (see Annex 2 for full assessment of each deliverable in this respect). **Five deliverables are directly relevant** in that they explicitly address priorities in the Europe 2020 Strategy and/or the Commission's 10 political priorities, along with relevant Commission Communications and Council Conclusions (see Annex 5 for an overview). These deliverables are: *High-Performance Apprenticeships & Work-Based Learning: 20 Guiding Principles*; *Basic Skills in the Workplace*; *Teachers and Trainers Matter – How to support them in high-performance apprenticeships and work-based learning*; *Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool* and *Financing Adult Learning*. **The other five deliverables are indirectly relevant** as they do not explicitly address the EU priorities, but can be seen as contributing to them. These deliverables are: *Teacher's Careers*, *DigCompEducator*, *Online Compendium of Good Practices in Education and Training - Modernising Higher Education*, *SELFIE* and the *Online Compendium of Good Practices in Education and Training - Citizenship and Inclusive Education*.

No contradictions with the relevant EU priorities could be identified for any of the deliverables studied. It should be noted that the two deliverables produced by WG Digital Skills and Competences (*DigCompEducator* and *SELFIE*) were shaped by the WG but took on a life of their own being further adapted and developed by users outside the WG.

4.2.2 Link to national priorities

Based on the analysis of the national developments in the education and training systems, the table below shows where there is a link between the individual deliverables produced by the different working groups and recent or ongoing policy measures in Member States. The last column of the table then sums up the number of deliverables that are reflected in national policy for each country.

Table 4. Reflections of deliverables identified in national policy

| Member State | Topic addressed by ET2020 deliverables | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|--|--|--|---|--|---|---|--|--|------------------------------|
| | Teachers' careers (WG Schools) | Apprenticeships & work-based learning (WG VET) | Teachers/ trainers in apprenticeships & work-based learning (WG VET) | SELFIE (WG Digital Skills and Competences) | DigCompEducator (WG Digital Skills and Competences) | Financing Adult Learning (WG Adult Learning) | Basic skills in the workplace (WG Adult Learning) | Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool (WG Adult Learning) | Modernising Higher Education (WG Higher Education) | Citizenship and Inclusive Education (WG Citizenship) | Total number of deliverables |
| AT | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 5 |
| BE | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 7 |
| BG | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | 6 |
| CY | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 7 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| CZ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 5 |
| DE | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 8 |
| DK | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 9 |
| EE | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 6 |
| EL | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 7 |
| ES | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | 6 |
| FI | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 8 |
| FR | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 6 |
| HR | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 9 |
| HU | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | 5 |
| IE | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 7 |
| IT | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 8 |
| LT | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | 5 |
| LU | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 7 |
| LV | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 6 |
| MT | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 9 |
| NL | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 6 |
| PL | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | 5 |
| PT | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 6 |
| RO | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 6 |
| SE | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 5 |
| SI | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | 3 |
| SK | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 6 |
| UK | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | 6 |
| Total number of countries | 17 | 26 | 8 | 13 | 12 | 15 | 13 | 26 | 27 | 22 | |

Source: desk research for current study

Based on the findings presented above, three **country groups** can be identified with respect to the link between ET2020 deliverables and ongoing national reforms and developments in the 2015-18 period:

- **Limited link:** seven countries²⁹ for which a link was identified in regard to three to five deliverables. This includes predominantly small countries with centrally managed education systems and a mix of northern, western, and southern countries.
- **Moderate link:** 15 countries³⁰ for which a link was identified regarding six to seven deliverables. This includes a combination of small and larger countries, as well as a geographical mix of countries.
- **Strong link:** six countries for which a link was identified in regard to eight to ten deliverables³¹. This includes a mix of small countries and large

²⁹ AT; CZ; HU; LT; PL; SE; SI

³⁰ BE; BG; CY; EE; EL; ES; FR; IE; LU; LV; NL; PT; RO; SK; UK.

³¹ DE; DK; FI; HR; IT; MT

countries with federalised education systems, as well as southern and northern countries.

A direct comparison between the **deliverables** based on the table above reveals a very strong link for three out of 10 deliverables. For example, the *Online Compendium of Good Practices in Education and Training Modernising Higher Education* has a link with national policy measures in 27 countries, followed by *Apprenticeships & work-based learning* and the *Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool* with 26 countries each. The lowest comparative link was identified for *SELFIE* (13 countries), *DigCompEducator* (12) and *Teachers/trainers in apprenticeships & work-based learning* (8). This also reflects the timing of the deliverables as some of them are relatively recent and hence significant alignment might be too early to expect. The other five deliverables had a link in for 15-22 countries.

An analysis of the **alignment of deliverables by the WG** that produced them based on the table above shows that the two deliverables by WG Digital Skills and Competences are reflected in the national policy of the same countries. Similarly, in case of the three deliverables produced by WG Adult Learning there is an overlap of countries in which the deliverables were reflected in national policy. For the two reports *Financing Adult Learning* and *Basic Skills in the Workplace*, the deliverables were reflected in the same nine countries³². In contrast, a comparison of the potential impact of the deliverables by the WG VET shows a wide gap between the guide on *High-Performance Apprenticeships & Work-Based Learning: 20 Guiding Principles* with potential impact in 26 countries, and *Teachers/trainers in apprenticeships* with potential impact in eight countries. No potential pattern could be analysed for the three WGs with only one deliverable per WG.

Overall, the desk research suggests a **fairly high extent of alignment of deliverables with national priorities**. This finding is confirmed by the stakeholder surveys and the key informant interviews. For example, most stakeholder survey respondents stated that the topic of the ET2020 tools and deliverables they were involved in was strongly connected with the education and training policy priorities of their institution, their country, other countries, and the European Union. Most of the stakeholders interviewed also described the tools and deliverables to be of medium to great interest for their organisation. At the same time, interview feedback points to a risk of deliverables presenting only general, less useful, conclusions in order to be agreeable to all WG members. In such instances, the outputs serve as interesting background material according to a few interviewees but are not of high significance for their national contexts. Moreover, where the outputs are considered as not very useful, according to some Member States, it is because initiatives similar to those inspired by ET2020 had already been implemented at the national level. Specifically, with regard to deliverables in the form of toolkits and online compendia, the point was made in the interviews that these need to be updated on a regular basis to remain relevant and useful in the national contexts.

In the Member State consultation survey, almost all Member States (96% of responses) indicate that the ET2020 strategic objectives and priority areas are aligned with their national education and training objectives and priorities. This is mainly because the ET2020 objectives are broad and flexible enough to accommodate the diversity of national policy aims and goals – and the respondents also believed that the objectives should *remain* broad and flexible.

Finally, as the case studies presented in section 4.3 reveal, the impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables is greatest in those countries where the topics coincide with national priorities.

³² BG, DE, DK, HR, HU, LT, LV, MT, PL

4.3 Impact and dissemination of tools and deliverables at national level

The key findings emerging from the assessment of the impact of tools and deliverables at the national level has tended to follow a chain starting with individual WG members or individuals that were closely involved in the ET2020 process. This impact then fed through to the organisations that these individuals represent. The impact at the organisational level then, in some instances, was diffused to other national stakeholders to create a national impact. These three impact dimensions are reflected in section 4.3.1. This is then followed by section 4.3.2 focusing on the impact of specific ET2020 tools and deliverables, and section 4.3.3 exploring the factors affecting the dissemination of tools and deliverables at the national level, as well as the media impact. Further detail on the conceptual differences between the various types and levels is presented in section 2.2.

4.3.1 Impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables

4.3.1.1 Impact at the individual level

The strongest impact, according to the interview feedback, Member State consultations, and stakeholder surveys, was achieved at the individual level among the ET2020 participants. This suggests that a key benefit of ET2020 is considered to be that the framework is a forum for discussion, exchange of experience and latest practice for education and training policy makers and stakeholders. Through mutual learning and the exchange of experiences, ET2020 has created a **common knowledge base, increased cooperation**, and built up **networks of experts** across Member States and sectors of education and training – this is a key outcome that representatives from all Member States confirm. The ET2020 process can also benefit individual advocacy work by **raising awareness** among policy makers of policy reforms and good practices in other countries.

In addition to the exchange of information and best practices, Member States highlight a more profound effect – the **creation of a common language/conceptual framework** on education and training policy that allows Member States to have more pertinent discussions on the topic. ‘Speaking the same language’ should also facilitate the transfer of good practices and lessons learnt across countries.

Furthermore, ET2020 tools and deliverables can contribute to **individual capacity building**. For example, a technical-level policy maker reported that the ET2020 tools and deliverables have improved her capacity to analyse and formulate better policy proposals, as well as provide examples and evidence-based models of policies implemented by other countries.

4.3.1.2 Impact at the organisational (national ministry) level

Most stakeholder survey respondents reported that ET2020 tools and deliverables have had an impact within their organisations. In particular, survey respondents highlighted that ET2020 tools and deliverables have had a strong impact on **discussions within their own organisations** and on **planning, designing and implementing new initiatives** on the topic in their own organisations (around 60-70% indicating strong and some impact). This is especially important given that nearly 70% of respondents to the participant survey came either directly from a ministry or an agency attached to a ministry, indicating a direct impact within the primary stakeholder organisations responsible for formulating education and training policies at the national level. The ET2020 tools and deliverables have also been used to support agenda setting in respondents’ organisations or within their member organisations (in case of associations). It should be noted here that most of the survey responses came from ministry staff, indicating that to some extent the organisational level can be interpreted to mean the ministry level.

In some cases, the ET2020 tools inspired participants to apply specific activity formats in their own organisation. For example, an interviewee from a European association

representing national education institutions reported that after participating in an ET2020 peer counselling exercise, their association was encouraged to implement this format as a “critical friend feedback” element, adapted to their circumstances in their own organisation.

4.3.1.3 Impact at the wider national (systemic) level

Ultimately, the exchange of experiences and information in the framework of ET2020 can help inform and encourage policy reforms in Member States and other participating countries. Interviewees stated that ET2020 tools and deliverables have mainly been used to exchange information (35), to raise awareness of education and training policy reforms in national and/or international debates (33), and for agenda-setting (26). Crucially, 30 interview partners stated they had used the activities and deliverables to **launch or inform a policy action/ reform** in their country. The proportion of respondents in the stakeholder survey indicating ET2020 had an impact on planning, designing and implementing new initiatives/programmes at the wider country level was over 50% (indicating strong and some impact). This suggests there is some **direct impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables on national policies** although the strength of this impact may vary depending on whether the impact only extended to the planning or also to the implementation of new initiatives.

Part of the reason why the concrete impact on national reforms, programmes or other initiatives is not higher still, is that the individuals attending the activities are rarely the final decision-makers within their organisation. As such, they can present proposals and share the learning from the activities and deliverable, but ultimately someone else will make a decision on whether to use it or not. It can be expected that the more hierarchical this structure is in a country’s ministry of education and related agencies, the harder it will be to get the messages from the ET2020 tools and deliverables to reach the ultimate decision-makers in the way it is intended. For instance, one interviewee pointed out that high level politicians in her organisation only picked up information on ET2020 on an ad hoc basis, but systematic communication is lacking.

Keeping with the concept of an impact ‘chain’, **the impact at the individual level is transferred to the organisational (typically: national ministry) level, but then not always – albeit often – fully transferred to the national level.** To give a concrete example, a new law on apprenticeships was adopted in Slovenia in 2017. In the lead up to the reform, authorities and stakeholders discussed the various elements of the proposed legislation, including the introduction of payment for apprentices in line with the fifth criterion of the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. Whilst originally foreseen to be included by the Ministry of Education, which had also been involved in the production of the European Framework, the payment for apprentices was not enshrined in the law because of opposition from employer organisations. The law did however reflect other recommendations made in the Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. This example shows that ET2020 tools and deliverables have an impact at the organisational level in national ministries – policy makers initiated reforms, ministry staff proposed a law in line with ET2020 recommendations, and some ideas and tools were implemented. It also shows that they can have a substantial impact at the national level. However, not all ideas, good practices, and policy mechanisms developed in and by the ET2020 tools and deliverables translate directly and fully into national changes and reforms.

In conclusion, the findings presented above highlight the need for, and importance of, effective dissemination (see subsequent section), and effective interaction between staff at technical and political levels (see section 4.4).

Notwithstanding this issue, a **variety of concrete impacts** in individual countries **prompted by the sharing of experiences in the ET2020 framework in general** were highlighted by the key informant interviews. Although some interviewees emphasised that practices implemented in other Member States usually cannot be transferred fully to their

respective countries, they confirmed that the objectives, approaches and methodologies used in other countries can inspire policies 'at home'. The Member State consultation indicated examples of this impact in 19 countries, which can be grouped as follows:

- Legislative reforms in Finland, France and Poland. In Poland, for instance, a new Act on the Integrated Qualifications System was adopted to make the Polish qualifications framework consistent with the European Qualifications Framework.
- Reforms to national education and training systems through agreements with education stakeholders in Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia. In Hungary, for instance, the establishment of early warning and pedagogical support system, and the introduction of a quality assurance system and an examination system for VET were cited as being impacted by ET2020.
- National action plans or strategies influenced by ET2020 outputs in Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Slovakia, and the United Kingdom. In France, for instance, a national action plan for republican values in school education and validation of civic engagement in higher education was drawn up.
- A few concrete examples of the impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables were also provided by interviewees.
- In **Croatia**, the development of the national framework curriculum was in part influenced by the work in WG Higher Education. Moreover, the ET2020 tools and deliverables were very instructive for policy discussions and the design of the performance-based funding system for higher education in the country.
- In **Poland**, the work of WG Adult Learning has helped embed the message that adult learning in the workplace is important in several strategic documents on the national level. This was achieved through the contacts established with other government departments and work in the education ministry. For example, the Polish Strategy for Responsible Development refers to adult learning in the workplace as an important part of non-formal education. Adult learning in the workplace is also mentioned in the national Strategy for Human Capital Development. The main lifelong learning policy in Poland also includes the aim to develop adult learning in the workplace. A new Integrated Skills Strategy currently being developed fully embraces the idea of adult learning in the workplace and new approaches to its implementation. The example provided in the box below is described in greater detail as a case study in Annex 4.

Case study: Early Childhood Education and Care in Bulgaria

In October 2015 the Bulgarian Government adopted a new comprehensive reform of pre-school and school education. Improving equal access to early education and increasing the share of children aged 4-7 years participating in early education were two of the key goals of the reform. Inspired by the 2014 ET2020 Proposal for key principles of a Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care, the Bulgarian Government introduced new kindergarten services and attempted to lower the mandatory starting age of pre-school education. Even though Bulgaria did not participate in the production of the Quality Framework, the deliverable was introduced at an opportune time when the Bulgarian Government was drafting the new education act. It was also noted that the ET2020 activities were very important in national debates prior to the adoption of the 2016 Pre-school and School Education

Act, in particular concerning the most appropriate entry age for compulsory pre-school education. This case illustrates the joint influence of an ET2020 deliverables and the ET2020 benchmark indicators.

Other than the ET2020 process directly inspiring national reforms, interview and survey feedback also points to more indirect effects. For example, the ET2020 tools and deliverables have been used to support the **agenda setting** in national or international policy debates. The analysis of Member State consultation responses shows that ET2020 helps orient national agendas and increase stakeholder commitment by **raising awareness** on current challenges in education and training and by providing clear, **comparative indicators**. Those have had specific positive impacts by reducing the time and resources needed for the implementation of evidence-based policy. Thus, according to a few interviewees, putting national efforts in an international context helps **professionalise national debates**.

Furthermore, in some cases, the ET2020 framework led to **multilateral follow-up actions among groups of Member States**. For example, for an international conference organised by the UK, Dutch ministerial representatives were invited to hold a workshop on the Dutch employability programme, which a British technical policy maker interviewed for the current study learnt about through ET2020 channels. A Dutch interviewee also reported that several study visits to the Netherlands, e.g. from Sweden and the UK, on the topic of VET were facilitated through the WG VET.

The impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables on Erasmus+ projects was also mentioned by a few interviewees. Specifically, the ET2020 tools and deliverables acted as inspiration for project ideas as well as facilitating networks that can be used when preparing a project idea. Moreover, having already worked together in an ET2020 setting also makes it easier to work together as part of an Erasmus+ project.

4.3.2 Impact of specific ET2020 tools and deliverables

In the following section, impacts brought about by concrete ET2020 tools and deliverables are presented.

4.3.2.1 Impact of peer learning activities

PLAs are activities hosted by a Member State that **demonstrate a good practice or a policy issue** of national significance to explore. PLAs focus on one specific policy issue and gather Member States for which the issue at stake is a national challenge or where they have good practice to share (with a maximum of twelve Member States). They serve to analyse and compare different policy approaches, to develop new knowledge about the policy area, to exchange policy experience and evidence, to integrate research into policy making and to offer practical guidance to participating countries.

Over twenty PLAs across all WGs took place since 2015. A few interviewees have stressed the usefulness of the PLAs and the sharing of experiences for their country, which the following examples attest to:

- The PLA on “Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies” that took place in Germany in July 2016 was mentioned as a particularly useful activity. The usefulness was enhanced by the fact that the policy maker’s home country was in the process of launching its “iPad strategy, our tablet strategy”. Specifically, the participant found it helpful to see concrete examples of successful BYOD policies in Hamburg where the PLA took place.
- In Portugal, one of the PLAs allowed them to test and get feedback on their Intercultural School Seal which is aimed at promoting the recognition and

enhancement of cultural and linguistic diversity as an opportunity and a source of learning for all.

- In the Netherlands, the development of the financing scheme for basic skills training was based on a similar scheme implemented in Norway that was presented at a PLA in Stuttgart in October 2014. Similarly, the development of Citizen Curricula is based on a UK example presented in London 2017.
- Stakeholders in Malta reported that they were inspired by a PLA in the Netherlands that focused on education of students through media in order to deal with the prevention of violent radicalisation and included elements of the Dutch approach in their own curriculum.

These examples illustrate that the discussion of specific policies and programmes with like-minded peers among representatives from different countries, particularly based on the demonstration of concrete best practices, can **inspire the participants to adopt similar schemes** in their own national context. The following four case studies illustrate in more detail how specific PLAs affected the evolution of national policies at the national level.

The first example concerns a PLA in Slovakia on inclusive education which prompted a visit by a Slovak delegation to the UK to learn from a good practice example of the integration of Roma pupils into mainstream schools.

Case study: Integration of Roma through education in Slovakia

In September 2017, a PLA 'Identifying Challenges and Methods of Prevention of Discrimination and Segregation in Education' was held in Bratislava to address long-standing problems with integrating Slovakia's Roma minority into mainstream education. At the PLA, Mark Penfold from Babington Academy, UK, presented their approach to the integration of Roma pupils in education. This focuses on improvements to the classroom experience and the promotion of inclusive values and measures to boost pupils' confidence. The demonstrable success led a delegation of officials from the Slovakian Ministry of Education to visit Babington Academy in June 2018 to identify transferable lessons. Several follow-up activities are planned.

Draft legislation is under preparation to improve the monitoring of progress, provide more funding to schools integrating Roma pupils, and extend coverage of existing support measures. The reform process is however slowed down by the fact that attitudes by which factors other than the failure of the education system are blamed for Roma pupils' poor performance are hard to overcome.

The key factors allowing the PLA to translate into real change in the country are likely to have been the UK's good practice example showing that real improvements are achievable, and the opening up of the debate between policy makers and NGOs on the issue during and after the PLA on how to achieve inclusive education on the ground. This created a momentum for reform.

The recent policy changes may have also been influenced by an infringement procedure launched by the EU in 2015 against Slovakia because of discrimination against Roma in the education system. Slovakia also participates in the international INSCHOOL project co-funded by the European Commission and the Council of Europe aimed at improving education outcomes of Roma children.

The second example concerns the adoption of the model of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in Austria following a PLA in Norway.

Case study: Digitalisation of basic education via MOOCs in Austria

In Austria, prior to the ET2020 activity, the need for a more coordinated training of adult education professionals in general and in digital literacy in particular as well as the general need to better use ICT within the field were two aspects discussed in regard to adult education.

The ET2020 Oslo peer learning exercise 2015 on the use of ICT in the field was organised at the right time and reinforced the Austrian delegation of experts in their belief that the application of digital tools can be beneficial within adult education. Especially the idea of a MOOC following a train-the-trainer approach was show-cased in the meeting and a strong argument for the applicability of a similar approach within the Austrian adult education landscape could be made. With their experiences and the evidence presented in the workshop, the adult education experts could achieve national stakeholder commitment on the next steps to provide specific digital knowhow for adult educators in Austria.

There were three general outcomes that can be attributed to a degree to the participation in the Oslo workshop: The refinement of an ESF-call to further professionalise the training of adult education providers in the area of basic education, the Austrian state prize for adult education in the thematic area of digital literacy and the initiation of EBmooc, an adult education Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) with overall 6 000 participants to date.

Success factors at national level were the availability of a platform and network of practitioners to both raise awareness for activities and to disseminate results as well as the use of independent experts as delegates to the WG. At the same time, the topics discussed at the workshop concurred with relevant topics at national level. On European level, the WG format change in 2014/2015 improved the relevance of topics and of participants.

The third example concerns the development of a higher education graduate tracking system in Poland.

Case study: Higher education graduate tracking system in Poland

Between 2010 and 2014, Poland developed the methodology and tools for a national graduate tracking system in order to generate reliable data on the situation of graduates in the labour market as a basis for policy-making. Graduate tracking has also been a subject of discussion in the ET2020 Working Group on Higher Education (2014-15). A Peer Learning Seminar on "Tracking graduates' career paths" was held in Warsaw on 3-4 September 2015. Even though graduate tracking in Poland has been discussed for years and the general concept for the Polish tracking system was at this point already developed, the ET2020 activity proved to be a productive kick-off for further peer learning and networking between experts dealing with graduate tracking. The sharing of best practices in the framework of ET2020 did not stimulate the idea of the tracking system in Poland per se, but immensely facilitated the implementation process by discussing various aspects with other experienced Member States and reaching consensus among Polish stakeholders in light of the success stories of other countries. International validation was thus very beneficial to strengthen the commitment to the project and overcome reservations amongst some national stakeholders, including universities located in regions with a comparatively weak labour market. Since then, there has been considerable interest from other

Member States in the Polish approach. For example, ideas and practices regarding tracking systems were exchanged in mutual visits between Poland and Lithuania. The Polish system was also presented to other Member States on several occasions, including an event hosted by the University of Vienna.

Whilst not directly a result of a PLA, the example from the Netherlands below also highlights the impact of learning that can arise from the sharing of good practice examples, including through PLAs.

Case study: Lifelong Learning Labs in the Netherlands

The Netherlands is generally performing well in the field of education, training and informal learning, with comparatively high participation in formal and non-formal forms of training, as well as informal learning. However, this overall picture masks lower participation rates among some groups, such as older people, the low-skilled, flexiworkers and workers in small businesses. In response to this, the Dutch Government has allocated more than EUR 10 million (annually) to support the implementation of the national strategy on lifelong learning.

The ongoing debate and the political willingness to support lifelong learning helped the Netherlands' ability and appetite to learn from good practices in other countries and to develop their own project. One such project is the Lifelong Learning Labs which draws heavily on the approach adopted by the UK Citizens' Curriculum.

The evidence and learning from the UK Citizens' Curriculum project have been frequently shared within the ET2020 WG on Adult Learning and was also mentioned at the PLA on "Policies promoting basic skills in the workplace" in February 2017. However, the activity that ultimately led to the development of the Lifelong Learning Labs project was a conference organised within the context of the European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL) which is part of ET2020.

The project is still ongoing, but it is expected that the measure will lead to proposals that will make lifelong learning more interesting and relevant to those with low educational attainment and low basic skills. Importantly, there is a commitment from the Dutch Minister to pilot some of the proposals that emerge from the Lifelong Learning Labs.

In light of these cases, as well as the aforementioned feedback from interviewees, PLAs can be considered to be a well-received instrument that enables participants to share experiences, compare policies, and gather evidence for policy changes/reforms.

4.3.2.2 Impact of peer counselling exercises

Peer counselling is an instrument in the framework of ET2020 which brings together professional peers from a small number of national administrations to provide external advice to a country in the process of a policy development. It was introduced in 2015 and is intended to go beyond information-sharing and provide a forum for finding solutions to national challenges in a participatory workshop³³. To date, various peer counselling exercises have been carried out, including one in Romania on the topic of special needs education and another one in Sweden on the subject of school reforms. The following two case studies (see Annex 4 for further information) demonstrate the considerable impact the activity has had on some Member States.

³³ See European Commission: Peer counselling – a new element in the ET2020 toolbox. Information note. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/content/peer-counselling-new-element-et2020-toolbox-0_en

Both the Czech Republic and Slovenia requested the advice of their peers through a peer counselling exercise on their national approaches to performance-based funding in higher education, resulting in policy changes particularly in regard to the funding agreements with higher education institutions in both countries.

Case study: Performance-based funding in higher education in the Czech Republic and Slovenia

Both the Czech Republic (in 2015) and Slovenia (in 2017) requested peer counselling in order to consult with their peers from other countries on changes to their higher education funding systems. In the two countries, the reforms of the respective funding systems were still being discussed at the time, and international experts were consulted to inform these changes. Both activities successfully led to improvements in the respective funding systems.

In the Czech Republic, various suggestions by the peers were taken into account when revising the funding agreements and corresponding indicators measuring performance. Furthermore, the thorough internal review of the funding system prior to the event immensely increased the common understanding of the issue.

In Slovenia, the peer counselling exercise informed subsequent negotiations concerning the funding agreements between the government and the higher education institutions. Other intended changes such as a renewed definition of public service in a new comprehensive Higher Education Act have not yet been implemented due to a change in the Slovenian Government. Another side effect is the informal building of a network of peers that can be consulted outside of the peer counselling exercise. A follow-up event to the peer counselling in Slovenia has already been confirmed.

A second case study illustrates the changes put forward in Lithuania that were stimulated through the peer counselling process. More specifically, the advice was directly used for the national reform package on teacher remuneration and teacher career development.

Case study: Teacher education and career reforms in Lithuania

ET2020 peer counselling activities influenced the national reform package in Lithuania relating to the changes in the system of teacher remuneration, initial education and continuous professional development. Alongside other support from the OECD and European Commission, the national Ministry of Education used the targeted advice and support from a small set of peer country experts to inform the modelling and contents of the national reforms. The outcome of the ET2020 input was a direct application of the advice received from the peer country experts into the reform package on the teacher remuneration and career development prepared by the national Ministry.

The key success factors affecting the impact of ET2020 input were related to the strong national needs for such advice and support, driven by the strategic commitment to the reform. It was facilitated by the timely intervention of ET2020 peers as the national officials were drafting the reform, the helpful format of peer counselling inputs, evidence-based exchange of different country experiences, and targeted and focused exchanges. Challenges included the linguistic barriers to participation and information sources and the rapid implementation of the reform which reduced time available for further reflection and communication of intended reforms.

Based on the above examples, peer counselling can be considered a highly valuable instrument in the framework of ET2020. After all, the evidence-based advice given by well-prepared peers, and external experts, is directly targeted to the host country, allowing for in-depth discussions on national reforms. The exercise also requires the host countries to thoroughly reflect the explicit and implicit strategic goals of their education system as well as strengths and weaknesses, which strengthens their understanding and strategic outlook of their systems in place. A crucial factor that contributes to the success of these activities is the timeliness of the intervention. In conclusion, **peer counselling has proved to be a particularly useful ET2020 tool** that can directly influence national policies.

4.3.2.3 Impacts of peer review workshops

Only one peer review workshop was covered by this study. The stakeholder feedback collected did not provide sufficient information to ascertain its impact. One interviewee stated they had used the knowledge gained in a peer review for VET reforms in Romania. The interview feedback in terms of their utility is mixed. A few interviewees regarded the peer review workshops as useful due to the recommendations made for their respective countries. Other interviewees viewed them less positively compared to other types of activities. One interviewee regarded the peer reviews as useful, but also as very laborious.

4.3.2.4 Impacts of specific deliverables

In addition to the various ET2020 tools allowing for an in-depth, personal exchange between policy-makers, experts and other stakeholders, the deliverables that were produced in the WGs have also been of significant value in many cases. The examples below illustrate the impact that some deliverables have had:

- In **Luxembourg**, the *DigCompEducator* competence framework was considered helpful as they were working on a similar framework in their country.
- In Romania, the teachers' competence framework (i.e. the ET2020 deliverable *Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching*) and *DigCompEducator* had an impact. The deliverables helped the authorities map different competence areas (e.g. personal development, professional development, future skills, communication) that they wanted to include in the new curriculum for teacher development.
- An **Estonian** technical policy-maker reported that she translated and distributed the guidelines in *Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching* as they considered them to be particularly interesting. Several schools in their countries designed training programmes based on these guidelines.

The implementation of SELFIE is currently being discussed in Austria as it could be a beneficial second step to existing tools on the improvement of digital competences. In addition, the SELFIE also had a significant impact in the Italian context (see Box below).

Case study: Self-reflection tool for digitally capable schools in Italy

The SELFIE pilot in Italy provides an interesting case of implementation of the SELFIE tool, as it was accompanied by specific supporting actions to create favourable conditions for integrating, sustaining and scaling up SELFIE in the national compulsory education system.

Original plans for the pilot implementation in Italy envisaged the involvement of 21 schools in three regions, expecting to cover roughly 1 900 total users (about 1 470 students, 420 teachers and 17 school leaders). However, at the end of the pilot phase a total of 31 912 Italian users participated in SELFIE (1 507 school leaders and staff, 5 690 teachers and 24 715 students), reaching an exponential growth (about 1 680%).

The combination of ad hoc events (promoted by regional authorities and school networks) and supporting materials, as well as the support and commitment of school leaders and the SELFIE coordinators in each participating school ensured that the main ideas and added value of SELFIE could effectively reach each school community, hence increasing the uptake of SELFIE and the high-level of stakeholder engagement in the case of this initiative.

Some schools started to respond to the results from the self-assessment mainly by deepening the discussions on creating a “digital culture” at their schools or already integrating them in their school-specific curriculums on digital innovation. The value and impact of SELFIE is also reflected and recognised in the new Digital Education Action Plan for Schools recently approved by the Autonomous Province of Trento, which includes SELFIE among key actions that schools should implement in the coming years.

The impact of the ET2020 deliverable *High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles (2015)* at EU level – influence on the Council Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (March 2018) – and at national level (Belgium (Flanders)) is highlighted in the box below and in Annex 4.

Case study: High-performance apprenticeships and work-based learning in Belgium (Flanders) and EU

At the national level, the ET2020 deliverable provided real added value to the elaboration of a dual learning framework in Flanders. It helped to confirm key orientations taken by the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training. Coupled with other sources of information (in particular, an ESF project), it contributed to highlight which areas should be prioritised, and provided an opportunity to compare the Flemish reform to similar reforms in other Member States in an objective way.

Similarly, in Romania the ET2020 deliverable was one of the elements that contributed to the development of the dual VET system in Romania, together with the strong recommendations from the European Commission and the national political agenda.

The deliverable was also one of main sources which the Commission used to draft the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. In particular, it fed into the drafting of the system-level criteria listed in the Framework. The 20 guiding principles was a strong basis for the draft as it had already gone through a consensus building exercise between Member States’ experts (taking part in the WG) regarding the most important aspects of apprenticeship systems.

4.3.3 Dissemination and media impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables

4.3.3.1 Factors hindering or facilitating the dissemination of tools and deliverables at national level

Based on both the interviews and the stakeholder surveys, almost all stakeholders have made some effort to raise awareness and stimulate the dissemination of ET2020 tools and deliverables. Most participants of the ET2020 activities stated that they were provided with materials (e.g. reports, summaries) at the events that they could use for dissemination.

Almost all interview and survey participants informed other people either **within or outside their organisation** or both about the ET2020 activities in which they took part. Table 27 in Annex 3 shows that when materials were provided, all respondents disseminated information about the ET2020 activities. And when no materials were

provided, the respondents disseminated information only within their organisation, potentially stressing the need for the production of materials suitable for dissemination. Many respondents disseminated information to between 11–20 people (29%), 5–10 people (23%), and between 21–50 people (23%). Only 9% of respondents disseminated information to fewer than 5 other people (see Table 29 in Annex 3). However, only 21 survey respondents (or 16.3%) stated that the dissemination was required by their home organisation (see Table 28 in Annex 3 for more details).

The most common **awareness-raising and dissemination activities**, both according to the interview programme and the surveys, are team meetings/briefings (e.g. WG meetings, general assembly meetings, committee meetings) and informal/ad hoc meetings with direct colleagues. According to the Member State consultation survey, in most Member States information about ET2020 tools and deliverables is disseminated on an ad hoc basis by WG members alongside their regular work. This may involve circulating a note within their organisation, e-mail exchanges or making an oral intervention at a team meeting. A few interviewees stated that they prepared a written summary of each ET2020 event or output that is accessible in the organisation's intranet. Other important dissemination channels are newsletters/mailling lists (internal and external) and events and conferences, which have been used by around half of the interviewees. Information about outputs from the ET2020 tools and deliverables has been included in both internal and external newsletters often reaching several hundred/thousand individuals. However, due to dissemination being the responsibility mainly of WG members through their organic networks, there are differences in how and what information is disseminated between sectors (e.g. Higher Education and adult learning) within a country. Only one Member State (Slovenia) mentions a dedicated ET2020 national coordination structure for dissemination, and only two Member States mention regional dissemination of information.

In order to disseminate the outputs of the ET2020 tools and deliverables to relevant national and international stakeholders, several interviewees also consider events and conferences as important channels. Sometimes this takes the form of bringing copies of the outputs or leaflets, other times it involves presentations. These events include, e.g., joint WGs between ministries and other stakeholders as well as annual conferences or workshops with stakeholders such as national Councils on Education or university conferences. Outputs are also published on websites/intranet pages, including most notably the DG EAC Europa pages in order to make them accessible to a wider audience. In some cases, ET2020 tools and deliverables are referred to in official publications by the ministries, e.g. in a dossier on adult education prepared by the Austrian ministry. Other dissemination channels include social media (e.g. Twitter, LinkedIn) – including posts on the personal accounts of ET2020 participants as well as accounts of networks such as the European Basic Skills Network – and communities of practice on the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE). For example, a hashtag for the deliverable *SELFIE* was established, coupled with a promotional campaign (see below the media impact of *SELFIE* and other ET2020 deliverables). The results of WG VET and WG Adult Learning are presented and discussed at the Director General for Vocational Education meetings and the Training and the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training meetings, each taking place twice a year.

Nonetheless several interviews suggest that dissemination efforts focus on the communication on ET2020 outputs within, rather than outside, the home organisations. The informal nature of many of these efforts indicate that **dissemination is often not done systematically**. Rather, widespread communication depends on the individual's personal interest in dissemination – some are willing to write full reports on each ET2020 event or output, for example, while others may lack the time to communicate on these, outside of exchanges with close colleagues in informal meetings.

Overall, feedback from the interviews and surveys thus suggests that information on ET2020, both within and outside of the respondents' organisations (though focusing on

communication within their organisation and close network) is disseminated by almost all study participants. At the same time, as indicated above, the lack of systematic dissemination strategies points to a need for more effective dissemination approaches by the Member States. In the interview programme, several **challenges as well as facilitating factors** for dissemination were identified.

Regarding the key **challenges**, a few high-level and technical-level policy makers mentioned language barriers and time constraints as barriers to more effective dissemination. Furthermore, a few interviewees pointed out that it was easier to disseminate information on a topic that is already relevant in the national context. One interviewee, for instance, suggested defining the topics discussed in the framework of ET2020 meetings and activities in a way that reflects national needs as much as possible – this could happen by asking the participants prior to the meetings about the relevance of certain thematic issues for their home countries. It would then be easier for them to create a link for the dissemination back home as recipients were more able to understand the importance of the topic. In contrast, a few interviewees affiliated to the WG Higher Education perceived the efforts made by the Commission as already sufficient as the Commission usually asked Member States for their inputs prior to the meetings or development of certain deliverables. At any rate, it should be pointed out that the mandate detailing the topics to be dealt with in the WG need to be endorsed by Member States. Where the specific activities or deliverables that a WG is working on are not relevant to policy makers in specific countries, this is probably inevitable in that the diversity of education and training systems in Europe means that not every country will find every topic endorsed by a majority of other countries that is relevant to its ongoing policy discussions and reforms.

Sometimes contents generated in the WGs were perceived as too abstract to implement in a highly practical setting such as schools. Consequently, two interviewees associated with WG Schools felt that the outputs generated in the WGs should ideally contain a practical framework and examples of how specific subjects could be addressed in schools.

A few interviewees highlighted **factors that facilitate the dissemination of ET2020 tools and deliverables** at a national level. Government representatives tend to share the information that they obtain firstly with their direct colleagues. A few interviewees suggested allowing an additional national stakeholder organisation to attend WG meetings. This, in their view, would help extend the potential audience with which information could be shared. Moreover, it would broaden the perspective of the government representatives as well as the national stakeholder by allowing different viewpoints to be considered within the activity. It would also assist in overcoming any perceptions about the European Commission and other EU agencies being too far away from national stakeholder organisations. Some countries have already designated members of national associations as the official national representatives in WGs.

Another suggestion from a few interview partners was for the WGs to prepare leaflets or other dissemination materials at the end of each mandate period, where the lessons from all PLAs, meetings, exercises, etc. are summarised. There was a feeling that the information available at the moment is very fragmented.

The quality of the reports prepared following specific ET2020 activities (e.g. the PLAs) was also mentioned by a national stakeholder organisation (and WG member) as being critical to the successful dissemination of ET2020 tools and deliverables. Often, the outputs such as reports were perceived as too long and comprehensive and hence not appropriate for a dissemination to a broader audience in the home country. The reports have to be clear and concise, with specific examples of good practice. A few interviewees suggested that these should be prepared in the language of the member states to overcome language barriers. It is also important that the findings and recommendations are finalised through co-

production. According to one interviewee, if the report is aimed at policy makers it should be written directly by, or with significant inputs from, policy makers.

A few interview partners also noted that the most important report and deliverables should be disseminated directly from the European Commission to give them “greater weight”. A similar idea was presented by one of the national stakeholder organisations who argued that the lack of official status of the documents may result in less attention being placed on these documents. However, it was also recognised that such a proposal would be difficult to implement given that education and training policy is a national responsibility.

Developing and enhancing the communications and dissemination potential of ET2020 and any future strategic framework will without a doubt be a key factor in the future success and effectiveness of the activities and deliverables. There is a big opportunity to further raise Member States’ awareness and understanding of good practices and policy innovations across the education and training policy area.

4.3.3.2 Media impact

One approach to assess the public reach of ET2020 tools and deliverables is a **media impact analysis**. After all, references to ET2020 in academic literature, traditional media outlets (such as stakeholder websites, newspapers and information portals, websites of ministries and other policy-making bodies), and social media can give an indication on how many and what kind of stakeholders have been reached and whether national/international debates have been stimulated. However, it also needs to be kept in mind that media impact is not the primary anticipated impact of ET2020 tools and deliverables.

As for the 30 ET2020 tools analysed in the study, few media references were identified. Many activities were not referred to at all or only mentioned in the official ET2020 newsletter. The two activities that produced the highest number of results (but still less than 10) were the PLAs “Supporting educators for innovative, open and digital education” (WG Digital Skills and Competences, December 2017, Croatia) and “Transforming Higher Education: How We Teach in the Digital Age” (WG Digital Skills and Competences & WG Higher Education, January 2017, Malta). The former event is mentioned, for example, in a Croatian article in the portal ICT Business³⁴ and the website of the University of Zagreb³⁵. Some participants reported on the PLA on Twitter as well³⁶. The joint PLA in Malta is communicated, for instance, within a conference of the Italian universities³⁷, in a presentation by the University of Zagreb³⁸ or by the European Federation of Education Employers³⁹ on Twitter. For the other activities, only one respectively or no results at all could be retrieved. The limited virtual media presence of the thirty activities is to some extent not unexpected, particularly considering that the events do not target the broader public and tend to be invite-only events.

The different ET2020 deliverables varied by the extent of their media presence. Several deliverables had a relatively high media presence and reached a great number of individuals beyond the initial members of the WG who developed the deliverables. Among the deliverables analysed in this study, *DigCompEducator* is the one with the highest number of pageviews. In total, it was accessed 22 332 times on the europa.eu website in the analysed time period. Furthermore, the deliverable is mentioned on various websites in EU circles and international networks such as the Digital and Development network⁴⁰

³⁴ See <https://www.ictbusiness.info/vijesti/predstavniciminstarstava-obrazovanja-eu-na-radionici-u-srcu>

³⁵ See <https://www.srce.unizg.hr/en/international-relations/pla7>

³⁶ See <https://twitter.com/hashtag/wgdigital>

³⁷ See http://www2.cruil.it/cruil/magnifici_incontri_cruil_2018/Tav4A%20-%20Azioni%20e%20risorse%20Università%20Digitale%20contesto%20EU.pdf

³⁸ See <http://educa-t.hr/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/seminar-1-04-pp-sandra-kucina-softic.pdf>

³⁹ See https://twitter.com/EFEE_EU/status/821666463958388736

⁴⁰ See <http://www.cominit.com/ict-4-development/content/european-framework-digital-competence-educators-digcompedu>

and, at the national level, in in Czech⁴¹, Dutch⁴² or Italian⁴³ news portals. Moreover, the deliverable is repeatedly mentioned in academic circles, both in English and non-English publications⁴⁴. In social media, the impact has also been substantial. On Twitter in particular, more than 50 entries can be identified on the topic⁴⁵. Remarkably, other than interest groups, it is primarily individuals from various Member States, for example teaching principals, school development planners, and researchers, who refer to *DigCompEducator* on Twitter, indicating a lively debate on the subject.

Other deliverables with a strong media presence include *Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching*, *SELFIE*, *High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles*. The former, for example, has been referenced in a large variety of literature and media, including in international fora⁴⁶, EU-related journals⁴⁷, in academic literature⁴⁸ or in strategy documents by Member States such as the Norwegian National Strategy for Quality and Cooperation in Teacher Education⁴⁹, suggesting the relevance of the guide for policy-making. SELFIE is the deliverable with the second highest number of pageviews (8 382 since its launch in 2017) and is referred to, for example, by the information service EUBusiness⁵⁰ or the initiative CRISS⁵¹ or, at the national level, in *Irish Tech News*⁵², the UK news channel *WiredGov*⁵³ or the Italian newspaper *Tribuna Economica*⁵⁴. On social media, for example, on Twitter⁵⁵ or Facebook⁵⁶, SELFIE is mentioned regularly as well. The publication on *High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning* has been disseminated via various channels such as in a joint report by the EU, OECD and UNESCO on work-based learning⁵⁷ or in national ministries (e.g. Austrian

⁴¹ See <http://www.ucitelske-listy.cz/2017/04/ondrej-neumajer-byt-digitalne-gramotny.html>

⁴² See https://www.vleva.eu/nieuws/digcomp-21-er-leer-zwemmen-de-digitale-oceaan?utm_source=News&utm_medium=RSS&utm_campaign=RSS_Syndication

⁴³ See <https://www.agendadigitale.eu/scuola-digitale/competenze-digitali-a-scuola-come-usare-il-digcomp-2-1/>

⁴⁴ References include: Butler, D. et al. (2018): The Digital Learning Framework: What Digital Learning can look like in Practice, An Irish Perspective. In: E. Langran & J. Borup (Eds.), *Proceedings of Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education International Conference* (pp. 1339-1346). Washington, D.C., United States: AACE; Malach, J.; Kostoloányová, K. (2017): Schools as Digitally Competent Educational Organisation: Specific Preparation for Work Positions and Educational Roles. European Conference on e-Learning. Kidmore End: pp. 344-352.

⁴⁵ See <https://twitter.com/search?f=tweets&q=DigCompEdu&src=typd>

⁴⁶ Lunenberg, Mieke; Dengerink, Jurrien (2017): Social Change. International Forum for Teacher Educator Development. Online: <https://info-ted.eu/social-change/>

⁴⁷ Erasmus+ Journal (2016): Education and Training 2020. Online: <http://www.erasmus-journal.eu/education-and-training-2020/>

⁴⁸ Examples include: Livingston, K. (2016): Teacher Education's Role in Educational Change. In: European Journal of Teacher Education, 39:1, pp. 1-4. Jones, M.; McLean, K. (2017): Personalising Learning in Teacher Education. Springer Singapore. Simões, A. R.; Lourenço, M.; Costa, N. (2018): Teacher Education Policy and Practice in Europe. Challenges and Opportunities for the Future. Routledge: London.

⁴⁹ See https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/d0c1da83bce94e2da21d5f631bbae817/kd_teacher-education-2025_uu.pdf

⁵⁰ See <https://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/digital-skills.17js>

⁵¹ See <https://www.crissh2020.eu/selfie-european-commissions-new-tool-support-schools-using-digital-technologies/>

⁵² Velker, A. (2018): Near half of European adults lack basic digital skills, says EU Commission. Online: <https://irishtechnews.ie/near-half-of-european-adults-lack-basic-digital-skills-says-eu-commission/>

⁵³ See <https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/Education+and+training+initiatives+18012018151000?open>

⁵⁴ See <http://tribuna.com/eportale/it/2014-03-20-23-48-00/30502-eu-new-measures-to-boost-key-competences-and-digital-skills-as-well-as-the-european-dimension-of-education>

⁵⁵ See <https://twitter.com/search?q=Self-reflection%20tool%20for%20digitally%20capable%20schools%20&src=typd>

⁵⁶ See <https://www.facebook.com/search/str/Self-reflection+tool+for+digitally+capable+schools/stories-keyword/stories-public>

⁵⁷ European Commission et al.: Investing in Work-Based Learning. Online: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0026/002606/260677E.pdf>

Ministry for Education and Science⁵⁸ or the Irish Action Plan on apprenticeships⁵⁹) and academic literature too.

The study *Teachers and Trainers in Work-based learning/apprenticeships* had a moderate media impact with references, for example, on the website of the Spanish Ministry for Education⁶⁰, the London School of Economics and Political Science⁶¹, or in a German forum on vocational and business teaching⁶², with few or no references in academic literature or social media. This could be due to the fact that this deliverable was not yet finalised at the time of this research. The other deliverables were mentioned rarely in public debates and literature, in part reflecting the type of deliverable, purpose and target group.

In summary, the deliverables and activities vary widely in their impact. The following comparative table presents the key findings. It shows the overall number of pageviews, the references in traditional media (including national and international news portals, press releases and articles on websites of national or international organisations), social media (Twitter, Facebook) and academic literature (including monographs, anthologies and journals). As the numbers of references vary greatly, the categories “low” (almost no or no results), “average” (limited number of findings, less than 100) and “high” (numerous references, more than 100) were used to establish the overall impact.

Table 5. Comparative analysis: Media impact of the deliverables and activities under ET2020

| Deliverable/activity | Access (pageviews), 2015-18 | Traditional media | Social media | Academic literature | Overall impact |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------|
| DigCompEducator | 22 332 | > 100 | > 100 | 72 | high |
| Shaping career-long perspectives in teaching | 5 ⁶³ | > 100 | 5 | 42 | high |
| High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning | n/d | > 100 | 11 | 12 | high |
| SELFIE | 8 382 | 26 | 15 | 1 | average |
| Teachers and trainers in work-based learning | n/d | 40 | 4 | - | average |
| ET2020 activities | n/d | 21 | 18 | - | low |
| Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool | 1 138 | 1 | 1 | - | low |
| Financing Adult Learning | n/d | 4 | - | - | low |
| Basic skills in the workplace | n/d | - | - | - | low |

⁵⁸ See <https://www.bbfk.at/rueckblick/konferenz-2016/programm/79-abstracts-2016?extid=abs&extsel=48>

⁵⁹ Irish government (2016): Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeship and Traineeship in Ireland 2016-2020. Online: <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Action-Plan-Expand-Apprenticeship-Traineeship-in-Ireland-2016-2020.pdf>

⁶⁰ See <http://todofp.es/profesores/biblioteca-todofp/documentos-europeos/formacion-profesional.html>

⁶¹ See <http://www.lse.ac.uk/business-and-consultancy/consulting/consulting-reports/teachers-and-trainers-in-work-based-learning-apprenticeships>

⁶² See https://www.bwpat.de/index.php?option=com_acymailing&ctrl=archive&task=view&listid=2&mailid=78-bwp-newsletter-nr-186-08-09-2017&Itemid=250&tmpl=component

⁶³ 5 413 pageviews of the umbrella page summarising the work of WG Schools.

| | | | | | |
|--|-------|---|---|---|-----|
| Online compendium for good practices in education and training | 3 776 | - | - | - | low |
|--|-------|---|---|---|-----|

Source: Data provided by the Commission, data compiled by Technopolis (Meltwater, Google, Google Scholar).

The variation in media impact can be explained by the different format of each ET2020 tool and deliverable. For instance, a comprehensive study such as *Shaping career-long perspectives in teaching* can be expected to have a greater impact on academic literature than a database or any of the one-off ET2020 activities. Thus, to assess the overall impact, the type of deliverable and the respective target groups (e.g. greater public, small circles in specialised communities) is taken into account in the assessment for each individual deliverable:

- The low media impact generated by the ET2020 activities can be considered plausible since they are single events for a (closed, specialised) community. Some studies primarily directed at policy-makers and academics, e.g. *Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching* or *High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning* have generated a substantial amount of impact on traditional media, including references on websites of national ministries and stakeholders. They are also referred to in academic literature, rendering the impact satisfactory. Exceptions are the reports *Financing Adult Learning*, *Basic skills in the workplace* and *Teachers and trainers in work-based learning*. Especially concerning the first two reports, it can be assumed to be partly due to the generic title that rendered the production of meaningful results particularly difficult. Furthermore, as elaborated above, the low media resonance of *Basic skills in the workplace* as a PLA report feeding into a final report is plausible.
- Tools and frameworks such as *SELFIE* and *DigCompEducator* directly address a variety of stakeholders (schools, teachers' associations etc.), which may explain their high impact both in traditional and social media.
- The *Online Compendium for Good Practices in Education and Training* has got a comparatively low number of pageviews, although this may simply reflect the fact that the compendium is a work in progress. Nevertheless, it is important that the compendium is continuously updated to maintain its relevance to policy-makers and other potential users. The interviews provide somewhat conflicting views on the compendium. For example, one academic noted that the database is not particularly useful for her as the abstracts are too short to get a substantial idea of the respective policies, whilst others considered the database to be a beneficial tool.
- Thus, overall, only a partially moderate to low media impact – even if in many cases reasonable – can be identified. In addition, despite the dissemination efforts by the interviewees and survey participants outlined above, there appears to be a lack of familiarity with ET2020 activities among the participants of both surveys. After all, only half of the respondents in the wider stakeholder survey said that they were familiar with the mutual learning activities (Table 11 in Annex 3), and fewer than half of the respondents in the participants survey said that they were adequately informed about the results from *other* mutual learning activities which they did not attend (Table 23 in Annex 3).
- The overall findings indicate the **need for more effective dissemination** by the Member States. To ensure that the learning does not stay with the participants of ET2020 activities but rather the results are disseminated

widely both within and outside participants' organisations, attention should be put on developing a **comprehensive and effective dissemination strategy**, for both stakeholder and media/broader public communication. For this purpose, it may be necessary to define the key target audiences for each type of future activity, a strategy for the use of social media and the use of other communication channels, key messages to be used in communication and key responsibilities.

To further improve the dissemination efforts at the national level, a number of suggestions have been identified in the stakeholder feedback:

- The WGs should systematically dedicate time and resources to discuss how dissemination is undertaken and how it can be improved. For example, WG Citizenship recently surveyed its members about the dissemination activities that they engage in, the barriers that they face and potential solutions. Similarly, WG Schools recently organised an event on the dissemination of its deliverables. Such initiatives should be further supported amongst all WGs.
- The WGs should prepare leaflets or other dissemination materials at the end of each mandate period, summarising the lessons from all PLAs, meetings, exercises, etc. It was noted through the stakeholder consultations that the information available at the moment is not fully fit for wider dissemination purposes. In this respect, the format and language accessibility of key messages from ET2020 activity can be further increased, such as having a two-page summary from each activity which can be easily distributed "at home" and translating the summary of key points into the official EU languages. As things stand, some countries may find the dissemination less effective unless outputs are translated by the national governments (which has cost implications). In this context, it is worth pointing out that the publication "High-performance apprenticeships & WBL: 20 guiding principles" has been translated into 4 languages by national authorities, suggesting that Member States are prepared to translate deliverables when they see a value in it.
- Some countries have structures in place for members of the different WGs to meet regularly and exchange information about the developments in their WGs. This practice could be encouraged across more Member States. Widening the membership of WGs and/or participation in ET2020 tools and activities or strengthening the involvement of relevant stakeholders from outside the ministries would also increase the dissemination of messages at the national level.
- Effective dissemination takes time and the individuals attending the activities may not always be able to dedicate the time needed to share and adapt what they have learnt. It is also important for the participating organisations to determine the best person to attend the ET2020 activities. This may not always be the person with the most knowledge and experience, particularly if that person does not have sufficient time to disseminate the information. Equally, it will not be very helpful if the person attending does not have sufficient knowledge of the topic being discussed.

4.4 Interactions between the technical level and the political level

The level of interaction and links between the technical and political level has been uneven depending on the thematic areas, national ministry organisational arrangements for dissemination and the initiative and level of seniority of ET2020 participating individuals. The exchange of information between the ET2020 projects and deliverables and their

political leadership could benefit from a more structured and consistent approach. The knowledge generated as part of the ET2020 process is not picked up by the political hierarchy on a systematic basis, based on a regular knowledge exchange and stable relationships. A more regular process/structured interchange based on concise information could be further strengthened in this respect. The approach of the Higher Education WG could be considered to inform the work of other WGs (the WG mandate is prepared in cooperation between the WG and the Directors General for Higher Education. The core WG work topics are linked to the Presidencies' priorities and are prepared by a PLA, discussed in the WG meetings, discussed in the Directors General for Higher Education meetings and sometimes again in the WG).

In the stakeholder interviews, the perception of the extent to which the deliverables and activities were communicated in high-level groups such as director's meetings varies. Some respondents stated that they communicate to high level groups to a great extent, e.g. by giving presentations and updates regularly. This is often facilitated when the ET2020 participants are relatively senior members of their organisation and thus have access to the decision-makers⁶⁴ or organisational structures are in place to share information from ET2020 processes.⁶⁵ Other interviewees estimate the extent of their communication to be of medium intensity: they report occasionally and on an informal ad-hoc basis internally to the high-level groups rather than systematically.

Regarding topics that are also relevant for organisations other than DG EAC (e.g. DG EMPL in the case of apprenticeships), communication to these other organisations may be more difficult if the topics are not priorities these recipient organisations. Furthermore, several interview partners consider the communication to the high-level groups to be a challenge. This is due to communication products from ET2020 activities, e.g. minutes and slides, not being particularly suitable for these groups, and would be more effective in a more concise format (resume style or flash reports) and focused on the key results and outcomes of ET2020 tools. Thus, the communication of activities and deliverables in high-level groups largely depends on the thematic areas of the WGs as well as on the participating individuals.

In the Member State consultation responses, more than half of the Member State responses (58%) stated that the links between the technical (i.e. WGs, mutual learning activities) and political (i.e. HLG, DG meetings, Education Committee, EYCS Council) levels could – and *should* – be improved. One of the key challenges identified is the flow of information from the WGs to the political level, and in particular information about the *results* from the work of the WGs. It was suggested that this challenge could be solved by more regular and systematic dissemination of the ET2020 deliverables, potentially in several languages. Another suggestion was for a common ET2020 platform/portal where all stakeholders could find the dates, agenda and other documents of different meetings (WG, DG, HLG, PLAs, etc.).

Another challenge raised by a few Member States is the separation of WGs between DG EAC and DG EMPL. The split was seen as unfavourable for policy cohesion by the Member States: one Member State pointed out, for example, the lack of coordination between the

⁶⁴ For example, one stakeholder is a director of a directorate in the national ministry and thus has the opportunity to reach the different levels in the educational system. At the political level, they disseminate the information from the deliverables and activities to the minister and the deputy minister to influence the political agenda for example. On the expert level they disseminate the information to the experts on the regional level through frequent presentations, discussions and reports. They disseminate the information to civil society too.

⁶⁵ An example given in the interviews related to the Member State where on the national level they use the director general meetings to prepare themselves and to develop positions, using the information also from ET2020, amongst other sources. Within such meetings there is a formal and an informal sphere in which to have a bilateral exchange of information. Another example relates to the ET2020 participant conducting a session with the department director and assistant director usually once every 5-6 months approximately. Here, they would hold a short presentation, no longer than 20-30 minutes, about the ET2020 development and the future tasks that the WG would be undertaking.

two large events (Vocational Skills Week and the European Education Summit) organised after the division of the WGs.

The ET2020 indicative rolling Work Plan was introduced in 2015 after the ET2020 mid-term evaluation to “improve the transparency and coherence of ET2020 activities.”⁶⁶ Almost none of the interviewees were aware of the existence of the rolling work plan. This is a clear indication that if the plan is to remain in use, more effort should be placed on disseminating information about it. When given an explanation about what the plan is and what its goals are, many interviewees agreed that there is a need for greater transparency and a stronger link between the WGs and the political level. Given the shared understanding that political will in the Member States to use the deliverables is one of the key factors facilitating the development of successful ET2020 deliverables (see section 3.3), increasing the awareness of the work plan and ensuring that both WG members and senior officials follow it would strengthen the link between the technical and political levels and contribute to the development of better, more useful deliverables.

⁶⁶ 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020). Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52015XG1215%2802%29>

5 Conclusions and recommendations

This section summarises the main findings of the assessment. The findings have also served to inform a series of recommendations on how to improve the ET2020 tools and deliverables, and more generally overall EU support to Member State education and training systems.

5.1 Conclusions

Overall the evidence from this study shows that the ET2020 framework of cooperation is working well. There is little desire among the stakeholders consulted for a complete overhaul of the framework or its discontinuation. Thus, the emphasis is to be placed on fine-tuning and further increasing the impact of existing structures and mechanisms.

Specifically, the assessment reveals that the ET2020 tools and deliverables are **useful to national ministries** in Member States and other participating countries/stakeholders. This is because they provide a forum for exchange of information on the latest education and training developments as well as good practices, challenges encountered, and lessons learnt from the implementation of past initiatives and reforms. ET2020 tools are also useful for extensive networking (which assists in establishing relevant contact points in other countries and also occasionally lead to the development of joint project proposals) and for offering an open and informal space for in-depth and focused discussions between Member States, the European Commission and other stakeholders. Even when there is no direct immediate transfer of good practices or learning, the ET2020 tools enable a greater understanding and overview of education and training systems across Europe which helps in terms of developing a common vision for the future of education and training in Europe.

The **mix of sectoral and horizontal WGs is considered appropriate** in addressing ET2020 objectives and priorities as it allows both a focus on the key education and training sectors and key horizontal themes cutting across the sector boundaries. The reduction in the number of WGs is a reflection of 2013 Council Conclusions to streamline the objectives and have more tightly focused priority areas. This seems to have been a success as there is strong support amongst the stakeholders consulted for maintaining the stability of the current architecture as it is considered to work well and respond to the key education and training system challenges. Notwithstanding this, there is, however, agreement that the mechanisms for interacting with other WGs need to be strengthened to fully exploit potential synergies and avoid overlaps/duplication.

The **mutual learning activities** (peer counselling, peer learning activities and peer reviews) are valued and considered useful to participants. A commonly reported advantage is that the mutual learning activities allow exchange of information on a detailed, and technical level, as well as opportunities for interactive and in-depth discussions between countries and other stakeholders. Their open, informal and “non-politicised” environment for discussion is a key asset.

The frequency and type of usage of the **online platform Yammer** varies widely between the WGs with some WGs making a greater use of the platform for collaborative work and webinars. Generally, Yammer tends to be used for information sharing. As such, the main added value has been that it offers an alternative to email communication and provides a repository of WG-related communications and documents.

A **stable WG membership** facilitates the design and development of ET2020 deliverables, enabling good working relationships and strong buy-in. The process was also helped when there was a critical mass of Member States stakeholders interested in the issues considered in the WG, providing rich inputs and driving the development of the deliverables. Often such active participation was driven by domestic factors of similar challenges/reforms being considered in the participants’ own countries. Factors that hindered the design and development of ET2020 deliverables include the lack of regular meeting attendance of all

national representatives and a lack of sufficient policy interest from a critical mass of Member States.

The annual **Education and Training Monitor reports** (as well as the ET2020 benchmarks and main indicators) have been instrumental in stimulating the debate at the national level, indicating that actions have been taken to implement the recommendation made in the 2014 evaluation to improve monitoring of the ET2020 process. The combination of qualitative assessments and the quantitative analysis of key education system developments is considered useful in providing a more evidence-based approach to education and training policy changes/reforms. Specifically, the ET2020 benchmarks and indicators are used to raise awareness and stimulate national policy debate, to make budgetary spending justifications, and to provide reliable information for reports and presentations.

The **ET2020 deliverables are directly or indirectly relevant to EU priorities**, notably the Europe 2020 Strategy. Regarding the **link with national policy reforms**, deliverables produced by the same WG tend to be linked to national policy in the same countries, i.e. there is a correlation between the WG that produced a deliverable and the countries in which policies relevant to the deliverable have been adopted in the last three years. It is not possible to establish a causal link between specific deliverables and coinciding adoption of policies in specific countries purely based on desk research. However, the case studies undertaken for this study as well as stakeholder feedback point to many examples of concrete impact of deliverables in certain countries.

The ET2020 process has achieved an **impact** along a chain starting at the individual level (e.g. technical-level policy maker), and moving to the organisational level and the wider national (systemic) level. Specific activities and deliverables have in many cases directly or indirectly contributed to the sharing of expertise and the implementation of policy changes (as demonstrated by the case studies in particular). For example, peer counselling appears to have been an effective type of activity due to its targeted, demand-driven nature. Quite a few examples of strong impact of individual PLAs were also identified. Notably, impact tends to be greater where and whenever ET2020 outputs coincide with thematic priorities in national reform agendas.

The evidence also indicates that the actual impact of ET2020 outputs on the wider national (systemic) level very much depends on a **combination of factors**, including the following:

- The networking and dissemination efforts of the national representatives in WGs.
- The level of seniority of individuals attending the activities and in cases where they are not the key decision makers, how effectively they can disseminate the key messages of activities to their senior managers.
- Whether reforms in a specific education field are considered or are underway in a country. This determines its openness and interest in learning from other countries' experiences and gathering new ideas.

A number of **limiting factors** has also been identified. For example, there is a lack of systematic and consistent dissemination at the Member State level, despite a recommendation made in the 2014 evaluation to improve this aspect. Furthermore, the varying economic situations and the diversity of education and training systems in Europe makes it impossible to devise a 'one size fits all' good practice model. This also implies that the ET2020 impact can vary greatly across countries.

While the creation of a compendium of good practice examples addressed a recommendation made in the 2014 evaluation and was mostly praised by interviewed stakeholders, there is a need to develop common criteria for such good practice examples. Without a common set of criteria, it is difficult for the users to determine on what basis the

good practice examples are being presented and thus the usefulness in terms of informing and influencing policy changes and reforms in other countries.

Concerning the **interaction between the technical and political levels**, this has been uneven, and awareness among stakeholders of the ET2020 indicative rolling Work Plan is low suggesting that there is still a lack of clarity around the ET2020 process and expected outcomes - already pointed out in the mid-term evaluation. That the interaction between the technical and political levels could be further improved is also reflected in the fact that some ET2020 outputs have had an impact at the organisational/ministry level but not at the wider national level.

5.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings and conclusions set out above, the following recommendations are made:

1. A number of successful elements in the current ET2020 process should be maintained with minor improvements:

- The **current structure of the ET2020 WGs** should be maintained, especially in relation to the composition of the sector-focused working groups. The most appropriate format for the issue-focused working groups requires further reflection, both to ensure better synergies with the sectoral WGs and to make the ET2020 framework more agile (see 2 and 3 below). The mandates of the WGs need to continue, as is the case presently, to have a clear focus on a limited number of key concrete issues of core interest to a critical mass of Member States. There is a clear preference among the stakeholders consulted for discussions to be detailed, concrete and in-depth.
- The **use of qualitative and quantitative evidence** to underpin the ET2020 processes should be further supported. This relates both to the continued use of the annual Education and Training Monitor reports and the ET2020 benchmarks and indicators, accompanied by a more qualitative analysis of the education and training systems' context. Also, good practice examples used in the ET2020 exchanges and/or published in the online compendium of good practices should be further underpinned by a clear and consistent definition of what constitutes a good practice example. Also, a clear set of criteria should be outlined through which such good practice examples can be identified (e.g. that the specific policy or measure has proven to be effective and sustainable in the field of education and training, as demonstrated by evaluation evidence and/or monitoring and assessment methods using process data, and that has potential for transferability to other education and training systems). This would further increase the transparency and robustness of the evidence base used in the ET2020 activities.
- The **alignment of future ET2020 deliverables with EU priorities and the work of the European Commission** should be ensured, as is the case presently, by explicitly linking the rationale for new deliverables with relevant EU priorities. The usefulness of the WG activities to the policy development processes at the European Commission should also be further supported and maximised to continue to ensure that such outputs feed into the work of the European Commission. At the same time, the launch of new activities or the production of new deliverables in response to shifting EU political priorities needs to be implemented seamlessly alongside the work of the WGs to avoid potential disruption to the work of WGs.
- **Further strengthening the link between ET2020 tools and deliverables and national priorities** should continue to be driven by a

bottom-up approach drawing on the rich inputs by Member States. This should ensure that the timing of ET2020 activities coincides to a great extent with the relevant policy debates and consideration of reforms and measures in the Member States. This, in turn, can be expected to result in a greater impact of ET2020 activities at the national level.

- ET2020 tools should become even **more flexible and agile** (beyond the existing opportunities to organise ad-hoc events/PLAs/peer counselling) to be able to respond in time and appropriately to the emerging education and training system challenges and political priorities. Concretely, this could involve having the possibility to form sub-WGs (with members from multiple WGs or individuals/organisations not represented in the WGs) working on concrete new issues emerging from the overall WG work, shorter mandates and blended exchange approaches including more frequent use of a combination of face-to-face and virtual meetings, thus facilitating more cross-working across the WGs (see 2 below).

2. Recommendations pertaining to new actions in the future include:

- Further attention is needed to **fully exploit synergies, and improve coordination and collaboration** between the WGs, especially in cases where horizontal WGs have a direct thematic link to the sectoral WGs (e.g. digital skills, migration and other cross-sector topics). Concretely, this could involve more frequent organisation of joint events where relevant as well as more effective dissemination of information between the WGs. It should be clarified at the outset of the WG mandate period and continuously monitored throughout the mandate period which WG deals with topics that potentially affect more than one WG, such as digital skills at the workplace or the teaching of citizenship in schools.
- The **quality of membership and participation** in ET2020 tools and deliverables is critical to their success. Continuous and stable WG membership positively affects the results and dissemination of ET2020 messages, and hence also the impact at the national level. Stable membership in WGs should be encouraged to ensure continuity and support better working relationships. Equally, it is important that the right profile of delegates (e.g. technical specialists as opposed to individuals from international coordination departments) is attending the in-depth discussions at the ET2020 activities. When appropriate, participation in the ET2020 activities should also be increasingly opened to include external experts and stakeholders. They can bring valuable, up-to-date and broader perspectives and experiences to the perspectives of government officials. This could be piloted in one WG to explore the effectiveness of such an approach.
- **Dissemination of ET2020 outcomes at the national level should be strengthened** by adopting a more systematic approach:
 - This could start with a clear communication strategy consisting of general guidelines that can be adapted flexibly by WG coordinators and members, as well as mutual learning activity participants. The communication strategy should clarify the key dissemination roles (between the EC and Member States who are primarily responsible for the dissemination at the national level), target audiences (senior management in ministries, other colleagues outside the immediate WG membership, external stakeholders such as trade unions, employer organisations, education bodies, representative organisations of learners, students and parents, media, general

- public, etc) and communication channels (the use of traditional publications such as reports, newsletters, key messages as well as social media channels).
- This should also be supported by fit-for-purpose dissemination products and channels, including encouraging Member States to form national taskforces to share information and learning from all WGs and thus supporting the dissemination of ET2020 messages; and introducing explicit feedback loops in the structure and work programme of the WGs so that dissemination progress at the national level is monitored.
 - WG members also need to have the capacity to gather information at the national level and share it with the group as well as disseminate the work done by the WG at the national level.
 - The issue of the translation of key messages from the ET2020 activities should also be considered as this would facilitate their dissemination. Whilst the translation of full documentation from ET2020 activities would be very costly, each core activity and deliverable could result in a one-page summary of the key policy messages which would be subject to translation.
 - Information and outputs of past PLAs and other mutual learning activities can be difficult to locate on the Europa website and it would therefore be useful to develop a common and searchable space where all ET2020 tools and deliverables can be accessed.
 - The EC could also more clearly communicate the main success stories from ET2020 activities so far, including those relevant for countries with a variety of education and training systems, to highlight the added value of ET2020. Such success stories and good practice examples could also be highlighted in the annual Education and Training Monitor reports and should then be substantiated with clear evidence of their success and positive influence on the national reforms. This connection could be especially useful for convincing Member States to adopt education and training reforms since a direct connection between reforms and the improvement in specific education indicators can be showcased. If applicable, Member States should refer to relevant ET2020 outputs in strategy papers and national action plans (some Member States have already done that).
- ET2020 tools should allow plenty of room for **interactive discussions and critical debate** rather than focusing on long, formal presentations, in order to improve their usefulness to WG members and mutual learning activity participants. In-depth discussions on national approaches give participants the opportunity to better compare the policies discussed to their own national context and to discuss strengths and weaknesses in detail, increasing the likelihood of creating an impact. 'On-demand' activities such as peer counselling requested by Member States in line with their national priorities could take place even more often (subject to demand from Member States). The impact of deliverables could be enhanced by continuing to monitor which priorities and interests are common across the Member States, and ensuring this is reflected in future work programmes of WGs as far as possible. Such a tailored and bottom-up approach to Member States' needs (unmet needs can be identified through CSRs to raise new issues to the national stakeholders) could mean further evolution of some activities towards more bespoke formats with a more limited membership. These

activities could focus on countries where key reforms in a particular area are underway or are urgently called for (as opposed to involving all Member States for some of whom the topic might not be high on the national agenda).

- The use of the ET2020 indicative rolling Work Plan needs further reflection to ensure it is more effectively promoted to the relevant stakeholders (in addition, as it is currently, to the members of the Education Committee who should be further encouraged to disseminate the Plan more systematically in their ministries to improve its usefulness). The **interaction between the technical and political levels of policy makers/stakeholders** should be improved by binding them together more coherently in the ET2020 framework and ensuring the exchanges between the two levels are more systematic and regular. In this respect, the approach of the Higher Education WG could be considered to inform the work of other WGs (the WG mandate is prepared in cooperation with the WG and the Directors General for Higher Education whilst the core WG work topics are linked to the Presidencies' priorities and are prepared by a PLA, discussed in the WG meetings, discussed in the DG Higher Education meetings and sometimes again in the WG).

Finally, it is important not to consider the ET2020 tools and deliverables in isolation and as separate activities. They all form part of a "toolbox" of activities that serve to complement each other in reaching the ET2020 priorities and objectives. So rather than considering whether more or less should be done regarding certain ET2020 activities, the key focus should be on how the core synergies between the current activities can be more fully exploited i.e. to ensure that the ET2020 tools available to the EC and the Member States are used optimally in the evolving political and operational contexts of education and training systems.

Annex 1 ET2020 activities and deliverables covered in the study

| Peer counselling | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| Title | Date, country | |
| Higher-education performance-based funding | September 2015, Czech Republic | |
| School reform (teachers and quality assurance) | November 2015, Sweden | |
| Teachers' career pathways | November 2015, Lithuania | |
| Special needs education | October 2016, Romania | |
| Higher-education performance-based funding | March-June 2017, Slovenia | |
| Inclusive education | November 2017, Bulgaria | |
| Peer learning activity (PLA) | | |
| Title | Date, country | ET2020 Working Group |
| Supporting educators for innovative, open and digital education | December 2017, Croatia | WG Digital Skills and Competences |
| Transforming higher education: how we teach in the digital age | January 2017, Malta | WG Digital Skills and Competences + WG Higher Education (joint) |
| Coding and Computational Thinking | September 2016, Finland | WG Digital Skills and Competences |
| Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies | July 2016, Germany | WG Digital Skills and Competences |
| Quality assurance for school development | October 2016, Estonia | WG Schools |
| Continuity and transitions in learner development | February 2017, Portugal | WG Schools |
| The role of teachers and school leaders in schools as learning organisations | May 2017, Belgium | WG Schools |
| Networks for learning and development across school education systems | September 2017, Serbia | WG Schools |
| Transforming school education | March 2016, Belgium | WG Schools |
| Future skills | February 2016, Belgium | WG Higher Education |
| Regional development and innovation | September 2016, Hungary | WG Higher Education |

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Teaching generations Y and Z: pedagogical challenges in teaching and learning environments in higher education | July 2017, France | WG Higher Education |
| Enhancing Quality Culture in Higher Education: government incentives and the role of HEI leadership | November 2017, Norway | WG Higher Education |
| Strengthening media literacy and critical thinking among young people as a tool to prevent and combat violent radicalisation | April 2016, the Netherlands | WG Citizenship |
| Social and civic competences – from the Paris Declaration to Global citizenship education | October 2016, Austria | WG Citizenship |
| Inclusive education as the most effective means for preventing social exclusion in today's diverse society | May 2017, Malta | WG Citizenship |
| Qualification programmes for in-company trainers | September 2017, Germany | WG VET |
| Peer learning Forum on Teachers and Trainers | November 2016, Greece | WG VET |
| New work-based learning method: teachers accompanying learners in the workplace | March 2017, the Netherlands | WG VET |
| Policies promoting basic skills in the workplace | February 2017, United Kingdom | WG Adult Learning |
| Policies promoting medium skills in the workplace | June 2017, France | WG Adult Learning |
| How can policy best ensure that workplace learning provides the skills needed by employers and employees | September 2017, Poland | WG Adult Learning |
| Peer review | | |
| Title | Date, country | ET2020 Working Group |

High-level peer review supporting teachers and trainers (four workshops):

- specifying roles and responsibilities – Belgium and Croatia;
- Strengthening professional development – Cyprus and Sweden;
- Preparing for key challenges – Finland and Austria;
- Fostering collaboration – Romania and Estonia.

October 2017, Estonia

WG VET (DGVT)

| Other | | |
|--|------------------------|--|
| Title | Date, country | ET2020 Working Group |
| Apprenticeships in the digital age: are we ready for the future? | November 2017, Belgium | WG VET and the members of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) |

| Deliverable | | |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Title | Type of deliverable | ET2020 Working Group |
| Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching. Guide on policies to improve Initial Teacher Education, 2015 | Report/Guide | WG Schools |
| High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles, 2015 | Policy guidance | WG VET |
| Teachers and Trainers in Work-based learning / apprenticeships – Mapping of models and practices, 2017 | Study | WG VET |
| SELFIE | Self-assessment tool | WG Digital Skills and Competences |
| DigCompEdu ⁶⁷ | Competence framework | WG Digital Skills and Competences |
| Financing Adult Learning, 2011-2013 | Policy recommendations | WG Adult Learning |
| Basic skills in the workplace, 2017 | Report | WG Adult Learning |
| Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool | Policy tool | WG Adult Learning |

⁶⁷ Whilst DigCompEdu was discussed in the WG and covered by a dedicated session, it should not be considered as a “direct deliverable” of WG Digital Skills and Competences.

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Online Compendium of Good Practices in Education and Training - Modernising Higher Education | Database of good practices | WG Higher Education |
| Online Compendium of Good Practices in Education and Training - Citizenship and Inclusive Education | Database of good practices | WG Citizenship |

Annex 2 ET2020 deliverable fiches

Teacher's Careers

| Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching. Guide on policies to improve Initial Teacher Education⁶⁸ | | |
|--|--|---|
| <i>Overview</i> | | |
| Type | Guide | Objective: The guide explores ways for countries to enhance the relevance and quality of how teachers are prepared for their challenging role and illustrates suggested policy actions with examples from across Europe. Key outputs: Key principles and suggested policy actions on ITE as regards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The continuum of the teaching profession • Collaborative learning • Governance |
| Year | 2015 | |
| Working Group | School Policy | |
| Participants | 30 European countries (EU MS, Liechtenstein, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey) and European social partner organisations | Background: This deliverable is a key output by the Working Group on School Policy which focuses on i) policies to improve the quality and relevance of Initial Teacher Education (ITE), aimed at more effective continuum of teacher education and professional development, and ii) ways of developing collaborative practices inside and around schools to tackle early school leaving and ensure that all learners succeed in education. The Group was composed of government representatives from 30 European countries, including EU Member States as well as Liechtenstein, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey, and representatives of the European social partner organisations. Through discussions and peer learning in different forms (quarterly meetings, in-depth country focus workshops, questionnaires, reviews of research literature), in this report the Working Group collected evidence on successful policy practice and reforms of ITE. |
| <i>Alignment with EU priorities</i> | | |
| Overall assessment | The deliverable is well anchored in the ET2020 priorities, in particular regarding the objective on the support of educators as addressed in several Council | |

⁶⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/experts-groups/2014-2015/school/initial-teacher-education-sum_en.pdf

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>conclusions and Commission communications (see below).</p> |
| <p>Alignment with specific priorities</p> | <p>Ensuring the quality and attractiveness of teaching, ITE and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) are recognised as priority objectives in the 2009 Council Conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020) and in the 2015 Joint Report on its implementation.</p> <p>In the 2014 Council conclusions on effective teacher education, EU Education Ministers agreed that 'ITE should provide prospective teachers with the core competences required to deliver high quality teaching, as well as stimulate the motivation to acquire and update competences throughout their careers. (...), it should not only include subject knowledge and pedagogical competences reinforced by integrated periods of practical teaching experience, but also encourage both self-reflection and collaborative working, adaptation to multicultural classrooms and acceptance of leadership roles.'</p> <p>In the 2012 Commission Communication on Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes, the Commission highlighted actions to support teachers, school leaders and teacher educators among key policy pointers for enhanced efficiency, consistency and coordination in education systems. In the 2013 Council Conclusions on investing in education and training (a response to the above-mentioned 2012 Commission Communication on Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes) and the 2013 Annual Growth Survey ensuring effective initial teacher education and by providing coherent and adequately resourced systems for recruitment, selection, initial teacher education, early career support and competence-based continuing professional development of teaching staff is stressed as a priority.</p> <p>The 2016 Commission Communication on Improving and Modernising Education sets out the objective of enabling teachers to cope with challenging tasks by building on a teaching profession "that is based on excellent initial education, teamwork, and career-long professional development". The 2017 Commission Communication on School Development and Excellent Teaching for a Great Start in Life addresses initial teacher education by emphasizing the importance of supporting teachers for excellent teaching, affirming that the Commission will e.g. promote the exchange of best practices among providers of Initial Teacher Education.</p> |

The work of this Working Group builds on the outputs of previous EU Working Groups in the field of teacher education and professional development, which include policy guidance on related issues such as induction for beginning teachers (European Commission, 2010), the development of teacher competences (European Commission, 2013) and support to teacher educators (European Commission, 2013).

Indications of alignment with national policy

| Member State | Potential national alignment | Evidence |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| AT | | |
| BE | ✓ | Belgian (Wallonian) reform of initial teacher education (increase course length from three to four years for primary and low-secondary education teachers) - expected to enter into force in 2019/2020; Flemish reform also includes an obligation to offer career paths for adults wanting to become teachers - 2016 |
| BG | | |
| CY | ✓ | Significant efforts made to upscale teachers ongoing training through a new 'professional learning' framework (pilot phase) - 2015 |
| CZ | ✓ | New teacher career structures with the support of EU funds (e.g. induction programme for novice teachers) - 2017 |
| DE | | |
| DK | ✓ | Agreement that aims to give teachers more freedom to plan and conduct their teaching better adapted to students' needs and local context - 2017 |
| EE | ✓ | Support for initial teacher education and continuous professional development financed by ESF underway - 2017 |
| EL | | |
| ES | ✓ | ITE and pathways to teaching planned to be reformed - 2017 |
| FI | ✓ | Teacher education development programme: ITE and continuing professional development will be amended, training will be better adapted to the actual skills and development needs of teachers and school heads - 2017 |
| FR | | |
| HR | | |

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| HU | | |
| IE | ✓ | Additional EUR 2.7 million to promote innovative approaches and increase access to initial teacher education programmes for travellers, disabled people and other under-represented groups – announced in 2016 |
| IT | ✓ | New ITE system introduced, fully operational by 2021: three-year initial teacher education managed jointly by universities and schools; the course combines formal learning with two years' teaching apprenticeship - 2015 |
| LT | ✓ | New set of requirements for initial teacher education included, compulsory for all teacher training institutions in higher education from 2017 - 2015 |
| LU | ✓ | ITE recently strengthened: three-year induction period has been introduced for all new teachers, both in primary education (where a similar traineeship did not exist) and in secondary education (replacing the previous two-year programme); moreover, the hours of compulsory continuing professional development doubled to 48 hours every 3 years) - 2015 |
| LV | | |
| MT | ✓ | Current work on infrastructure: set up a committee to ensure teacher readiness through appropriate initial teacher training, re-training of existing teachers and up-skilling and professionalising of trainers who are skilled in a specific sector, but who do not possess teacher training - 2017 |
| NL | | |
| PL | | |
| PT | | |
| RO | | |
| SE | | |
| SI | | |
| SK | ✓ | National reform programme: objective to enhance ITE with the aim of improving practical training, and to improve the continuing professional development of teachers so that it better corresponds to real needs and professional standards - 2017 |
| UK | ✓ | Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund (professional development programme) implemented - 2017 |

Apprenticeships & Work-Based Learning

High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles⁶⁹

Overview

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Type | Study | Objective: The key purpose of the deliverable is to promote work-based learning in all its forms, with special attention to apprenticeships, and to make related policies more effective and more targeted to the labour market needs. The rationale is that promoting work-based learning, including apprenticeships, can help young people make a smoother transition from school to work, improve their employability and hence, contribute to reducing youth unemployment. Key outputs: 20 guiding principles for stakeholders involved in work-based learning focused on 4 main themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving national governance and social partners; • Supporting companies; • Making apprenticeships attractive and improving career guidance; and • Quality Assurance. |
| Year | 2015 | |
| Working Group | VET | |
| Participants | EU Member States, EFTA countries, Candidate Countries, EU social partner and VET provider organisations, Cedefop and European Training Foundation | Background: This document presents 20 guiding principles developed by the ET 2020 Working Group on Vocational Education and Training (WG on VET) in 2014-2015. These principles were developed during a series of meetings, in-depth country focus workshops and webinars. Representatives of the EU Member States, EFTA countries, and Candidate Countries as well as EU Social Partner and VET Provider organisations, Cedefop and the European Training Foundation (ETF) participated in the Working Group, which was chaired by the Commission. Cedefop and external consultants have contributed to the working group through background documents and research activities. |
| <i>Alignment with EU priorities</i> | | |
| Overall assessment | The deliverable directly addresses challenges defined in the EU priority "Jobs, growth and investment", in particular priorities set regarding "labour markets and skills" on challenges as regards e.g. employment rates and the acquisition of skills. The benefits of | |

⁶⁹ <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/8f010ea2-265b-11e7-ab65-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>apprenticeships are specifically named. The need to improve young people's entry into the labour market through integrated action such as apprenticeships is also defined in the strategy Europe 2020.</p> |
| <p>Alignment with specific priorities</p> | <p>In the 2012 Commission Communication on Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes, the Commission highlighted actions to help facilitate transition from learning to work through work based learning and notably apprenticeships and other dual models. As a result, e.g. the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) was established to bring together governments with other key stakeholders, like businesses, social partners, chambers, vocational education and training (VET) providers, regions, youth representatives or think tanks.</p> <p>The deliverable directly responds to objectives mentioned in the 2010 European Ministers for Vocational Education and Training, the European Social Partners and the European Commission's Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training and the 2015 Riga Conclusions by the Ministers in charge of vocational education and training (EU Member States, Candidate Countries, European Economic Area Countries)⁷⁰.</p> <p>The European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships was adopted by the EPSCO Council on 15 March 2018. This initiative is part of the New Skills Agenda for Europe, launched in June 2016. It also ties in with the European Pillar of Social Rights, which foresees a right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning. It sets out 14 key criteria that Member States and stakeholders should use to develop quality and effective apprenticeships. This initiative will help increase the employability and personal development of apprentices and contribute towards a highly skilled and qualified workforce responsive to labour market needs. The initiative is also a follow-up to the 2016 Communication on Investing in Europe's Youth.</p> <p>The European Pact for Youth, launched in November 2015, is a concrete example of how stakeholders have responded to the call for improved VET and apprenticeships: a business-led initiative to create 10,000 business-education partnerships – bringing together representatives for business, education and youth, and the European institutions – that over the next two years is expected to lead to at</p> |

⁷⁰ The Riga Conclusions stresses that there is an increased need to promote work based learning in all its forms (apprenticeship included) by involving social partners, companies, chambers and VET providers, as well as by stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship.

| | | least 100,000 good quality apprenticeships, traineeships or entry-level jobs and boost the chances of young people getting jobs. |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Indications of alignment with national policy</i> | | |
| Member State | Potential national alignment | Evidence |
| AT | ✓ | Austrian Economic Chamber initiated a 'supra-regional apprenticeship placement' pilot project in cooperation with the employment service and the Federal Ministry of Economy, new approach for updated curricula based on "learning outcomes" - 2017 |
| BE | ✓ | ESF BIDA project: established cooperation between strategic partners: apprenticeship agencies, teachers, socio-educational services, part-time education institutes, companies, trainers and secondary schools - 2016 |
| BG | ✓ | Amended VET Act: introduction of the dual system of vocational training, e.g. all VET schools will conduct training according to new school documentation - 2016 |
| CY | ✓ | approved a Strategic Plan for the System of Technical and Vocational Education and Training 2015-2020, including Apprenticeship Scheme - 2015 |
| CZ | | |
| DE | ✓ | Municipal youth and social services strengthening their cooperation with employment agencies to place disadvantaged young people in apprenticeships - 2016 |
| DK | ✓ | A tripartite agreement has established a better vocational education and training (VET) programme, with 35 basic orientations - 2016 |
| EE | ✓ | Taking measures to extend the apprenticeship programme with ESIF support; new partnerships with employers launched - 2016 |
| EL | ✓ | Approved Quality Frameworks for Study Programmes of VET as well as for the Implementation of Apprenticeships in Enterprises - 2017 |
| ES | ✓ | Some regions have developed comprehensive modular approaches for apprenticeships - 2015 |
| FI | ✓ | New act on VET: consolidation of VET in a single entity with its own governance, new funding models for vocational schools etc - 2017 |

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|----|---|--|
| FR | ✓ | National and regional operational programmes funded by the Youth Employment Initiative; network of regional apprenticeship ambassadors - launched in 2016 |
| HR | ✓ | National Curriculum for VET under review: increasing labour market relevance of VET, complemented by plans to develop sectorial curricula, establish an effective network of vocational schools and programmes and quality assurance system, establish regional centres of competence and promote international mobility of teachers and students - 2016 |
| HU | ✓ | Amendment of the VET law introduces the 'Chamber Guarantee', guarantees help for students in finding training places for apprenticeships - 2017 |
| IE | ✓ | National promotional campaign incl. website; National Agency for Workforce Learning will enhance delivery of company-led training + establish five new networks; apprenticeships and traineeships supported in the framework of the National Skills Strategy 2025 - 2017 |
| IT | ✓ | School reform - more integrated and attractive apprenticeship system - 2017 |
| LT | ✓ | Action plan for developing and implementing apprenticeships - 2016 |
| LU | ✓ | Chamber of Commerce launched the 'Talent Check' initiative to help students choose a suitable training place, companies can also make use of candidates' test results when selecting apprentices - 2016 |
| LV | ✓ | Competences-based general education curriculum set to be rolled out from 2018, intended to align skills with future labour market needs. The target for vocational education is to increase its share of students by offering them better work opportunities and gradually updating the curriculum - 2017 |
| MT | ✓ | Increased quality of work-based learning through formal accreditation of work-based modules; planned "Work-based Learning and Apprenticeship Act" will provide a harmonised legal framework for work placements, apprenticeships and internships - 2017 |
| NL | ✓ | Experiments are taking place in upper secondary VET schools to integrate the school-based and dual/apprenticeship track; the experiments address the need of VET schools and companies for more flexibility between both tracks and to stimulate cooperation between them - 2015-2021 |
| PL | | |

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| PT | ✓ | Initiatives aim to increase VET attractiveness and boost participation - 2017 |
| RO | ✓ | New strategic framework for VET (e.g. set of new training and occupational standards) - 2015 |
| SE | ✓ | National competence centres piloted for selected occupations, enabling apprentices to gain practical training - 2017 |
| SI | ✓ | Pilot implementation of apprenticeship scheme, draft amendment to VET Act - 2017 |
| SK | ✓ | VET reform: aims to improve the labour market relevance of VET by introducing elements of a dual system that includes apprenticeships - 2017 |
| UK | ✓ | New apprenticeship policy launched in Wales, strategy to ensure that vocational qualifications meet the needs of learners, higher education providers and employers in a wide range of careers - 2017; In Northern Ireland, new traineeships and apprenticeships system are offered - 2017 |

Teachers/Trainers in Apprenticeships & Work-Based Learning

| Teachers and trainers in work-based learning/apprenticeships ⁷¹ | | |
|--|------------------|---|
| Overview | | |
| Type | Study | Objective: The study provided results in three key areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • governance arrangements in place for professionals involved in WBL; • professionalisation arrangements for those professionals; and finally, • in what way cooperation between schools and companies is arranged, focusing on the quality of the professionals involved. Key outputs: The study identifies existing frameworks, policy approaches and cooperation at national and organisational level; qualifications/competence profiles or frameworks/sets of competences; methodologies, cross-institutional networking opportunities and schemes for systematic professional development and good practice examples. The study provides recommendations and proposes follow-up actions at the EU, national, sector, providers' and company level. |
| Year | 2017 | |
| Working Group | VET | |
| Participants | External authors | Background: The key purpose of the deliverable is to map and analyse existing approaches and project examples with regard to WBL teachers and trainers, focusing on i) governance structures which aim to ensure high competence of teachers and trainers in WBL, ii) professionalisation opportunities for teachers and trainers in WBL/apprenticeships, and iii) continuous dialogue between teachers and trainers with the aim to improve the quality of WBL. The study identified existing frameworks, policy approaches and cooperation at national and organisational level; qualifications/competence profiles or frameworks/ sets of competences; methodologies, cross-institutional networking opportunities and schemes for systematic professional development and good practice examples from across the EU28. In addition, ten case studies were conducted on existing practices of cooperation between teachers and trainers in WBL. Furthermore, the study took into account five examples from projects and |

⁷¹ <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/88780c83-6b64-11e7-b2f2-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>initiatives (from Lifelong Learning Programme and Erasmus+ programme or other national or EU programmes) related to governance and professionalisation of teachers and trainers in WBL.</p> |
| <p><i>Alignment with EU priorities</i></p> | |
| <p>Overall assessment</p> | <p>The deliverable directly addresses challenges defined in the Europe 2020 priority “Jobs, growth and investment”, in particular priorities set regarding “labour markets and skills” addressing challenges as regards e.g. employment rates and the acquisition of skills. Specifically, “securing sufficient availability of qualified trainers” set out in the European Semester is named as a challenge to be addressed. It is also aligned with the ET2020 framework.</p> |
| <p>Alignment with specific priorities</p> | <p>In 2012 Commission Communication on Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes, the Commission highlighted actions to help facilitate transition from learning to work through work based learning. It is noted that the revision and strengthening of the professional profile of all teaching professions is an essential step to reform education and training system. In this sense, the Commission stresses the need of introducing “coherent and adequately resourced systems for recruitment, selection, induction and professional development of teaching staff based on clearly defined competences needed at each stage of a teaching career, and increasing teacher digital competence.”</p> <p>The same focus on the importance of teacher education is put by the Council of the European Union, which emphasises the need to implement appropriate policies for attracting and recruiting teachers, for providing them with effective initial training education and for ensuring that they can receive constant update of their competences. In particular, the 2014 Council Conclusions on effective teacher education highlight that the provision of high quality continuous professional development is crucial in order to ensure that teachers possess and maintain the relevant competences they require to be effective in today’s classrooms.</p> <p>The deliverable directly responds to objectives mentioned in the 2015 Riga Conclusions on a new set of medium-term deliverables in the field of VET for the period 2015-2020. The Riga Conclusions stress that there is an increased need to promote work-based learning in all its forms (apprenticeship included) by involving social partners, companies, chambers and VET providers, as well as by stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship. In the Riga Conclusions, European VET ministers underlined the increasing</p> |

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| | <p>need to promote work-based learning in all its forms and the need to introduce systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of VET teachers, trainers and mentors in both school and work based settings across the EU.</p> <p>The European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships was adopted by the EPSCO Council in March 2018. It states that “teachers, trainers and mentors should be supported to update their skills and competences in order to train apprentices according to the latest teaching and training methods and labour market needs”. The initiative is part of the New Skills Agenda for Europe, launched in June 2016. The Commission has identified 14 key criteria that Member States and stakeholders should use to develop quality and effective apprenticeships.</p> <p>The European Pact for Youth, launched in November 2015, is a concrete example of how stakeholders have responded to the call for improved VET and apprenticeships: a business-led initiative to create 10,000 business-education partnerships – bringing together representatives for business, education and youth, and the European institutions – that over the next two years is expected to lead to at least 100,000 good quality apprenticeships, traineeships or entry-level jobs.</p> |
|--|---|

Indications of alignment with national policy

| Member State | Potential national alignment | Evidence |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| AT | | |
| BE | | |
| BG | ✓ | VET development strategy: training of trainers/mentors addressed - 2016 |
| CY | | |
| CZ | | |
| DE | | |
| DK | | |
| EE | | |
| EL | | |
| ES | | |
| FI | | |

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| FR | ✓ | Reform of VET system, aimed to improve the quality of training and governance of the overall system - 2018 |
| HR | ✓ | 2016-2020 programme and action plan for VET development: includes improving models of work-based learning; developing the system of quality assurance; improving the professional development of teachers; supporting internationalisation and the mobility teachers - 2016 |
| HU | | |
| IE | | |
| IT | ✓ | Revised quality assurance framework revised, addressing quality assurance models (e.g. VET provider accreditation) - 2017 |
| LT | | |
| LU | ✓ | Important steps through amended VET law were also taken to ensure that VET teachers and trainers receive the latest training - 2016 |
| LV | | |
| MT | ✓ | Comprehensive reform of Apprenticeship Act including defining rights and obligations for VET providers - 2017 |
| NL | ✓ | Quality agreements for VET schools - 2016 |
| PL | | |
| PT | | |
| RO | | |
| SE | | |
| SI | ✓ | Programme to improve the professional competences of VET teachers, increased budget to ensure that more teachers in vocational subjects obtain a teaching certificate - 2016 |
| SK | | |
| UK | | |

SELFIE

| Self-reflection tool for digitally capable schools (SELFIE)⁷² | | |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Overview</i> | | |
| Type | Self-reflection tool | <p>Objective:</p> <p>SELFIE (Self-reflection on Effective Learning by Fostering Innovation through Educational Technologies) is a tool to help school communities “to understand where they stand in their use of digital technologies”⁷³. SELFIE gathers information of all important school-related stakeholders (such as teachers, students, school leaders) to deliver a comprehensive picture of the schools’ strengths and weaknesses regarding digital technologies for learning. The following dimensions are inter alia considered by the tool:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School strategies • Teaching • Learning and assessment practices • Infrastructure • Curricula • Student’s experience <p>The tool should give schools the possibility to self-reflect their use of digital technologies.</p> <p>Key outputs:</p> <p>The output of the evaluation is a SELFIE School Report which summarizes the input of the different stakeholders and gives an overview where the school stands regarding their use of digital technologies.</p> |
| Year | 2017 | |
| Working Group | WG Digital skills and competences | |
| Participants (in the pilot version of the tool) | Belgium (Flanders), Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Italy, Malta, Republic of Ireland, Spain and United Kingdom. Apart from these countries, | <p>Background:</p> <p>In the SELFIE pilot version of early October 2017, schools in 11 EU countries participated. The next version of SELFIE with all data from the pilot implementation is expected for 2018. More than 5000 school leaders, teachers and students gave input for the design of the tool.</p> |

⁷² <https://ec.europa.eu/education/schools-go-digital>

⁷³ <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomporg/selfie-tool>

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>also some schools in Russia, Georgia and Republic of Serbia</p> | |
| <p><i>Alignment with EU priorities</i></p> | | |
| <p>Overall assessment</p> | <p>In the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth the importance of the digital society is highlighted. It is mentioned that MSs need to promote the development and usage of more accessible online services including digital skills. It indirectly contributes to the Digital Single Market which is anchored in the 10 Commission’s priorities for 2015-2019.</p> | |
| <p>Alignment with specific priorities</p> | <p>Innovation friendly institutions ‘which are promoting the creativity and innovation by developing specific teaching and learning methods (including the use of new ICT tools and teacher training)’ are mentioned under a strategic objective in the 2009 Council Conclusions on a Strategic Framework for ET2020.</p> <p>In the 2015 Commission Communication on New priorities for European cooperation in education in training it is highlighted that “a more active use of innovative pedagogies and digital skills and tools” is relevant for high-quality learning. Hence, educators should use innovative pedagogies and ICT tools to foster digital skills.</p> <p>In the 2012 Commission Communication Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes the Commission set as priority for member states to ‘scale up the use of ICT-supported learning and access to high quality OER’. This for instance includes to modernize the ICT infrastructure of schools, to support ICT-based teaching and assessment practices.</p> <p>In the 2013 Council Conclusions on Rethinking Education, the Council invites MS to optimize ‘ICT-supported learning and access to high quality Open Education Resources (OERs) (...) and by supporting education and trainings institutions in adapting to the emerge of OERs, with particular regard to quality assurance and monitoring.’</p> <p>In the 2017 Commission Communication on School Development and Excellent Teaching for a Great Start in Life, the SELFIE-tool is basically announced and its benefits are highlighted as schools can ‘chose to report on their progress in the availability, use, competence and attitudes to Information and Communication Technologies, building a database across all participating Member States’.</p> | |

| | | In the 2016 Commission Communication on Improving and Modernising Education, it is highlighted that 'Europe needs to develop and innovate school education' meaning that also schools need to give access to digital resources and infrastructure to respond to the needs of the digital era. |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Indications of alignment with national policy⁷⁴</i> | | |
| Member State⁷⁵ | Potential national alignment | Evidence |
| AT | ✓ | Adoption of the national digital education strategy 'School 4.0 – let's get digital' - 2017 |
| BE | ✓ | Participated in the pilot version of the tool - 2017 |
| BG | | |
| CY | ✓ | Did participate in the pilot version of the tool. There are several measures addressing digital skills but no policies which are targeting entire schools - 2017 |
| CZ | | |
| DE | ✓ | Over 5 years, EUR 5 billion will be invested in 'digital infrastructures for general and professional schools to the commitment by the states to put digital education into practice.' This initiative is grounded in the digital strategy - 2016. |
| DK | ✓ | Participated in the pilot version of the tool - 2017 |
| EE | ✓ | Participated in the pilot version of the tool - 2017 |
| EL | ✓ | Participated in the pilot version of the tool - 2017 |
| ES | ✓ | Participated in the pilot version of the tool - 2017 |
| FI | ✓ | Participated in the pilot version of the tool - 2017 |
| FR | | |
| HR | ✓ | Croatia is financing an 'e-School project' mainly with EU funds – since 2015 |
| HU | | |
| IE | ✓ | Participated in the pilot version of the tool - 2017 |
| IT | ✓ | Participated in the pilot version of the tool - 2017 |
| LT | | |
| LU | | |

⁷⁴ National policy can be seen to be aligned with the SELFIE tool if countries set up projects or policies affecting the use of digital technologies by schools. With regard to the available documents/information, it is difficult to assess the direct impact of the SELFIE tool on national policies as the pilot version of the tool has just been launched in October 2017. However, as already in 2017, teachers, school leaders etc. were invited to give their input for the design of the tool, it may be possible that these affected national legislations already in 2017. Moreover, national alignment has been ticked if schools in a country participated in the pilot version tool as this illustrates that a country responds to EU activities by forwarding these opportunities to their schools.

⁷⁵ Georgia, Serbia and a number of schools in Russia did also participate in the pilot version of the SELFIE-tool.

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| LV | | |
| MT | ✓ | Participated in the pilot version of the tool - 2017 |
| NL | | |
| PL | | |
| PT | ✓ | In the past, Portugal launched several initiatives addressing the use of mobile technologies in school. The new Digital Competence Initiative proposes to upskill the ICT competences and to provide digital education resources to modernise teaching methods and the training of trainers - 2017 |
| RO | | |
| SE | | |
| SI | | |
| SK | | |
| UK | ✓ | Participated in the pilot version of the tool, but ICT strategies were widely used in classrooms already before that - 2017 |

DigCompEdu

| Digital Competence Framework for Educators (DigCompEdu)⁷⁶ | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| <i>Overview</i> | | |
| Type | Report | <p>Objective:</p> <p>DigCompEdu aims to give a framework for educators on what it means to be digitally competent. The framework covers all levels of education from early childhood to higher and adult education. The framework encompasses 22 competences organised in six areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional engagement • Digital resources • Teaching and learning • Assessment • Empowering learners • Facilitating learners' digital competence. <p>The focus of the framework is on how to integrate digital competences in the innovation and enhancement of education and training. Technical skills are not in the focus.</p> <p>Key outputs:</p> <p>In the report, the added value of the DigCompEdu framework is described as fourfold. It provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "a sound background that can guide policy across all level; • a template that allows local stakeholders to move quickly on to developing a concrete instrument, suited to their needs, without having to develop a conceptual basis for this work; • a common language and logic that can help the discussion and exchange of best practices across borders; • a reference point for Member States and other stakeholders to validate the completeness and approach of their own existing and future tools and frameworks." |
| Year | 2017 | |
| Working Group | WG Digital skills and competences | |
| Participants | EU member countries | <p>Background: The framework is based on work carried out by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC). Input came inter alia from around 100 teachers who participated in specific workshop sessions at the eTwinning Conference in Athens and from 72 participants in online stakeholder consultations. The members of the ET2020 Working Group on Digital Skills and Competences also gave their input.</p> |

⁷⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcompedu>

| <i>Alignment with EU priorities</i> | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| Overall assessment | | The deliverable addresses the Europe 2020 strategy by improving digital skills. In the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth the importance of the digital society is highlighted. It is mentioned that MSs need to promote the development and usage of more accessible online services including digital skills. It indirectly contributes to the Digital Single Market which is anchored in the 10 Commission's priorities for 2015-2019. |
| Alignment with specific priorities | | In the report of the deliverable it is mentioned that it contributes to the Commission's recently endorsed Skills Agenda for Europe (2016) and to the Commission's Europe 2020 flagship initiative An Agenda for new skills and jobs (2010) . In the 2016 Commission Communication on Improving and Modernising Education , it is highlighted that 'Europe needs to develop and innovate school education' meaning that also schools need to give access to digital resources and infrastructure to respond to the needs of the digital era. |
| <i>Indications of alignment with national policy⁷⁷</i> | | |
| Member State | Potential national alignment | Evidence |
| AT | ✓ | Austria adopted a national digital education strategy 'School 4.0 – let's get digital' - 2017 |
| BE | ✓ | The days for teachers' continuous professional development which also contains the adaption the digital society are planned to be increased - 2019. |
| BG | | |
| CY | ✓ | A training-website for teachers has been set-up. The training is addressing the digital gap - 2017 |
| CZ | | |
| DE | ✓ | A strategy on 'Education in the digital world' has already been adopted by the German federal states - 2016 |
| DK | | |
| EE | ✓ | In Estonia, 'digital learning is addressed in various aspects of education including changes to the national curriculum, providing students and teachers with the |

⁷⁷ The national alignment of this report may be that countries launch more programmes to foster the digital competences of educators. For instance, support may include: the use of digital technologies for communication, collaboration and professional development; the use of sourcing, creating and sharing digital resources; managing and orchestrating the use of digital technologies in teaching and learning; the use of digital technologies and strategies to enhance assessment; the use of digital technologies to enhance inclusion, personalization and learners' active engagement; and enabling learners to creatively and responsibly use digital technologies for information, communication, content creating, wellbeing and problem-solving.

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| | | necessary digital tools, including in teacher education' - 2017 |
| EL | ✓ | The three-year plan on education identifies as a priority the gradual increase in digital opportunities at all education levels - 2017 |
| ES | ✓ | Adopted the 'digital competence framework for teachers' with the aim to improve teaching ICT skills - 2017 |
| FI | ✓ | Set up 'new comprehensive school programme' which aims to make Finland the leading country for modern learning by 2020. One of the approaches is that each of the participating school is given a tutor teacher who supports his peers in new (digital) learning methods - since 2016 |
| FR | ✓ | The Digital School plan encompasses digital teacher training. For instance, an online platform is offering resources for digital teaching methods - 2017 |
| HR | ✓ | In the framework of the e-Schools project, the low level of digital maturity in Croatian schools is addressed. The programme has manifold measures and also included the training of staff and teachers in 151 pilot schools - since 2014 |
| HU | | |
| IE | | |
| IT | | |
| LT | | |
| LU | | |
| LV | | |
| MT | | |
| NL | | |
| PL | | |
| PT | ✓ | In the past, Portugal launched several initiatives addressing the use of mobile technologies in school. The new Digital Competence Initiative proposes to upskill the ICT competences and to provide digital education resources to modernise teaching methods and the training of trainers - 2017 |
| RO | | |
| SE | | |
| SI | | |
| SK | | |
| UK | | |

Financing Adult Learning

| Thematic Working Group on Financing Adult Learning Final Report ⁷⁸ | | |
|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Overview | | |
| Type | Report | Objective: The objective of the report is 'to inform and focus the policy debate on how best to fund and to invest in adult learning'. It is for instance discussed why investing in learning is so important, who should pay for the funding or how funding should be prioritised. |
| Year | 2013 | |
| Working Group | WG (Financing) Adult Learning | |
| | | Key outputs: Key outputs are 13 suggestions for action which address national as well as EU authorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-disciplinary research should be used to set funding policies and priorities for adult learning. • Awareness of the benefits of adult learning by integrating them in funding decisions should be raised • Investment required to achieve the ET2020 adult learning benchmarks should be reviewed at the national level. • Funding policies should be adapted to ensure enough means for adult learning by specific priority groups. • It should be invested in the development of adult learning staff and infrastructure. • The policy environment, legal frameworks and incentives should support the financing of adult learning. • Guidelines for the roles of key stakeholders in supporting efficient investment in adult learning should be established. • Quality frameworks for adult learning should include mechanisms to identify the full costs and benefits for the different stakeholders. • A cost-benefit based approach to the provision of accompanying measures should be developed to attract those without previous participation in adult learning. • The existing initial education learning infrastructure should be used when developing adult learning provision. |

⁷⁸ https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/thematic_wg_financing_report.pdf

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transnational Peer Learning Activities for finance and policy officials should be developed at the European level. • Key performance indicators should be established to compare the effectiveness of the financial instruments. • National authorities should review that capacity of existing financial instruments to fulfil the requirements generated for adult learning by national economic and social policy objectives |
| Participants | EU member countries | <p>Background:</p> <p>The report is supposed to be a contribution to the debate on policy development in adult learning, and was launched by the Thematic Working Group on Financing Adult Learning, established in the framework of the Open Method of Coordination under the work programme of ET2020. The Working Group used the OMC to assess and to analyse already existing funding policies and practices in the member states.</p> |
| <i>Alignment with EU priorities</i> | | |
| Overall assessment | | <p>In the Europe 2020 strategy it is recognized that adult learning does contribute to the agenda for inclusive growth by providing a means of up skilling or re-skilling.</p> <p>The deliverable contributes to several EU priorities, especially the 'New Skills Agenda for Europe' and the European Pillar of Social Rights which includes a commitment to education, training and lifelong learning and to active support to employment.</p> |
| Alignment with specific priorities | | <p>The European Agenda for adult learning (2011) includes the priority to 'improve the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult learning sector'.</p> <p>The 2011 Council Resolution on a Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning and the more recent 2012 Commission Communication on Rethinking Education: draws out significance of adult learning to economic challenges facing Member States and the difficulties of adequately monitoring the adult learning sector.</p> <p>The 2017 Commission Communication on Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture: sets framework for European cooperation on adult learning and includes an objective to make lifelong learning a reality. States that further efforts are needed to promote adult learning.</p> <p>The 2016 Commission Communication on New Skills Agenda for Europe puts an emphasis on adult learning in relation to basic skills and learning at the workplace.</p> |

| <i>Indications of alignment with national policy⁷⁹</i> | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Member State | Potential national alignment | Evidence |
| AT | | No, but crucial reforms have been done in the past through the Adult Education Initiative - 2012 |
| BE | | |
| BG | ✓ | Several projects financed by the ESF seek to improve adult learning, including literacy courses for adults. |
| CY | | There are some activities tackling adult learning (such as development of new qualification standards) but no new ways to finance adult learning. |
| CZ | ✓ | National vocational qualification standards have become the reference point for accrediting CVET programmes which could give evidence that existing initial education learning infrastructure is used when developing adult learning provision - 2017 |
| DE | ✓ | 'The Federal Ministry of Education and Research is investing EUR 180 million in the improvement of literacy of low-skilled individuals and promoting basic skills. Legislation on continuous professional training in force since August 2016 is to improve access for the low-skilled and long-term unemployed to a continuing vocational education and training (CVET) qualification. A new 'upward mobility student loan' for job-related VET gives financial support to those preparing for more than 700 types of qualifications, regardless of age' – since 2016 |
| DK | ✓ | New targeted economic support has been put in place - 2017 |
| EE | | No as in the Education and Training Monitor (2017) report it is mentioned that employers are lacking the incentives to offer training and retraining among the workforce. The awareness raising measures did apparently not contain information about the finance or cost-benefit analysis. |
| EL | ✓ | A new self-financed scheme of adult education programmes has been established. |
| ES | | |
| FI | | |

⁷⁹ National policies are assessed to be aligned with this deliverable if they have been launched considering the suggestions for action introduced above. These include either new programmes/projects which directly finance adult learning or new policies, documents etc. about financing of adult learning. Regarding the latter, policies which aim only at facilitating adult learning (competence databases etc.) but not directly funding adult learning are not considered as potentially linked to the document.

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| FR | | |
| HR | ✓ | A programme has been put in place to enable students who have completed a low level of vocational studies to continue at a higher level free of charge. |
| HU | ✓ | The EDIOP programme has funding of EUR 78 million. It aims to digitally upskill disadvantaged adults in employment age (16-65), through training and motivating them to use IT tools and IT facilities – since 2017 |
| IE | | There has been set a target to increase participation in adult learning, but it is not specified how the target will be reached. |
| IT | ✓ | 'The "National Plan Industry 4.0" increases public incentives for employees and managers participating in training activities linked with digitisation' - 2017 |
| LT | ✓ | An entitlement to training leave for non-formal education activities for each person.' - 2015 |
| LU | ✓ | 'An amendment to the Labour Law was adopted, reorganising the State's co-financing provisions for training provided by companies' - 2017 |
| LV | ✓ | An ESF project to improve prospects for employed adults, including low skilled and older adults. Around 36 000 adults are expected to take part in training financed through this project, of which 12 000 are expected to be low-qualified adults. The training will be provided mostly at VET schools - 2017 |
| MT | ✓ | The government gave financial incentives for employers to invest in CVET dedicated to the low-skilled - 2017 |
| NL | ✓ | Several programmes to finance adult participation in learning were launched. There is a smaller scale experiment with voucher funding for modular bachelor and associate degree programmes. Participation in formal part time education is also promoted through a low interest loan to finance tuition fees - 2017 |
| PL | ✓ | There are ESF projects in the pipeline to finance activities for adults to develop methods and tools supporting ICT use and to make them widely available. |
| PT | | Several measures implemented to boost adult education but from the information available these rather seem to be flanking and supporting activities instead of concrete financing schemes. |
| RO | | |
| SE | | |
| SI | | |

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| SK | | Only flanking measures regarding adult learning were introduced. |
| UK | ✓ | The Education Funding Agency and the Skills Funding Agency have been merged to form the Education and Skills Funding Agency, to be the sole agency responsible for funding adult learning - 2017 |

Basic Skills in the Workplace

| Basic skills in the workplace - Peer Learning Activity ⁸⁰ | | |
|--|--|--|
| <i>Overview</i> | | |
| Type | Report | <p>Objective:</p> <p>The activity compared and contrasted policies from three countries (the Netherlands, Norway, and the UK), to identify the essential conditions for success of policies promoting the acquisition of basic skills (literacy, numeracy, digital skills).</p> <p>Key outputs:</p> <p>Reform proposals as regards:</p> <p><i>Preconditions:</i> long-term political commitment, buy-in from stakeholders, governance approach tailored to policy objective & target group, clearly defined roles of stakeholders, evaluate and monitor policies</p> <p><i>Approaching training providers, companies and learners:</i> link learning to stakeholder needs, keep content flexible, secure long-term funding, communicate about policy to 'agents of change', provide clear guidelines for employers, employees and providers</p> <p><i>Actions by learning providers, companies and learners:</i> integrate basic skills learning into pre-existing programmes, quality assurance tailored to policy objectives</p> |
| Year | 2017 | |
| Working Group | Adult Learning | |
| | | |
| Participants | 11 countries (not specified) | <p>Background:</p> <p>This deliverable was the outcome of a Peer-Learning Activity in February 2017 hosted by the UK. It gathered participants from 11 countries. As part of the activity, good practices from three countries were discussed. It is also relevant for the transversal topic 'digital'.</p> |
| <i>Alignment with EU priorities</i> | | |
| Overall assessment | <p>The deliverable is well-anchored in a range of EU strategies and communications.</p> <p>Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth: acknowledges skills, including digital and basic, development as a key element in response to the current economic crisis, demographic ageing and as a part of the broader economic and social strategy of the EU.</p> <p>The 2009 Council Conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training includes a strategic</p> | |

⁸⁰ https://ockham-ips.nl/Portals/57/OpenContent/Files/4902/ET2020_AL_WG_Report_on_the_Peer_Learning_Activity_Basic_skills_in_the_workplace_Manchester_2017_B055.pdf

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| | objective to improve quality and efficiency of education and training which refers to raising the level of basic skills such as literacy and numeracy. |
| Alignment with specific priorities | <p>European Agenda for adult learning (2011): mentions improving basic skills provision as an objective; includes a priority to improve the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult learning sector</p> <p>Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture: refers to lack of basic skills among many adults in 'lifelong learning' section</p> <p>New Skills Agenda for Europe: includes section on strengthening basic skills, including numeracy, literacy and basic digital skills</p> <p>New measures to boost key competences and digital skills, as well as the European dimension of education: emphasises need to support development of basic digital skills</p> <p>2014 Council Conclusions on Efficient and Innovative Education and Training to Invest in Skills – supporting the 2014 European Semester: invites Member States to promote the acquisition of basic skills</p> <p>A new start for Europe: My agenda for jobs, growth, fairness and democratic change (2014): contains a reference to boosting digital skills</p> |

Indications of alignment with national policy

| Member State | Potential national alignment | Evidence |
|--------------|------------------------------|---|
| AT | ✓ | Austria adopted a national digital education strategy 'School 4.0 – let's get digital' (Box 1) –2017. |
| BE | | |
| BG | ✓ | Some literacy courses for adults are funded by the European Social Fund. |
| CY | | |
| CZ | | |
| DE | ✓ | The national decade for literacy and basic education was launched to improve literacy of low-skilled individuals and promoting basic skills – 2016. |
| DK | ✓ | Targeted economic support is provided to strengthen participation of the low skilled in adult learning – 2017. |
| EE | ✓ | |
| EI | ✓ | Initiative launched to improve adults' skills, including digital skills, and focussing on low-skilled adults – 2017 |
| ES | | |

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| FI | | |
| FR | ✓ | Free training for low-qualified adults plus new 'vocational basic skills' certificate designed to empower low-qualified adults on the labour market – 2016. |
| HR | | |
| HU | ✓ | EDIOP programme funding to digitally upskill disadvantaged adults – since 2017 |
| IE | ✓ | Upskilling Pathways Recommendation under implementation focusing on reintegration of inactive population with low skills. |
| IT | ✓ | Pilot project for online self-assessment of basic skills including literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills of unemployed people – 2017 |
| LT | | |
| LU | ✓ | Luxembourg Digital Skills Bridge Programme kicked off, a pilot project aiming to teach digital skills to 600 employees - 2018 |
| LV | | |
| MT | ✓ | Several initiatives aimed at encouraging individuals, especially low-skilled adults, develop their skills (Investing in Skills; Training Pays) - 2017 |
| NL | ✓ | Large-scale pilot project involving around 20 universities of applied sciences and 500 part-time programmes, in which the structured content of training programmes is replaced with work-based learning. Employers can choose the skills to be developed for their employees in these courses – 2016-2022 |
| PL | | |
| PT | ✓ | Digital Competences Initiative aims to upskill ICT competences of 20,000 people – since 2014- |
| RO | | |
| SE | ✓ | Measures implemented to widen access to adult education for the low-skilled - 2017 |
| SI | | |
| SK | | |
| UK | ✓ | No direct impact, but one of the three countries presenting good practice examples in this area as part of the initiative. |

Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool

| Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool ⁸¹ | | |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Overview</i> | | |
| Type | Policy tool | Objective: The tool serves to help Member States formulate and implement evidence-based effective adult learning policies. Key outputs: Country profiles benchmarking countries' progress in terms of adult learning, key benchmarks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving learners disposition towards learning • Increasing employers' investment in learning • Enhance access to learning for disadvantages and difficult-to-engage groups • Deliver training that meets the needs of employers and learners • Assure the quality of adult learning • Coordinate adult learning policy at national, regional and local levels The tool was accompanied by a full report and leaflet . |
| Year | ongoing | |
| Working Group | WG Adult learning | |
| Participants | 28 EU Member States + 5 candidate countries + 2 EFTA countries | Background: This deliverable consists of a website bringing together data on adult learning and continuing vocational education and training (CVET). The website provides a reference point for policy monitoring and is underpinned by a high-level conceptual framework for adult learning policies that is designed to help national, regional and local policy makers implement and improve their policies. It also provides access to a collection of quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the comparative performance of countries. This interactive feature can assist in the monitoring of progress and relative performance in the area of adult learning. The website is accompanied by a study report . |
| <i>Alignment with EU priorities</i> | | |
| Overall assessment | The deliverable contributes to several EU priorities, especially the 'New Skills Agenda for Europe' and the European Pillar of Social Rights which includes a commitment to education, training and lifelong learning and to active support to employment. No contradictions with any relevant priorities could be identified. | |

⁸¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/policy-tool>

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| Alignment with specific priorities | <p>New Skills Agenda for Europe: includes reference to upskilling of adult population, and puts an emphasis on adult learning in relation to basic skills and learning at the workplace</p> <p>2016 Council Recommendation on Upskilling pathways – new opportunities for adults: Includes a recommendation to promote the use of assessment tools on adult learning.</p> <p>European Agenda for adult learning of 2011: this includes the priority to ‘improve the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult learning sector’</p> <p>2011 Council Resolution on a Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning and the more recent 2012 Commission Communication on, Rethinking Education: draws out significance of adult learning to economic challenges facing Member States and the difficulties of adequately monitoring the adult learning sector</p> <p>European Pillar of Social Rights (Principles 1 and 4) concerning ‘Education, training and life-long learning’ and ‘Active support to employment’ respectively.</p> <p>Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth: includes the goal to ensure that adult education recognises the competences required to engage in the labour market; calls for implementation of lifelong learning principles.</p> <p>2017 Commission Communication on Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture: sets framework for European cooperation on adult learning and includes an objective to make lifelong learning a reality. States that further efforts are needed to promote adult learning.</p> <p>2016 Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways: recommends providing new opportunities for adults, especially those with few skills, to acquire a minimum level of literacy, numeracy and digital competence</p> |
|---|--|

Indications of alignment with national policy

| Member State | Potential national alignment | Evidence |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| AT | ✓ | Ongoing Adult Education Initiative - since 2012. |
| BE | ✓ | Decree in Flanders aiming to improve quality of adult education sector – 2016. |
| BG | ✓ | Literacy courses for adults funded by the ESF. |
| CY | ✓ | Development of new professional qualifications standards; national action |

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| | | plan to improve formal second-chance education for adults – 2017. |
| CZ | ✓ | Continuous lifelong learning measures introduced - 2016. |
| DE | ✓ | Legislation on continuous professional training adopted - 2016. |
| DK | ✓ | Targeted economic support to strengthen participation of the low skilled in adult learning – 2017. |
| EE | ✓ | Several measures to raise awareness about adult learning were taken, including a communications campaign, a satisfaction survey and an online test for adults to test their skills and receive feedback - 2017. |
| EL | ✓ | Government launched initiative to promote short-term employment of unemployed people through public programmes – focus on improving adults’ skills (incl. Digital); also adult upskilling through Social Solidarity Income for those aged 45 or higher - 2017. |
| ES | ✓ | Targeted measures to improve workers’ employability, modular approach for adult learning accompanied by particular qualification and certification - since 2015. |
| FI | | |
| FR | ✓ | Free training for low-qualified adults plus new ‘vocational basic skills’ certificate designed to empower low-qualified adults on the labour market – 2016. |
| HR | ✓ | New adult education legislation adopted – 2016. |
| HU | ✓ | EDIOP programme funding to digitally upskill disadvantaged adults – since 2017. |
| IE | ✓ | Increased focus on lifelong learning in skill strategy; AONTAS position paper for Irish action plan for education – 2016. |
| IT | ✓ | The "National Plan Industry 4.0" increases public incentives for employees and managers participating in training activities linked with digitisation. Migrants can engage in adult education through the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) - 2017. |

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| LT | ✓ | New entitlement to training leave for non-formal education activities for each person introduced - 2015. |
| LU | ✓ | National lifelong learning strategy addressed adult education quality issues and participation - 2017. |
| LV | ✓ | Various measures, e.g. establishment of an adult education supervisory council introduced - 2016. |
| MT | ✓ | Several initiatives, including Investing in Skills; Training Pays - 2017. |
| NL | ✓ | 500 part-time programmes on work-based learning – employers can choose skills to be developed for their employees – since 2016. |
| PL | ✓ | Some measures to improve qualifications recognition and ICT skills among adults. |
| PT | ✓ | Qualifica Programme – government strategy to boost adult education – 2017. |
| RO | ✓ | Some reform attempts but stalled. |
| SE | ✓ | Right to adult education at upper secondary level introduced - 2016. |
| SI | ✓ | OECD-supported National Skills Strategy to regulate adult education system. Public consultation and report - 2017. |
| SK | | |
| UK | ✓ | New careers strategy 'Preparing for Success 2015-2020' in Northern Ireland including counselling for people of working age – 2015-2020. |

Online Compendium of Good Practices in Education and Training - Modernising Higher Education

| Online Compendium of Good Practices in Education and Training - Modernising Higher Education | | |
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| <i>Overview</i> | | |
| Type | Compendium of policy measures/Database | Objective: The compendium was created to collect national good practices in modernising higher education and to facilitate peer learning and stimulate future peer counselling. Key output: Library of policy measures with free word search, searchable by field of action, type of reform, country, and year. The fields of action/benchmarks in the area of higher education are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing attainment levels • Improving quality and relevance of higher education • Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border collaboration • Linking higher education and research and business for excellence and regional development • Improving governance and funding |
| Year | ongoing | |
| Working Group | WG Higher education | |
| Participants | In principle, all Working Group members | Background: This deliverable represents a compendium of policy measures aimed at modernising higher education. |
| <i>Alignment with EU priorities</i> | | |
| Overall assessment | The deliverable can be seen as contributing to EU political priorities, including Europe 2020, in higher education. | |
| Alignment with specific priorities | Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth: makes general reference to a need for Member States to improve tertiary educational outcomes and reform their education system 2009 Council Conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in | |

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| | <p>education and training: The European Higher Education Area and Bologna process and the goal to develop are highlighted. Building a European Higher Education Area involves adapting national higher education systems to make them more compatible and strengthen their quality assurance mechanisms. This deliverable clearly supports these efforts.</p> <p>Renewed EU agenda for higher education (2017): the Communication states that EU activities should be better coordinated to support evidence for policy-making and practice. While the Communication announces the set-up of a Knowledge Hub on higher education, this does not include or refer to this deliverable.</p> <p>2017 Commission Communication on Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture: calls for increased cross-border cooperation on higher education</p> <p>2016 Commission Communication on New Skills Agenda for Europe: contains a section on modernising higher education, referring to common challenges such as impact of technology and globalisation on higher education, the need to improve graduate learning and employment outcomes, to give prospective students better guidance and to encourage multidisciplinary approaches.</p> |
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Indications of alignment with national policy

| Member State | Potential national alignment | Evidence |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| AT | ✓ | Various (four or more) relevant initiatives directly listed in the library – from 2015 onwards |
| BE | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. new quality assurance system in higher education) - from 2015 onwards. |

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| BG | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. Performance-based financing model for higher education institutions) - from 2015 onwards. |
| CY | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. student grant bill) - from 2015 onwards. |
| CZ | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. new student information portal) - from 2015 onwards. |
| DE | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (national centre on integration and migration) - from 2015 onwards. |
| DK | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. reform of the higher education funding system in 2016) - from 2015 onwards. |
| EE | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library from 2015 onwards (e.g. development of a needs-based grant system in 2016) |
| EL | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. creation of regional academic councils in 2017) - from 2015 onwards. |
| ES | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. development of international campuses of excellence) - from 2015 onwards. |
| FI | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. government reform in the area of higher education in 2016) - from 2015 onwards. |

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| FR | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. national framework of training programmes and accreditation) - from 2015 onwards. |
| HR | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library from 2015 onwards (e.g. scholarship schemes introduced in 2017) |
| HU | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. competence test for students introduced in 2016) - from 2015 onwards. |
| IE | ✓ | One relevant initiative directly listed in the library 2015 (national plan of equity of access to higher education) - 2015. |
| IT | ✓ | Three relevant initiatives (e.g. increased performance-related funding) - from 2016 onwards. |
| LT | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. optimisation of the higher education network) - from 2015 onwards. |
| LU | | |
| LV | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. promotion of STEM subjects) - from 2015 onwards. |
| MT | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. new post-doctoral centre in 2016) - from 2015 onwards. |
| NL | ✓ | Two relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. pilot of a new accreditation system in 2017) |

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| PL | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library from 2015 onwards (e.g. establishment of an Innovation Council in 2016) - from 2015 onwards. |
| PT | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. amendment of international student statute in 2016) from 2015 onwards. |
| RO | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. single student registration system introduced in 2016) from 2015 onwards. |
| SE | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. new study places in higher education since 2016) from 2015 onwards. |
| SI | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the library (e.g. performance-based funding of higher education introduced in 2018) from 2015 onwards. |
| SK | ✓ | One relevant initiative directly listed in the library: the re-launch of the long-standing higher education reform - 2016. |
| UK | ✓ | One relevant initiative directly listed in the library: reform of the higher education and research system - since 2016. |

Online Compendium of Good Practices in Education and Training - Citizenship and Inclusive Education

| Online Compendium of Good Practices in Education and Training - Citizenship and Inclusive Education | | |
|--|--|--|
| <i>Overview</i> | | |
| Type | Compendium of policy measures/ Database | <p>Objective:</p> <p>The compendium was created to collect national good practices in the area of inclusive education and citizenship/civic competences and to facilitate peer learning and peer counselling. It represents the key deliverable of this WG, produced during the period considered for this study.</p> <p>Key output:</p> <p>Library of policy measures with free word search, searchable by field of action, type of reform, country, and year. The fields of action/benchmarks in the area of higher education are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing critical thinking and media literacy • Ensuring young people acquire social, civic and intercultural competences • Fostering the education of disadvantaged children and young people • Promoting intercultural dialogue |
| Year | ongoing | |
| Working Group | WG Citizenship | |
| Participants | 36 countries are members of the WG, including the EU28 and Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Albania, Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Turkey | <p>Background:</p> <p>This deliverable represents a compendium of policy measures aimed at promoting citizenship values, civic competences, and inclusive education.</p> |
| <i>Alignment with EU priorities</i> | | |
| Overall assessment | <p>The deliverable directly contributes to Europe 2020's goal of achieving inclusive growth, particular the headline target of reducing the rate of early school leavers by promoting good practices of fostering inclusive education.</p> <p>The citizenship element of the deliverable features in the Commission's 10 political priorities (justice and fundamental rights; and migration).</p> | |

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| <p>Alignment with specific priorities</p> | <p>2018 Council Recommendation on Common values, Inclusive Education and the European Dimension of Teaching: This Recommendation aims to strengthen national democracies and social cohesion by promoting common values in education, foster more inclusive education, encourage a European dimension of teaching and support teachers in this regard. The Recommendation is accompanied by a Commission Staff Working Document.</p> <p>In response to the Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education following terrorist attacks in Copenhagen and Paris in 2015, the ET2020 framework was refocused to address the role of education and training in social cohesion and common values. While the deliverable mentions the terms 'civic competences' and 'citizenship', its fields of action do not explicitly mention the terms 'freedom', 'tolerance' and 'non-discrimination' as stated in the Declaration. It rather mentions 'critical thinking', and 'social and intercultural competences'. This means that the link is not explicit enough and makes it difficult to see the connection between the Online Compendium and the EU priorities.</p> <p>2017 Council Conclusions on security and defence, social dimension, education and culture, climate change, Jerusalem: These include priorities such as bringing European together through education and culture, e.g. by promoting media literacy (a field of action under this deliverable), and promoting youth exchanges. The deliverable directly contributes to these goals.</p> <p>2009 Council Conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training: The Conclusions include a strategic objective to promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship, i.e. through inclusive education. This deliverable clearly supports these efforts.</p> <p>In a wider sense, the deliverable is linked to the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth that took place in Gothenburg on 17 November 2017 and at which Heads of State and Government discussed education and training. Building on this, the European Commission issued a statement on promoting common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching.</p> |
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| | <p>The Action Plan on Integration of third country nationals (2016): The Action Plan provides a comprehensive framework to support Member States' efforts in developing and strengthening their integration policies, and describes the concrete measures the Commission will implement in this regard. The integration of third country nationals is not explicitly stated in the deliverable, although education on citizenship and civic competences can be expected to indirectly contribute to this EU priority.</p> <p>Communication on supporting the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism (2016): Once again, the deliverable does not directly mention radicalisation or violent extremism as a field of action in the compendium but can be expected to indirectly contribute to this EU priority.</p> <p>2017 Council Conclusions on inclusion in diversity to achieve a high quality education for all: The Conclusions mention citizenship, civic competences and inclusive education. Consequently, the deliverable can be viewed as directly contributing to this EU priority. Inclusion in diversity is indirectly covered by the deliverable's field of action to foster intercultural competences of young people.</p> |
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Indications of alignment with national policy⁸²

| Member State | Potential national alignment | Evidence |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| AT | ✓ | Various relevant initiatives directly listed in the Compendium (e.g. a new compulsory module of civic education starting at 6 th grade introduced in 2016) - from 2015 onwards. |
| BE | ✓ | Belgium is taking measures to prevent violent radicalisation through education, as directly listed in the Compendium. A new subject was introduced in schools in 2016/7, including special needs schools, focusing on 'philosophy and citizenship education'. There |

⁸² Several transnational initiatives are listed in the library, including a network of Media Literacy Centres involving five EU Member States encouraging critical thinking. This provides an example of ET2020 contributing to Member States coordinating their education policies and launching joint initiatives. By highlighting these measures, the Compendium may encourage other Member States to join such initiatives or create their own ones.

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| | | has also been a focus on qualifying teachers of Islam – since 2015. |
| BG | | |
| CY | ✓ | One relevant initiative directly listed in the Compendium: introduced a code of practice against racist behaviour, aimed at reducing intolerance in schools – 2016. |
| CZ | ✓ | Implementation of inclusive education reform started, aimed at gradually increasing participation of children with special needs – since 2016. |
| DE | ✓ | One relevant initiative directly listed in the Compendium: introduced a new Federal strategy against radicalisation - 2016. |
| DK | ✓ | One relevant initiative directly listed in the Compendium: launched a package of measures against radicalisation, including a theme week, teaching materials, updated guidance and programmes for learning consultants – 2016. |
| EE | ✓ | New training material for teachers to help them teach on human rights and democratic citizenship. |
| EL | ✓ | The government introduced a Programme for the Integration and Education of Roma Children - 2016. |
| ES | ✓ | Several initiatives directly listed in the Compendium, e.g. national strategic plan adopted to promote citizenship in schools – 2017. |
| FI | ✓ | Introduced compulsory 'social studies/citizenship education' subject in schools - 2016. |
| FR | ✓ | Several initiatives directly listed in the Compendium (e.g. inter-ministerial action plan against violent radicalisation introduced in 2015. A citizen reserve was created to help teachers with educational projects linked to |

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| | | secularism and citizenship education – since 2015. |
| HR | ✓ | Several initiatives directly listed in the Compendium, including reforms to school curricula boosting citizenship education. |
| HU | | |
| IE | ✓ | Introduction of 'politics and society' subject in schools, as per Compendium - 2017. |
| IT | ✓ | Additional resources are spent to train teachers on subjects including civics and global citizenship, integration of minorities, and disability and inclusion. Migrants can engage in adult education through the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR). |
| LT | | |
| LU | ✓ | New compulsory subject 'life and society' introduced focusing on developing social, democratic and intercultural competences - 2016/7. |
| LV | ✓ | Latvia is reforming the special education system and developing a comprehensive support system for the education of students with special needs in mainstream classrooms |
| MT | ✓ | A reform of the national school curriculum includes a new focus on inclusiveness and citizenship. |
| NL | ✓ | Several relevant initiatives, including a new schools and safety foundation set up, as per the Compendium - 2016. |
| PL | | |
| PT | ✓ | A pilot schemes was launched to develop secondary students' interest in civic participation - 2017. |
| RO | ✓ | Some ESF-funded projects to integrate Roma into the education system implemented – from 2015 onwards. |

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| SE | ✓ | Introduced measures to combat racism and violent extremism, as per the Compendium - 2016. |
| SI | | |
| SK | ✓ | A new action plan for Roma integration up to 2020 was approved, focusing on narrowing the difference between the education level of Roma and the population average - 2017. |
| UK | | New initiative in Scotland focusing on improving educational outcomes of most disadvantages communities - since 2015. |

Annex 3 Survey analysis

Wider stakeholder survey

Table 6. Profile of respondents – country, organisational and WG/sectoral affiliation

| Country | Count | % | Organisation | Count | % |
|----------------|-------|------|---|-------|------|
| Austria | 2 | 2.6 | Government authority (e.g. a Ministry) | 8 | 10.4 |
| Belgium | 17 | 22 | Government agency related to a Ministry | 10 | 13 |
| Croatia | 1 | 1.3 | European Commission | 2 | 2.6 |
| Cyprus | 1 | 1.3 | NGO | 20 | 26 |
| Czech Republic | 2 | 2.6 | Youth organisation | 3 | 4 |
| Denmark | 1 | 1.3 | Research institution | 15 | 19.5 |
| Estonia | 3 | 4 | Independent expert/researcher | 3 | 4 |
| France | 4 | 5.2 | Education provider | 5 | 6.5 |
| Germany | 5 | 6.5 | Social partner | 2 | 2.6 |
| Greece | 3 | 4 | Trade union | 1 | 1.3 |
| Hungary | 2 | 2.6 | Private sector organisation | 1 | 1.3 |
| Iceland | 1 | 1.3 | Other: Please specify | 6 | 7.8 |
| Ireland | 3 | 4 | Left blank | 1 | 1.3 |
| Italy | 9 | 11.2 | Total | 77 | 100 |
| Lithuania | 2 | 2.6 | | | |
| Macedonia | 1 | 1.3 | WG/sectoral affiliation | Count | % |
| Morocco | 1 | 1.3 | Schools | 3 | 3.9 |
| Poland | 1 | 1.3 | Higher Education | 4 | 5.2 |
| Serbia | 2 | 2.6 | VET | 13 | 16.9 |
| Slovakia | 1 | 1.3 | Adult Learning | 8 | 10.4 |
| Slovenia | 2 | 2.6 | Digital Skills and Competences | 8 | 10.4 |
| Spain | 9 | 11.2 | Citizenship | 1 | 1.3 |
| Sweden | 1 | 1.3 | N/A (selected deliverables from 3 groups) | 29 | 37.7 |
| Turkey | 1 | 1.3 | Not specified | 11 | 14.3 |
| United Kingdom | 2 | 2.6 | Total | 77 | 100 |
| Total | 77 | 100 | | | |

Table 7. How familiar are you with the following deliverables from the ET2020 process?

| | To a large extent | To some extent | Not at all | Don't know/not applicable | Count |
|---|-------------------|----------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching. Guide on policies to improve Initial Teacher Education, 2015 (WG Schools) | 15.1% | 32.9% | 41.1% | 11% | 73 |
| High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles, 2015 (WG VET) | 20% | 32% | 36% | 12% | 75 |
| Teachers and Trainers in Work-based learning / apprenticeships – Mapping of models and practices, 2017 (WG VET) | 8.1% | 41.9% | 33.8% | 16.2% | 74 |
| SELFIE (WG Digital Skills and Competences) | 13.5% | 32.4% | 41.9% | 12.2% | 74 |
| DigCompEducator (WG Digital Skills and Competences) | 13.5% | 35.1% | 41.9% | 9.5% | 74 |
| Financing Adult Learning, 2011-2013 (WG Adult Learning) | 12.3% | 20.6% | 52% | 15.1% | 73 |
| Basic skills in the workplace, 2017 (WG Adult Learning) | 15.3% | 31.9% | 41.7% | 11.1% | 72 |
| Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool (WG Adult Learning) | 11.1% | 22.2% | 50% | 16.7% | 72 |
| National practices in modernising higher education (WG Higher Education) | 10.8% | 33.8% | 43.2% | 12.2% | 74 |
| Citizenship and inclusive education (WG Citizenship) | 18.9% | 48.7% | 29.3% | 2.7% | 74 |

Table 8. To what extent was the report/document/tool a topic of debate in education and training policy making in your country?

| | # of times deliverable was selected | To a large extent | To some extent | Not at all | Don't know/ Not applicable | Count |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching. Guide on policies to improve Initial Teacher Education, 2015 | 20 | 7.7% | 46.2% | 7.7% | 38.5% | 13 |
| High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles, 2015 | 21 | 5.3% | 47.4% | 21.1% | 26.3% | 19 |
| Teachers and Trainers in Work-based learning / apprenticeships – Mapping of models and practices, 2017 | 19 | 0% | 35.3% | 23.5% | 41.2% | 17 |
| SELFIE | 11 | 0% | 63.6% | 9.1% | 27.3% | 11 |
| DigCompEducator | 17 | 11.8% | 47.1% | 11.8% | 29.4% | 17 |
| Financing Adult Learning, 2011-2013 | 5 | 0% | 50% | 0% | 50% | 4 |
| Basic skills in the workplace, 2017 | 16 | 0% | 61.5% | 15.4% | 23.1% | 13 |
| Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool | 10 | 0% | 25% | 12.5% | 62.5% | 8 |
| National practices in modernising higher education | 13 | 8.3% | 66.7% | 0% | 25% | 12 |
| Citizenship and inclusive education | 23 | 19.1% | 42.9% | 9.5% | 28.6% | 21 |

Note: Maximum of three deliverables.

Table 9. To what extent has the report/document/tool inspired debates on new initiatives in education and training policy making in your country?

| | # of times deliverable was selected | To a large extent | To some extent | Not at all | Don't know/ Not applicable | Count |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching. Guide on policies to improve Initial Teacher Education, 2015 | 20 | 7.7% | 30.8% | 23.0% | 38.5% | 13 |
| High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles, 2015 | 21 | 21.0% | 36.8% | 21.1% | 21.0% | 19 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|----|
| Teachers and Trainers in Work-based learning / apprenticeships – Mapping of models and practices, 2017 | 19 | 6.3% | 31.3% | 12.5% | 50% | 16 |
| SELFIE | 11 | 10% | 70% | 0% | 20% | 10 |
| DigCompEducator | 17 | 5.9% | 58.8% | 11.8% | 23.5% | 17 |
| Financing Adult Learning, 2011-2013 | 5 | 25% | 0% | 50% | 25% | 4 |
| Basic skills in the workplace, 2017 | 16 | 7.7% | 46.2% | 30.8% | 15.4% | 13 |
| Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool | 10 | 12.5% | 12.5% | 25% | 50% | 8 |
| National practices in modernising higher education | 13 | 8.3% | 66.7% | 0% | 25% | 12 |
| Citizenship and inclusive education | 23 | 14% | 42.9% | 9.5% | 33.3% | 21 |

Note: Maximum of three deliverables.

Table 10. To what extent can the report/document/tool be linked to concrete reforms in education and training policy making in your country?

| | # of times deliverable was selected | To a large extent | To some extent | Not at all | Don't know/ Not applicable | Count |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching. Guide on policies to improve Initial Teacher Education, 2015 | 20 | 7.7% | 15.4% | 23.1% | 53.9% | 13 |
| High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles, 2015 | 21 | 25% | 30% | 20% | 25% | 20 |
| Teachers and Trainers in Work-based learning / apprenticeships – Mapping of models and practices, 2017 | 19 | 0% | 47.1% | 5.9% | 47.1% | 17 |
| SELFIE | 11 | 18.2% | 27.3% | 18.2% | 36.4% | 11 |
| DigCompEducator | 17 | 0% | 64.7% | 11.8% | 23.5% | 17 |
| Financing Adult Learning, 2011-2013 | 5 | 0% | 25% | 25% | 50% | 4 |
| Basic skills in the workplace, 2017 | 16 | 0% | 38.5% | 23.1% | 38.5% | 13 |
| Adult Learning Policy Analysis Tool | 10 | 0% | 25% | 12.5% | 62.5% | 8 |
| National practices in modernising higher education | 13 | 8.3% | 50% | 16.7% | 25% | 12 |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|-------|-------|------|-------|----|
| Citizenship and inclusive education | 23 | 14.3% | 38.1% | 9.3% | 38.1% | 21 |
|-------------------------------------|----|-------|-------|------|-------|----|

Note: Maximum of three deliverables.

Table 11. Are you familiar with any of the mutual learning activities organised in the context of the ET2020? By mutual learning activities we mean peer learning activities (PLAs), peer counselling activities and peer review activities.

| | Count | % |
|-------|-------|------|
| Yes | 38 | 51.4 |
| No | 36 | 48.6 |
| Total | 74 | 100 |

Table 12. For the mutual learning activities that you are familiar with, please state the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

| | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree or disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know/not applicable | Count |
|---|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| They are an effective means to trigger national debates on changes in the education and training policies | 26.3% | 52.6% | 13.2% | 5.3% | 0% | 2.6% | 38 |
| They are an effective means to improve national education and training policies | 23.7% | 44.7% | 23.7% | 2.6% | 2.6% | 2.6% | 38 |
| They are an efficient means to improve national education and training policies | 18.4% | 44.7% | 23.7% | 10.5% | 0% | 2.6% | 38 |

Participants survey

Table 13. Profile of respondents – country, organisational affiliation, number of ET2020 activities attended, role in the ET2020 activities and WG/sectoral affiliation

| Country | Count | % |
|----------------|-------|------|
| Albania | 1 | 0.8 |
| Austria | 1 | 0.8 |
| Belgium | 8 | 6.2 |
| Bulgaria | 3 | 2.3 |
| Croatia | 5 | 3.9 |
| Cyprus | 3 | 2.3 |
| Czech Republic | 1 | 0.8 |
| Estonia | 4 | 3.1 |
| Finland | 2 | 1.5 |
| France | 2 | 1.5 |
| Germany | 3 | 2.3 |
| Greece | 4 | 3.1 |
| Hungary | 3 | 2.3 |
| Iceland | 2 | 1.5 |
| Ireland | 3 | 2.3 |
| Italy | 6 | 4.7 |
| Latvia | 2 | 1.5 |
| Lithuania | 4 | 3.1 |
| Macedonia | 3 | 2.3 |
| Malta | 2 | 1.5 |
| Netherlands | 1 | 0.8 |
| Norway | 4 | 3.1 |
| Portugal | 3 | 2.3 |
| Romania | 6 | 4.7 |
| Serbia | 4 | 3.1 |
| Slovakia | 3 | 2.3 |
| Slovenia | 3 | 2.3 |
| Spain | 3 | 2.35 |
| Sweden | 4 | 3.1 |
| Switzerland | 1 | 0.8 |
| Turkey | 1 | 0.8 |
| Left blank | 34 | 26.4 |
| Total | 129 | 100 |

| Organisation | Count | % |
|---|-------|------|
| Education provider | 3 | 2.3 |
| EU agency (e.g., CEDEFOP) | 2 | 1.6 |
| European Commission | 3 | 2.3 |
| Government agency related to a Ministry | 20 | 15.6 |
| Government authority (e.g. Ministry) | 67 | 52.3 |
| NGO | 4 | 3.1 |
| Other: Please specify: | 1 | 0.8 |
| Private sector organisation | 1 | 0.8 |
| Research institution | 13 | 10.2 |
| Social partner | 5 | 3.9 |
| Stakeholder | 9 | 7 |
| Left blank | 1 | 0.8 |
| Total | 129 | 100 |

| Number of mutual learning activities in which you participated | Count | % |
|--|-------|------|
| Once | 41 | 31.8 |
| 1-3 activities | 50 | 38.8 |
| More than three activities | 27 | 20.9 |
| Never | 10 | 7.8 |
| Not specified | 1 | 0.8 |
| Total | 129 | 100 |

| Role in activity | Count | % |
|-------------------------------------|-------|------|
| Host of a peer counselling activity | 2 | 1.5 |
| Host of a peer learning activity | 17 | 13.2 |
| Host of a peer review activity | 1 | 0.8 |
| Peer in a peer counselling activity | 8 | 6.2 |
| Peer in a peer learning activity | 74 | 57.4 |
| Peer in a peer review activity | 8 | 6.2 |
| Other / Not specified | 19 | 14.7 |
| Total | 129 | 100 |

| WG/sectoral affiliation | Count | % |
|--------------------------------|-------|------|
| Schools | 37 | 28.7 |
| Higher Education | 23 | 17.8 |
| VET | 16 | 12.4 |
| Adult Learning | 8 | 6.2 |
| Digital Skills and Competences | 21 | 16.3 |
| Citizenship | 7 | 5.4 |
| Not specified | 17 | 13.2 |
| Total | 129 | 100 |

Table 14. Most recent activity that respondents participated in

| Name of activity | Count |
|---|-------|
| Apprenticeships in the digital age: are we ready for the future? | 1 |
| Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies | 4 |
| Coding and Computational Thinking | 4 |
| Continuity and transitions in learner development | 2 |
| Enhancing Quality Culture in Higher Education: government incentives and the role of HEI leadership | 5 |
| Future skills | 5 |
| Higher-education performance-based funding | 2 |
| High-level peer review supporting teachers and trainers – Preparing for key challenges (Finland and Austria) | 1 |
| High-level peer review supporting teachers and trainers – Specifying roles and responsibilities (Belgium and Croatia) | 2 |
| How can policy best ensure that workplace learning provides the skills needed by employers and employees | 2 |
| Inclusive education as the most effective means for preventing social exclusion in today's diverse society | 3 |
| Networks for learning and development across school education systems | 3 |
| New work-based learning method: teachers accompanying learners in the workplace | 4 |
| Peer learning Forum on Teachers and Trainers | 6 |
| Policies promoting basic skills in the workplace | 6 |
| Qualification programmes for in-company trainers | 2 |
| Quality assurance for school development | 4 |
| Regional development and innovation | 2 |
| School reform (teachers and quality assurance) | 8 |
| Social and civic competences – from the Paris Declaration to Global citizenship education | 2 |
| Special needs education | 3 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Strengthening media literacy and critical thinking among young people as a tool to prevent and combat violent radicalisation | 2 |
| Supporting educators for innovative, open and digital education | 13 |
| Teachers' career pathways | 5 |
| Teaching generations Y and Z: pedagogical challenges in teaching and learning environments in higher education | 3 |
| The role of teachers and school leaders in schools as learning organisations | 6 |
| Transforming higher education: how we teach in the digital age | 6 |
| Transforming school education | 6 |
| Not specified | 17 |
| Total | 129 |

Table 15. In your opinion, how connected was the topic of the most recent activity that you participated in to the education and training policy priorities...

| | Strongly connected | Somewhat connected | Not connected at all | Don't know/not applicable | Count |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| ... of your institution? | 68.3% | 28.6% | 0% | 3.2% | 126 |
| ... of your country? | 64.2% | 28.3% | 0% | 7.5% | 120 |
| ... of other countries? | 56.3% | 31.1% | 0.8% | 11.8% | 119 |
| ... of the European Union? | 72.5% | 22.5% | 0% | 5% | 120 |

Table 16. Cross tabulation between role in activity and how connected the topic of the activity is to the respondent's institution, country, other countries, and the EU.

| | Strongly connected | Somewhat connected | Not connected at all | Don't know/not applicable | Not specified | Total |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------|
| ... of your institution? | | | | | | |
| Government authority | 44.2 | 20.2 | 0 | 2.3 | 0.8 | 67.4 |
| EU institution | 3.9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3.9 |
| Social partner | 3.1 | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3.9 |
| Stakeholder | 3.1 | 3.9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| NGO | 2.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 3.1 |
| Research institution | 7 | 3.1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10.1 |
| Education provider | 2.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2.3 |
| Private sector organisation | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 0 | 0.8 |
| Other | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 |
| Not specified | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 0.8 |
| Total | 66.7 | 27.9 | 0 | 3.1 | 2.3 | 100 |
| ... of your country? | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|-----|------|-----|------|
| Government authority | 43.4 | 19.4 | 0 | 1.6 | 3.1 | 67.4 |
| EU institution | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 2.3 | 0.8 | 3.9 |
| Social partner | 3.1 | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3.9 |
| Stakeholder | 2.3 | 1.6 | 0 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 7 |
| NGO | 1.6 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 3.1 |
| Research institution | 7.8 | 2.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10.1 |
| Education provider | 0.8 | 1.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2.3 |
| Private sector organisation | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 0 | 0.8 |
| Other | 0 | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 |
| Not specified | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 0.8 |
| Total | 59.7 | 26.4 | 0 | 7 | 7 | 100 |
| ... of other countries? | | | | | | |
| Government authority | 36.4 | 20.2 | 0.8 | 7 | 3.1 | 67.4 |
| EU institution | 2.3 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 3.9 |
| Social partner | 3.9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3.9 |
| Stakeholder | 2.3 | 2.3 | 0 | 0.8 | 1.6 | 7 |
| NGO | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 1.6 | 0.8 | 3.1 |
| Research institution | 4.7 | 3.9 | 0 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 10.1 |
| Education provider | 0.8 | 1.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2.3 |
| Private sector organisation | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 |
| Other | 0 | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 |
| Not specified | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 0.8 |
| Total | 51.9 | 28.7 | 0.8 | 10.9 | 7.8 | 100 |
| ... of the European Union? | | | | | | |
| Government authority | 45.7 | 14.7 | 0 | 3.9 | 3.1 | 67.4 |
| EU institution | 2.3 | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 3.9 |
| Social partner | 3.9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3.9 |
| Stakeholder | 3.1 | 1.6 | 0 | 0.8 | 1.6 | 7 |
| NGO | 1.6 | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 3.1 |
| Research institution | 8.5 | 1.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10.1 |
| Education provider | 0.8 | 1.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2.3 |
| Private sector organisation | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 |
| Other | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 |
| Not specified | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 0.8 |
| Total | 67.4 | 20.9 | 0 | 4.7 | 7 | 100 |

Table 17. Referring to the most recent activity that you participated in, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

| | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know/not applicable | Count |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Participants were well informed about its content before the activity | 57.9% | 32.5% | 4% | 3.2% | 0% | 2.4% | 126 |
| The objectives of the activity were clearly communicated to participants | 63.2% | 28.8% | 3.0% | 1.6% | 0% | 3.2% | 125 |
| The activity kept a clear focus on its objectives | 58.4% | 30.4% | 4.8% | 4% | 0% | 2.4% | 125 |
| The meeting format (duration, mixture of sessions) was suitable | 49.6% | 36.0% | 6.4% | 4% | 1.6% | 2.4% | 125 |
| The activity was efficiently structured | 60% | 28% | 5.6% | 4.0% | 0% | 2.4% | 125 |
| The right type and profile of participants took part in the activity | 50.4% | 31.2% | 7.2% | 5.6% | 0.8% | 4.8% | 125 |

Table 18. Cross-tabulation between organisation of the ET2020 activity and role of the participant

| | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know/ Not applicable | Total |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Participants were well informed about its content before the activity. | | | | | | | |
| Host | 55 | 40 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| Peer | 61.1 | 31.1 | 3.3 | 4.4 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| Other | 43.8 | 31.3 | 6.3 | 0 | 0 | 18.8 | 100% |
| Total | 57.9 | 32.5 | 4 | 3.2 | 0 | 2.4 | 100% |
| The objectives of the activity were clearly communicated to participants. | | | | | | | |
| Host | 57.9 | 36.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.3 | 100% |
| Peer | 64.4 | 28.9 | 4.4 | 2.2 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| Other | 62.5 | 18.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18.8 | 100% |
| Total | 63.2 | 28.8 | 3.2 | 1.6 | 0 | 3.2 | 100% |
| The activity kept a clear focus on its objectives. | | | | | | | |
| Host | 52.6 | 42.1 | 5.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100% |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|-------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|
| Peer | 56.7 | 32.2 | 5.6 | 5.6 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| Other | 75 | 6.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18.8 | 100% |
| Total | 58.4 | 30.4 | 4.8 | 4 | 0 | 2.4 | 100% |
| The meeting format (duration, mixture of sessions) was suitable. | | | | | | | |
| Host | 47.4 | 47.4 | 5.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| Peer | 51.1 | 33.3 | 7.8 | 5.6 | 2.22 | 0 | 100% |
| Other | 43.8 | 37.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18.8 | 100% |
| Total | 49.60 | 36 | 6.4 | 4 | 1.6 | 2.4 | 100% |
| The activity was efficiently structured. | | | | | | | |
| Host | 63.2 | 31.6 | 0 | 5.6 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| Peer | 60 | 28.9 | 6.7 | 4.4 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| Other | 56.3 | 18.8 | 6.3 | 0 | 0 | 18.8 | 100% |
| Total | 60 | 28 | 5.6 | 4 | 0 | 2.4 | 100% |
| The right type and profile of participants took part in the activity. | | | | | | | |
| Host | 57.9 | 21.1 | 10.5 | 5.3 | 0 | 5.3 | 100% |
| Peer | 48.9 | 35.6 | 6.7 | 0 | 1.11 | 1.1 | 100% |
| Other | 50 | 18.8 | 6.3 | 6.7 | 0 | 25 | 100% |
| Total | 50.4 | 31.2 | 7.2 | 5.6 | 0.80 | 4.8 | 100% |

Table 19. How useful were the activities in your opinion and how did you specifically benefit from the activities? The questions apply to all the activities you have participated in.

| | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree or disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know/ Not applicable | Count |
|--|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| The activity was useful for further developing my individual work responsibilities | 43.0% | 44.7% | 6.5% | 1.6% | 0.8% | 2.4% | 123 |
| The activity was useful for further developing the work of my organisation/ institution | 39.8% | 42.3% | 10.6% | 4.1% | 0.8% | 2.4% | 123 |
| The activity was useful for further developing my country's education and training policy agenda | 30.3% | 34.4% | 18% | 4.9% | 0% | 12.3% | 122 |
| The activity gave me new ideas for my field of work | 52.0% | 38.2% | 6.5% | 0% | 0.8% | 2.4% | 123 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-----|
| The activity showed me how ideas I already had can be effectively implemented | 33.3% | 43.9% | 13.8% | 3.3% | 1.6% | 4.1% | 123 |
| The activity showed me how ideas I already had should NOT be implemented (learning from mistakes) | 11.4% | 31.7% | 31.7% | 12.2% | 2.4% | 10.6% | 123 |
| The activity provided me with a better understanding of other countries' policies on education and training | 63.4% | 26% | 4.9% | 2.4% | 0.8% | 2.4% | 123 |
| The activity provided me with a better understanding of EU policies on education and training | 56.1% | 29.3% | 8.1% | 2.4% | 0% | 4.1% | 123 |

Table 20. Please answer the following question on the impact the activities have had on different levels of education and training policy making in your country.

| | Strong impact | Some impact | No impact | Don't know/ not applicable | Count |
|--|---------------|-------------|-----------|----------------------------|-------|
| On policy discussions on this topic within your own organisation | 26.0% | 55.3% | 8.9% | 9.8% | 123 |
| On policy discussions on this topic in the wider national policy debate | 13.0% | 49.6% | 18.7% | 18.7% | 123 |
| On planning and designing new initiatives/ programmes in your own organisation on this topic | 25.2% | 53.7% | 11.4% | 9.8% | 123 |
| On implementing new initiatives/ programmes on this topic by your own organisation | 26% | 42.3% | 18.7% | 13% | 123 |
| On planning and designing new initiatives/ programmes on this topic more broadly in your country | 13% | 40.7% | 22% | 24.4% | 123 |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| On implementing new initiatives/ programmes on this topic more broadly in your country | 14.6% | 37.4% | 22.8% | 25.2% | 123 |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|

Table 21. Cross-tabulation between the institutional affiliation of the respondent (recoded as Government vs. Non-government) and impact of the ET2020 activities at different policy levels

| | No impact | Some impact | Strong impact | Don't know/not applicable | Total |
|--|-----------|-------------|---------------|---------------------------|-------|
| On policy discussions on this topic within your own organisation | | | | | |
| Government | 4.7% | 57.6% | 30.6% | 7.1% | 100% |
| Non-government | 18.4% | 50.0% | 15.8% | 15.8% | 100% |
| On policy discussions on this topic in the wider national policy debate | | | | | |
| Government | 20.0% | 50.6% | 16.5% | 12.9% | 100% |
| Non-government | 15.8% | 47.4% | 5.3% | 31.6% | 100% |
| On planning and designing new initiatives/programmes in your own organisation on this topic | | | | | |
| Government | 11.8% | 57.6% | 24.7% | 5.9% | 100% |
| Non-government | 10.5% | 44.7% | 26.3% | 18.4% | 100% |
| On planning and designing new initiatives/programmes on this topic more broadly in your country | | | | | |
| Government | 23.5% | 40.0% | 16.5% | 20.0% | 100% |
| Non-government | 18.4% | 42.1% | 5.3% | 34.2% | 100% |
| On implementing new initiatives/programmes on this topic by your own organisation | | | | | |
| Government | 18.8% | 44.7% | 27.1% | 9.4% | 100% |
| Non-government | 18.4% | 36.8% | 23.7% | 21.1% | 100% |
| On implementing new initiatives/programmes on this topic more broadly in your country | | | | | |
| Government | 24.7% | 36.5% | 17.6% | 21.2% | 100% |
| Non-government | 18.4% | 39.5% | 7.9% | 34.2% | 100% |

Table 22. What is your overall evaluation of the activities that you attended?

| | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree or disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know/not applicable | Count |
|---|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| They are an effective means to trigger national debates on changes in | 35.8% | 42.3% | 11.4% | 7.3% | 0% | 3.3% | 123 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|-----|
| education and training policies | | | | | | | |
| They are an effective means to improve national education and training policies | 32.5% | 42.3% | 14.6% | 6.5% | 0.8% | 3.3% | 123 |
| They are an efficient means to improve national education and training policies | 29.5% | 45.9% | 13.1% | 6.6% | 0.8% | 4.1% | 122 |

Table 23. Link with other aspects of ET2020

| | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree or disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know/not applicable | Count |
|---|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| I am adequately informed about the results from the four ET2020 sector-focused working groups (Schools, VET, Higher Education, Adult Learning). | 16.9% | 40.3% | 12.1% | 16.1% | 8.1% | 6.5% | 124 |
| I am adequately informed about the results from the two ET2020 issue-focused working groups (Digital Skills and Competences, Citizenship/Promotion of Common Values). | 18.6% | 36.3% | 15.3% | 14.5% | 9.7% | 5.7% | 124 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| I am adequately informed about the results from other peer learning/ counselling/ review activities which I did not attend. | 12.9% | 35.5% | 12.1% | 19.4% | 13.7% | 6.5% | 124 |
| I am adequately informed about the results from expert groups such as the Indicator Expert Group on Education and Training Evidence Monitoring (SGIB) | 9.8% | 22.8% | 20.3% | 16.3% | 20.3% | 10.6% | 123 |
| Results from the working groups and/ or expert groups were adequately reflected in the activities that I participated in. | 26.8% | 31.7% | 13% | 9.8% | 4.1% | 14.6% | 123 |

Table 24. Please indicate how the activities that you attended could be improved.

| | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree or disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know/ not applicable | Count |
|---|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Activities like the one(s) I attended should be offered more frequently within the ET2020 framework | 33.9% | 33.0% | 21.5% | 6.6% | 3.3% | 1.7% | 121 |
| Activities like the one(s) I attended should be | 3.5% | 1.7% | 29.3% | 21.6% | 40.5% | 3.5% | 116 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-----|
| offered less frequently | | | | | | | |
| The activities should address different participants (please elaborate below) | 17.4% | 24% | 32.2% | 14% | 7.4% | 5% | 121 |
| The activities should include participants from more countries (please elaborate below) | 17.8% | 14.4% | 39% | 15.3% | 4.2% | 9.3% | 118 |
| The activities should target different topics (please elaborate below) | 15.7% | 21.5% | 38.8% | 13.2% | 5.8% | 5% | 121 |

Table 25. Were dissemination materials (e.g. reports, summaries, presentations) provided to you after your participation in the ET2020 activities?

| | Count | % |
|--------------|-------|------|
| Yes | 108 | 83.7 |
| No | 11 | 8.5 |
| Not answered | 10 | 7.8 |
| Total | 129 | 100 |

Table 26. Did you inform other persons, who did not directly take part in the activities, about the results?

| | Count | % |
|--------------------------------------|-------|------|
| Yes, persons in my organisation | 70 | 58.3 |
| Yes, persons outside my organisation | 5 | 4.2 |
| Yes, both | 41 | 34.2 |
| No | 4 | 3.3 |
| Total | 120 | 100 |

Table 27. Cross-tabulation of method of dissemination and provision of dissemination materials, %

| | Materials provided | No materials provided | Total |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Yes, persons in my organisation | 52.1 | 6.7 | 58.8 |
| Yes, persons outside my organisation | 4.2 | 0 | 4.2 |
| Yes, both | 34.5 | 0 | 34.5 |
| No | 0 | 2.5 | 3.1 |
| Total | 90.8 | 9.2 | 100 |

Table 28. How did you inform other people about the results of the ET2020 activity in which you participated? Select all that apply.

| | Count |
|---|-------|
| I organised a debriefing meeting in my organisation | 40 |
| I circulated a note within my organisation | 67 |
| I made an oral intervention at our team meeting | 66 |
| I prepared an article for a newsletter and/ or a post for a blog | 11 |
| The dissemination was required by my home organisation | 21 |
| I organised a presentation/meeting/intervention outside my organisation | 22 |
| Other (please specify) | 19 |

Table 29. Approximately how many persons did you disseminate the information to?

| | Count | % |
|--------------|-------|------|
| Less than 5 | 10 | 8.7 |
| 5 – 10 | 26 | 22.6 |
| 11 – 20 | 33 | 28.7 |
| 21 – 50 | 26 | 22.6 |
| More than 50 | 20 | 17.4 |
| Total | 115 | 100 |

Annex 4 Case studies

Digitalisation of basic education via Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) – Austria

Executive summary

In Austria, prior to the ET2020 activity, the need for a more coordinated training of adult education professionals in general and in digital literacy in particular as well as the general need to better use ICT within the field were two aspects discussed in regard to adult education.

The ET2020 Oslo peer learning exercise 2015 on the use of ICT in the field was organised at the right time and reinforced the Austrian delegation of experts in their belief that the application of digital tools can be beneficial within adult education. Especially the idea of a MOOC following a train-the-trainer approach was show-cased in the meeting and a strong argument for the applicability of a similar approach within the Austrian adult education landscape could be made. With their experiences and the evidence presented in the workshop, the adult education experts could achieve national stakeholder commitment on the next steps to provide specific digital knowhow for adult educators in Austria.

There were three general outcomes that can be attributed to a degree to the participation in the Oslo workshop: The refinement of an ESF-call to further professionalise the training of adult education providers in the area of basic education, the Austrian state prize for adult education in the thematic area of digital literacy and the initiation of EBmooc, an adult education Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) with overall 6 000 participants to date.

Success factors at national level were the availability of a platform and network of practitioners to both raise awareness for activities and to disseminate results as well as the use of independent experts as delegates to the WG. At the same time, the topics discussed at the workshop concurred with relevant topics at national level. On European level, the WG format change in 2014/2015 improved the relevance of topics and of participants.

Case study overview

| | |
|---|---|
| Thematic area or Working Group | Adult Learning – Basic skills |
| Country | Austria |
| ET2020 activity(ies) and deliverable(s), including year | ET2020 Working Group on Adult Learning In-depth country specific workshop on improving use of ICT and OER ⁸³ in adult learning, March 2015, Norway |
| Type of outcome/ impact | Refined existing basic education policy, launch of digital skills training for basic education professionals via MOOC with 6 000 participants, triggered academic publications of experiences with MOOC |

⁸³ Open Educational Resources.

National context

In Austria, the topic of adult education is tackled by various institutions on national and regional levels. The institutional landscape is diverse. On a national level, the Federal Ministry of Education bears the main responsibility, supported by other Federal Ministries, and alongside the Konferenz der Erwachsenenbildung Österreichs (Conference for Adult Education, KEBÖ). The KEBÖ brings together different associations of adult education providers ranging from the Volkshochschulen (Adult Education Centres), the Bildungshäuser (Adult Education Houses) to libraries. The Austrian adult education landscape is completed by private commercial providers, private non-profit providers, companies for their internal continuous education and training, and others. In 2004, in total, more than 1 700 adult education providers were counted.⁸⁴

Since 2012, Austria has implemented the basic skills programme “Initiative Erwachsenenbildung” (Initiative Adult Education). The programme is a cooperation between the Federation and the Austrian regions and accounts for most of the national adult education budget. In 2015, Austria was one of only seven European regions or countries that implemented such a policy.⁸⁵ The national policy was embedded in the Austrian lifelong learning strategy “LLL:2020” from 2011 and was recognised positively internationally.⁸⁶ However, potential for improvement was seen in three aspects:

- The hesitant use of ICT in the field,
- The low use of vocational basic education,
- The low awareness of the general public on matters of basic education in Austria.⁸⁷

As a consequence, in 2015, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education planned a call to further develop offers in the area of basic education. Because of the heterogenous adult education landscape in Austria, the topic of quality assurance in the training of adult education trainers was also a relevant topic.

Presently, the Initiative Adult Education is in its third funding period that runs until 2021. Digitalisation in adult education and digital competences as a basic skill still receives a lot of attention in Austria, as evidenced by a survey among professionals on the annual conference on adult education 2017, of which 73% regarded the training of professionals in the sector on digital skills to be of highest priority.⁸⁸ However, various steps towards reaping the benefits of digitalisation for this educational area – also in accordance with the qualification of adult education providers – have been undertaken since 2015. The most relevant ones for this case study are an ESF-call that was launched in 2015 to further professionalise the training of adult education providers in the area of basic education among others with innovative ICT-means⁸⁹, the decision to award a state prize for adult

⁸⁴ Qualitätssicherung und -entwicklung in der österreichischen Erwachsenenbildung. Eine Studie im Rahmen des Projekts „Instrumente der Qualität und Transparenz in der Erwachsenenbildung in Österreich“ (INSI-QUEB) des Österreichischen Instituts für Berufsbildungsforschung, Wien 2004, S. 4; quoted in Anneliese Heilinger: Die Qualifizierung von ErwachsenenbildnerInnen. Available at https://erwachsenenbildung.at/downloads/themen/Uebersicht_EB-Einrichtungen_Heilinger2006.pdf?m=1494705445&, [accessed on 16.10.2018]

⁸⁵ European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015. Adult Education and Training in Europe: Widening Access to Learning Opportunities. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p.31.

⁸⁶ Stoppacher, P., Edler, M., 2014, Evaluation der ersten Periode der Initiative Erwachsenenbildung. Available at: https://erwachsenenbildung.at/downloads/service/Evaluation_IEB.pdf; see also https://erwachsenenbildung.at/aktuell/nachrichten_details.php?nid=8175, [both accessed on 04.10.2018]

⁸⁷ See https://erwachsenenbildung.at/aktuell/nachrichten_details.php?nid=8175, [accessed on 04.10.2018]

⁸⁸ See https://erwachsenenbildung.at/aktuell/nachrichten_details.php?nid=11861, [accessed on 04.10.2018]

⁸⁹ See <https://www.esf.at/ausschreibung/qualifizierungsmassnahmen-fuer-mitarbeiterinnen-und-trainerinnen-der-basisbildung/>, accessed on 16.10.2018]

education thematically in the area of digital literacy⁹⁰ and the initiation of EBmooc⁹¹, a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) in the area of Erwachsenenbildung (EB, adult education).

Contribution and impact of ET2020

Tasked by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, an Austrian delegation of adult education experts participated in a number of workshops of the ET2020 Working Group on Adult Learning in 2014 and 2015. Of those workshops, especially an in-depth country specific workshop on Improving use of ICT and OER in adult learning that was organised in Oslo, Norway on 11-13 March 2015 stood out. This peer learning exercise included the presentation of country examples of experiences in the thematic area of which the Austrian delegation found a Norwegian example of particular interest. With the feasibility study “MOOC for Nordic education for teachers in the field of basic skills for adults”⁹² that was presented by Skills Norway (then: VOX), the speakers made a convincing case for the general applicability of MOOCs in adult education, especially with regards to training the trainers.

The **key result** of the workshop was that it reinforced the participating experts’ ideas and views in regard to the need for and chances of digitalisation in the context of adult education. This was considered important against the backdrop of the diverse Austrian adult education landscape and the need for a coordinated quality assurance approach in the training of professionals. In particular, the idea of a MOOC following a train-the-trainer approach was showcased in the meeting and a strong argument for the applicability of a similar approach within the Austrian adult education landscape was made. With the experiences of the workshop and in particular the feasibility study presented, the participating experts could also further advance their agenda within an Austrian steering group on matters of adult education and thus secure stakeholder commitment on the next steps to provide specific digital know-how for adult educators. Therefore, the main added value of the participation in the ET2020 measure was that it reinforced the delegation’s views that the application of digital tools can be beneficial within adult education. The event also provided them with evidence to argue their case in national steering groups and with national stakeholders.

There were four **general outcomes in the Austrian education policy** that can be attributed to some degree to the Oslo workshop.

- a) Launch of an **ESF call** to further professionalise the training of adult education providers in the area of basic education, among others with innovative ICT-means in 2015: Shortly after the participation in the Oslo workshop, an ESF call was prepared by the Federal Ministry of Education under the operational programme 2014-2020 of the ESF with the aim to foster equal access to lifelong learning for people of all ages. The call funds projects for the (continuous) education and training of professionals in the area of adult learning in four thematic areas. Here, development and refinement of innovative training models are funded, among others by the means of new ICT teaching and learning methods. Within the overall call, 145 projects are funded and it is likely that more project applications proposed eLearning approaches. According to interviews, one of the reasons to introduce the aspect of new ICT teaching and learning methods in the call were the experiences made at the workshop.

⁹⁰ See https://erwachsenenbildung.at/staatspreis/preistraegerinnen_2015.php#digital_literacy, [accessed on 16.10.2018]

⁹¹ <https://erwachsenenbildung.at/ebmooc/> as well as <https://ec.europa.eu/epale/de/node/32718>, [accessed on 16.10.2018]

⁹² See <https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/resource-centre/content/mooc-nordic-education-teachers-field-basic-skills-adults-feasibility-study>, [accessed on 16.10.2018]

- b) The **Austrian state prize** for adult education awarded in the **thematic area of digital literacy**: the Austrian state prize, an instrument implemented since 1956 and refined lastly in 2008 is a biennial prize awarded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education. There are usually three prizes issued: one to honour a practitioner, one for research achievements, and one for achievements in a specific field. In 2015, with the ET2020 workshops reiterating the importance of digital literacy in the area of adult education, the Austrian Ministry decided to award the prize for the thematic area of digital literacy. Thus, in December 2015, the prize was awarded to the initiative Gratis Online Lernen (free online learning). The initiative aimed to teach people how to best learn in a self-organised way online.
- c) Against the backdrop of the successful MOOC Gratis Online Lernen and in cooperation with some of the initiators of the MOOC like the TU Graz and the elearning platform iMooX as well as the feasibility study presented in Oslo, the Austrian Federal Ministry for education decided to fund a MOOC in the area of adult education following a train-the-trainers approach. The **EBmooc** aims to teach adult education trainers the use of digital tools in practice. The six modules center around topics like "learning in MOOC and Webinars"; "ICT-tools for the daily work in an educational service" or "OER in adult education". The course was organised in parallel with dedicated webinars with trainers to accompany the independent use of the learning materials. The class was free of charge and certified by Austrian adult education institutions for training of adult education professionals. The course was held in 2017 and in 2018 and reached overall about **6 000 professionals** mostly from Austria and in some cases from Germany. While the EBmooc attracted some interest from other European countries, it was mostly used by other German speaking adult education practitioners.
- d) As a follow up to the course, a **number of academic publications** have been issued by the EBmooc Team⁹³:
- MOOCs in der Erwachsenenbildung: So gelingen sie (MOOCs in adult education: This is how they work)
 - MOOCs in der Erwachsenenbildung: Geschäftsmodelle (MOOCs in adult education: business models)
 - Digitalisierung, Didaktik, Internettechnologien (Digitalisation, Didactics, Internet technologies)
 - Inverse Blended Learning in der Weiterbildung für Erwachsenenbildner_innen (Inverse Blended Learning in Training for adult education practitioners)
 - MOOCs und Inverse Blended learning (MOOCs and Inverse Blended Learning)
 - Digitalisation and adult education: new opportunities and new responsibilities
 - Die digitale Bereitschaft der Erwachsenenbildung (The digital readiness of adult education)
 - Weiterbildung im Großformat (Continuous training on large scale)

Influence of other European or international activities/ initiatives

While the feasibility study on MOOC for Nordic education for teachers in the field of basic skills for adults was important for the Austrian experts participating in the ET2020 activity,

⁹³ <https://erwachsenenbildung.at/ebmooc/publikationen.php>, [accessed on 16.10.2018]

the impulse to produce the study came from the Nordic Network for Adult Learning (NVL), the European Basic Skills Network (EBSN) and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Success factors for change

Overall, four success factors and transferable lessons learned were identified: two on a national level, one intersecting national and European levels, and one on a European level.

- On a **national level**, in order to have a successful and well-attended MOOC, awareness measures and advertisement among the possible participants are essential. Additionally, the dissemination of results and experiences as well as the messages of the training material increase future participation. While the Austrian landscape of adult education institutes is heterogeneous, practitioners are in fact well connected via the KEBÖ on the one hand and the adult education portal Erwachsenenbildung.at on the other. The size of the national network and the reach of the platform Erwachsenenbildung.at can thus be considered a success factor for the impact of the ET2020 activity, since it allowed for easier awareness raising and dissemination of results among the target group.
- Similarly, on a **national level**, the Austrian delegation consisted of a team of independent experts tasked by the Ministry. It is likely that Ministry staff, due to their workload, would not have had the capacity to disseminate the lessons learned in Oslo and follow through with the mission to introduce a MOOC for adult education professionals in Austria with the same persistence.
- **At the intersection of the national and the European level**, topics within the national policy debate were well aligned with the topics of the ET2020 activities, in particular with the workshop in Oslo. In the Austrian case, therefore, the results presented resonated very well with the ideas, experiences and interests of the Austrian participants and then also with the national stakeholders.
- **On the European level**, the Oslo workshop differed to some degree from similar activities organised previously. In 2014 and 2015, the peer learning exercises organised benefitted from the fact that more than just one learning example were presented. Furthermore, an application process was introduced asking participants to justify their interest in the topic and in the event. Both led to better events with better inputs and more interested participants. Lastly, the quality of the service provider/consultant accompanying the expert group can have a large impact on the output and the impact of the group. A good service provider acts as an intermediary between the commission and the expert group and respects the strengths and experiences of all parties involved.

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Early childhood education and care – Bulgaria

Executive summary

In October 2015 the Bulgarian Government adopted a new comprehensive reform of pre-school and school education. Improving equal access to early education and increasing the share of children aged 4-7 years participating in early education were two of the key goals of the reform. Inspired by the 2014 ET2020 Proposal for key principles of a Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care, the Bulgarian Government introduced new kindergarten services and attempted to lower the mandatory starting age of pre-school education. Even though Bulgaria did not participate in the production of the Quality Framework, the deliverable was introduced at an opportune time when the Bulgarian Government was drafting the new education act. It was also noted that the ET2020 activities were very important in national debates prior to the adoption of the 2016 Pre-school and School Education Act, in particular concerning the most appropriate entry age for compulsory pre-school education. This case illustrates the joint influence of an ET2020 deliverables and the ET2020 benchmark indicators.

Case study overview

| | |
|---|--|
| Thematic area or Working Group | Early Childhood Education and Care |
| Country | Bulgaria |
| ET2020 activity(ies) and deliverable(s), including year | Proposal for key principles of a Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care (2014) |
| Type of outcome/ impact | Informing ongoing policy reforms and stimulating national debate |

National context

In 2015, the draft Pre-School and School Education Act was highly anticipated in Bulgaria. The country had not undergone a comprehensive reform of pre-school and school education since 1991, and the new law was expected to address many of the problems of the education system. In particular, the draft law addressed Bulgaria's poor performance on two ET2020 benchmark indicators: the high rate of early school leaving and the low participation rate in early childhood education and care. In 2014, Bulgaria had 89.3% participation rate in early education for children aged 4 to 7 (the mandatory school age).⁹⁴ The rate was even lower for Roma children: only 42% were enrolled in pre-school or kindergarten.⁹⁵ That year, the EU average and EU targets were 93.9% and 95% respectively. Indeed, one of the 2015 European Semester country-specific recommendations (CSRs) to Bulgaria was to adopt the education reform act and to increase the participation of socially disadvantaged children particularly by improving access to good-quality early school education.⁹⁶

Bulgaria was also underperforming on the early leaving from education and training indicator. The share of early leavers had been increasing since 2011, and in 2015 it peaked

⁹⁴ European Commission (2015), Education and Training Monitor, Country fiche Bulgaria,

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Council of the European Union (2015), Council recommendation of 14 July 2015 on the 2015 National Reform Programme of Bulgaria and delivering a Council opinion on the 2015 Convergence Programme of Bulgaria, 2015/C 272/08

at 13.4% for 18-24 year olds (the EU average was 11.2% and the EU target is <10%).⁹⁷ Providing equal access to pre-school education was one of the key mechanisms for lowering the number of early school leavers set in the 2013 National Strategy for Reducing the Share of Early School Leavers.⁹⁸ The new education act emphasized the need to improve access.

The Pre-School and School Education Act was adopted in October 2015, and it came into force in August 2016.⁹⁹ Improving equal access was one of the key priorities of the reforms in early childhood education and care. The Act introduced new kindergarten services (i.e. hourly, half-day and weekend) and public subsidies for private pre-schools (with certain conditions) meant to increase the education options available to families and to make early childhood education more affordable (Part III Art 67(1) and Part IV Art 10(1)).

Contribution and impact of ET2020

The contribution and impact of the ET2020 “Proposal for key principles of a Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care: Report of the Working Group on Early Childhood Education and Care under the auspices of the European Commission” (Quality Framework) can be best characterized as informing ongoing policy reforms and stimulating national debate.

The Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science became aware of the Quality Framework in 2014 at a presentation of a draft of the framework in a conference in Athens under the Greek Council Presidency. At the time, there was no Bulgarian representative in the WG Early Childhood Education and Care, and Bulgaria was therefore not involved in the development of the Quality Framework. Ministry staff were also present at the presentation of the final version of the Quality Framework in Luxembourg at the end of 2014.

As soon as the Ministry ECEC staff became aware of the framework, they began thinking about possible ways to include the framework’s action statements in the early education reforms being prepared concurrently in Bulgaria. The Ministry disseminated information about the Quality Framework at the next meeting of regional experts, and there was a discussion of the key recommendations. Information about the key recommendations of the framework were then disseminated to municipalities and directors of kindergartens through the regional structures of the Ministry.

The Ministry staff used the framework for guidance on where to put their efforts in the ongoing reforms. In particular, they focused on the questions of access to and quality of pre-school education. As the education reforms were at their height of public debates and institutional discussions, the ECEC experts could put in the draft law some of the recommendations of the Quality Framework. They also used the principles of the framework in the preparation of a number of regulatory acts such as the Government standard for pre-school education and the National Strategy for the Development of Pedagogical Staff (2014-2020).

The two key contributions of the Quality Framework to the early education reforms in Bulgaria were to inspire the introduction of new early education services meant to make it more affordable for households and the (as of now not fully realised) attempt to lower the mandatory starting age for early education to five.

The main economic challenge to increasing participation in early education is the inability of households to afford sending their children to the kindergartens. Even if kindergarten base fees are reduced or covered by municipalities, there are additional expenses such as providing slippers and paying for the meals provided during the day that many households

⁹⁷ European Commission (2016), Education and Training Monitor 2016, available at <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/e9916271-ad65-11e6-aab7-01aa75ed71a1>, [accessed 15 February 2019]

⁹⁸ Ministry of Education and Science (2013), National Strategy for Reducing the Share of Early School Leavers 2013-2020, available at http://mon.bg/upload/6565/strategy_napusnali_obr_sistema_2013_2020.pdf, [accessed 15 February 2019]

⁹⁹ Ministry of Education and Science (2013), Pre-School and School Education Act, available at http://zareformata.mon.bg/documents/ZAKON_za_preducilisnoto_i_ucilisnoto_obrazovanie.pdf, [accessed 15 February 2019]

cannot afford. In an effort to allow households who cannot afford the full-day kindergarten to send their children to early education – and thus increase access to early education, the new education act introduced different types of kindergarten services (i.e. hourly and half-day). These new services are cheaper and/or free because no food is provided if children attend only half a day, and therefore might increase the share of children aged 4-7 participating in early education.

The main cultural challenge to increasing participation in early education is the opinion among some Bulgarians that early childhood education at a kindergarten is not valuable and that education can be provided just as well at home, especially if there is a retired grandparent and/or a stay-at-home parent who can do it (for free). Therefore, the attempt of the government to lower the starting age for compulsory pre-school education to five was met with strong public opposition. The ET2020 Quality Framework recommends children to start pre-school education at four, and the EU target is for 95% participation rate of children aged 4 - 7 in pre-school education. The Ministry was inspired to lower the compulsory preschool education starting age, but was unable to pass that reform. The compulsory age remained five.

The Pre-School and Education Act of 2015 does not meet all recommendations of the Quality Framework yet, and Bulgaria has slid further back on the ECEC indicator in the last few years. However, the process of working towards implementing the recommendations continues. The Ministry has applied for technical assistance from the European Union to develop a national quality framework inspired by the ET2020 Quality Framework. In 2018, the Ministry also adopted a new Strategy for Reducing the share of early leavers, which sets the mandatory minimum age for starting education at four years old. However, this minimum age requirement cannot be implemented without changing the Pre-School and Education Act of 2015.

Influence of other European or international activities/ initiatives

The introduction of the ET2020 benchmark indicator for early childhood education and care in the ET2020 framework¹⁰⁰ also had important influence on the early education reforms in Bulgaria. Since 2010 the indicator had measured Bulgaria's performance and consistently showed that Bulgaria was performing poorly relative to other Member States. The multi-year evidence of Bulgaria's poor performance together with the Council recommendation of 2015 gave urgency to the reforms of early childhood education. The evidence provided by the indicator created leverage to try to follow the recommendations of the Quality Framework even though there was public opposition against lowering the mandatory starting school age. This is a particularly good example of how the benchmark indicators may have influence when used in conjunction with Council recommendations.

Success factors for change

The key success factor was the temporal concurrence of the ET2020 Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care and the Bulgarian education reforms. The Quality Framework was developed just before the last stages of drafting the new education act, and the Ministry staff learnt about it just in time to use it as guidance in the reforms.

It is important to note that the Quality Framework was influential also because many stakeholder organizations knew about it and its recommendations, and could use this during the drafting of the Early Education and Education Act.

Bulgaria has nominated a representative for the upcoming ET2020 working group on early childhood education and care. As Bulgaria has slid down the indicator since 2014, Ministry staff hope that they will gather knowledge and information about best practices in ECEC and get inspiration about how to move forward in improving early education in Bulgaria through the PLAs and other mutual learning activities.

¹⁰⁰ European Union; Council of the European Union, Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020'), 25 May 2009, available at [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52009XG0528\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52009XG0528(01)), [accessed 15 February 2019]

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Peer counselling on performance-based funding in higher education – Czech Republic and Slovenia

Executive summary

Both the Czech Republic (in 2015) and Slovenia (in 2017) requested peer counselling in order to consult with their peers from other countries on changes to their higher education funding systems. In the two countries, the reforms of the respective funding systems were still being discussed at the time, and international experts were consulted to inform these changes. Both activities successfully led to improvements in the respective funding systems.

In the Czech Republic, various suggestions by the peers were taken into account when revising the funding agreements and corresponding indicators measuring performance. Furthermore, the thorough internal review of the funding system prior to the event immensely increased the common understanding of the issue.

In Slovenia, the peer counselling exercise informed subsequent negotiations concerning the funding agreements between the government and the higher education institutions. Other intended changes such as a renewed definition of public service in a new comprehensive Higher Education Act have not yet been implemented due to a change in the Slovenian Government. Another side effect is the informal building of a network of peers that can be consulted outside of the peer counselling exercise. A follow-up event to the peer counselling in Slovenia has already been confirmed.

Case study overview

| | |
|---|---|
| Thematic area or Working Group | Higher Education |
| Country | Czech Republic, Slovenia |
| ET2020 activity(ies) and deliverable(s), including year | Peer Counselling on Higher-education performance-based funding, September 2015, Czech Republic Peer Counselling on Higher-education performance-based funding, March-June 2017, Slovenia |
| Type of outcome/ impact | Informing amendments to existing regulations (e.g. funding formula, indicators), informing negotiations with national Higher Education institutions |

National context

Slovenia

Higher Education in Slovenia was originally regulated by a Higher Education (HE) Act, a decree on public funding of HE, and was largely funded through a lump sum allocated to individual institutions based on the number of students enrolled. However, prior to the ET2020 Peer Counselling activity, the HE Act and the funding approach were being revised to reflect a performance-based method. According to the interviewees, the ministry had been trying to introduce amendments to the act for several years. While all stakeholders agreed that the implementation of a new comprehensive Higher Education Act, rather than a number of amendments to the existing one, was necessary, they disagreed on the exact

way forward. There was a conflict of interest between different Higher Education stakeholders, primarily Higher Education Institutions (HEI). A major political issue was the definition of *public service*¹⁰¹ as the parties concerned, including HEIs, the Rector's Conference, and the research community, had different notions of the concept. Another relevant conflict of interest involves the differences in the funding of private and public HEI, which is also based on the definition of the provision public service¹⁰². These issues delayed the reform process.

In 2016, further amendments to the existing act were adopted, including a new funding formula for HEI. Negotiations on four-year funding agreements between the ministry and HEI were introduced as well. However, the funding agreements were a novelty to the Slovenian Higher Education system, which is why the ministry considered international expertise on the matter useful. In a second stage, the Slovenian Government planned to adopt the new HE Act in December 2017. This new Act would clarify the autonomy status of HEIs, provide further specifications regarding the regulation of the public service of HE, and the system of concessions system through which currently 13 private HEIs receive public funds in exchange for the provision of their services to students and regional community (European Commission, 2017). Thus, the Peer Counselling in 2017 took place during the national debate on the conception of the elements of a new HE Act.

Czech Republic

Public HEIs in the Czech Republic are almost completely dependent on public funding. Input-oriented metrics such as the number of students predominate in the budget over the output criteria (Jongbloed, 2010). Thus, the Czech Republic already had been using some elements of a performance-based approach in their funding system since 2010. However, the Ministry of Education intended to reform the current system, e.g. due to the (then) used indicators focusing on research and development rather than teaching. Furthermore, the system introduced considerable "instability and unpredictability" (Arnold et al. 2015) for HEIs. In order to have an exchange on performance-based funding with international experts, the Czech ministry requested a Peer Counselling that was held in 2015.

Contribution and impact of ET2020

Slovenia

In order to gain additional insight and expertise when reforming the HE Act, the Slovenian government proposed the subject on performance-based funding to the European Commission to consider for a Peer Counselling exercise. The Slovenian ministry proposed experts (Frank Ziegele, *Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung* [Centre for the Development of HEI], Germany) and peers.

The visits in Ljubljana took place on 09-10 March 2017 and 12-13 June 2017. The visits involved peers from five EU Member States (Austria, Latvia, Germany, Poland and the UK), with observers from Croatia (first visit) and Lithuania (second visit).

The Peer Counselling focused on four issues:

- Indicators and Funding Formula

¹⁰¹ The definition of public service, i.e. the directive whether and how HEI offer a public service, affects various aspects in HE, e.g. the relationship between public and private funding for different types of HEI.

¹⁰² „According to the Higher Education Act, an HEI may be established by the state or by private (national and foreign) natural persons and legal entities. Public HEIs are established in order to provide public services. In certain conditions, a private HEI may be granted a concession for a public service (and consequently for public co-financing) by a government decree on the basis of a public tender. In such cases, private HEIs are co-financed on the same conditions as the state ones. In the 2005–06 academic year, three out of five free-standing HEIs delivered undergraduate programmes with such a concession.” (Kodric et al., 2008)

- Funding Agreements
- Monitoring Performance
- Defining Public Service

The peers and the participants from Slovenia had intensive group and plenary discussions on recommendations for Slovenia. Each of the two peer-counselling visits had a part open for stakeholders, and a closed session among peers, Slovenian Ministry and Slovenian experts who had been nominated by the ministry. In the end, 35 recommendations on how to improve performance-based funding in Slovenia were stipulated.

The process and results of the Peer Counselling were, according to the interviewees, continuously communicated within the ministry, including different directorates. Moreover, relevant stakeholders (e.g. Council of HEI, Rector's Conference, student organisations, trade unions) were informed about the recommendations resulting from the Peer Counselling. In the national discussions, the recommendations are referred to frequently as well.

The Peer Counselling was considered timely as the ministry was in the process of preparing the funding negotiations with the HEI. Hence, the outcomes of the Peer Counselling could directly be used in the national negotiation process. In parallel, the ministry was working on amendments to the HE Act, so the Peer Counselling results had an impact on the legislative proposal as well.

Overall, the interviewees consider the Peer Counselling to have been a very positive experience as the invited experts and peers were highly knowledgeable and ready to study their national context in detail. The exchanges with the German expert Frank Ziegele and Austrian participants proved to be particularly enriching. For example, the new funding model that the Slovenian government introduced in 2016 was intended to be amended by the ministry in 2017. The peers and experts at the Peer Counselling activity provided recommendations on the necessary changes, which the Slovenian government intends to take on board in the new comprehensive HE Act. Particularly useful, according to the interviewees, were the recommendations on the funding agreements and negotiation processes. The recommendations and the international know-how gave the ministerial staff the necessary confidence in the negotiations. Due to the aforementioned conflicts of interests of the stakeholders, the international expertise helped the ministry to persuade stakeholders with informed arguments of the intended reforms. The negotiations with private and public HEI could be completed and the recommendations by the peers were all, to some extent, implemented.

Furthermore, the peers encouraged the Slovenian government to uphold the general definition of public service as envisaged by the ministry. The new definition has not been translated into law yet, as there has been a change of government in Slovenia. Nonetheless, thanks to the Peer Counselling and the follow up actions on the national level, the definition proposed by the ministerial staff has been accepted by the Rector's Conference and public HEI alongside the trade unions and student organisations.

Apart from the direct contributions to reforms and the negotiation processes in the country, the Peer Counselling also helped build an informal network of country representatives that consult each other on HE reforms. For example, the Croatian ministry invited the Slovenian ministerial staff to Croatia in order to discuss the Peer Counselling activity with the minister and other ministerial representatives as well as their on-going discussions on funding. Furthermore, Slovenia invited the Austrian ministry to visit them to discuss further questions, such as their template of the funding agreements or details on the funding formula.

The Slovenian government will hold a follow-up event to the Peer Counselling in which they will present the processes of negotiation and results to their peers. Moreover, they would

like to discuss how to proceed as regards the implementation of the funding agreements as well as their evaluation and monitoring.

Czech Republic

The Czech Republic held a Peer Counselling activity in September 2015, together with peers from Sweden, the Netherlands, Italy and Ireland. National HEI were involved in the activity as well. However, according to the interviewee, the invited Czech stakeholders were not particularly active during the event. Stakeholders other than HEI (e.g. student organisations, trade unions) or international non-ministerial experts were not involved in the Peer Counselling.

The Peer Counselling proved highly useful to the Czech ministry in various ways. First of all, the internal preparation to the activity was, according to the interviewee, a productive exercise that allowed for thorough reflection of the strengths and weaknesses as well as the explicit and implicit goals of the Czech funding system. The reflections resulted in the briefing documents for the invited peers.

Moreover, the peers provided several recommendations¹⁰³ that the Czech ministry used in their policy-making process. For example, the peers considered the number of indicators used in the Czech system too high and the funding formula too complex, which is why, according to the interviewee, the number of indicators referenced was reduced. Furthermore, based on the peers' suggestions, they also intend to diversify their funding system by creating four groups of HEI with slightly different quality indicators to account for the individual profiles of the HEI.

Previous changes were already made on the basis of the PLA held in The Hague (2014) focusing on performance agreements and their relationship to HE funding. For instance, the annual institutional development plans of HEI that served as funding agreements were expanded to three-year-plans to adopt a more strategic approach to planning for the HEI. Furthermore, the ministry included output indicators in addition to the existing input indicators to more adequately assess potential successes.

Success factors for change

Slovenia

Several success factors were listed by the interviewees:

- It was considered crucial for the success of the exercise that the top management level of the ministry was involved in the activity. In the Slovenian case, the Director General himself was deeply involved in the organisation and execution of the activity. This improved the quality of the discussions and raised the importance of the Peer Counselling and the level of engagement of all stakeholders.
- Parallel to the international team, the Slovenian ministry considered it important to establish a team of experts on the national level to parallelly discuss the issues in parallel. This helped disseminate the information and discussions in the Peer Counselling activity on the national level and helped create a link between the national policy level and the expert level.
- The involvement of national stakeholders is an important part of the counselling process. For example, two HEI vice rectors were deeply involved in the Peer Counselling activity. Between the counselling visits, they worked together with the ministry to further discuss and prepare the next visits. As the two participants are now heads of their respective university, the support

¹⁰³ For a detailed account of the Peer Counselling process and the recommendations, see (European Commission, 2015).

of the legislative changes at the top level of the universities is now strengthened.

- The timing of the Peer Counselling worked well for the Slovenian case as the results of the activity could well feed into the planned negotiations and legislative reforms.
- Hence, the personal engagement of various actors (ministry top level, experts, stakeholders) proved to be a success factor for the Slovenian case. As a result, the transparency and legitimacy of the reform process were increased.

Nevertheless, a stronger engagement of stakeholders would have increased the impact of the activity, in view of interviewees. Despite efforts by the ministry to invite them, some stakeholders did not participate actively or not at all in the activity. A higher level of engagement could have further increased the success of the activity.

Czech Republic

The Czech representative considers a thorough preparation of the Peer Counselling on the national level in particular a success factor for the activity. That way, the national funding system was thoroughly analysed and reflected prior to the activity. Furthermore, the objective point of view of the participating peers and the sharing of other national experiences allowed for the development of ideas that could reasonably be implemented in the Czech funding system. Nonetheless, similar to the Slovenian experience, the Czech interviewee reported that the overall engagement of stakeholders could have been higher.

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Self-reflection tool for digitally capable schools – Italy

Executive summary

SELFIE is one of the 11 initiatives set out in the Digital Education Action Plan adopted by the European Commission in January 2018 to promote the use of digital and innovative education practices in the school context. The SELFIE pilot in Italy provides an interesting case of implementation of the SELFIE tool, as it was accompanied by specific supporting actions to create favourable conditions for integrating, sustaining and scaling up SELFIE in the national compulsory education system.

Original plans for the pilot implementation in Italy envisaged the involvement of 21 schools in three regions, expecting to cover roughly 1 900 total users (about 1 470 students, 420 teachers and 17 school leaders). However, at the end of the pilot phase a total of 31 912 Italian users participated in SELFIE (1 507 school leaders and staff, 5 690 teachers and 24 715 students), reaching an exponential growth (about 1 680%).

The combination of ad hoc events (promoted by regional authorities and school networks) and supporting materials, as well as the support and commitment of school leaders and the SELFIE coordinators in each participating school ensured that the main ideas and added value of SELFIE could effectively reach each school community, hence increasing the uptake of SELFIE and the high-level of stakeholder engagement in the case of this initiative.

Some schools started to respond to the results from the self-assessment mainly by deepening the discussions on creating a “digital culture” at their schools or already integrating them in their school-specific curriculums on digital innovation. The value and impact of SELFIE is also reflected and recognised in the new Digital Education Action Plan for Schools recently approved by the Autonomous Province of Trento, which includes SELFIE among key actions that schools should implement in the coming years.

Case study overview

| | |
|---|--|
| Thematic area or Working Group | Digital Skills and Competences |
| Country | Italy |
| ET2020 activity(ies) and deliverable(s), including year | Self-reflection tool for digitally capable schools (SELFIE) |
| Type of outcome/ impact | Stimulating the debate at the school level as well at the regional level; learning effects for the national evaluation system; and influencing and informing local /regional policy initiative |

National context

Like in other European countries, investing in digital skills of the population is an essential element of the political agenda for education in Italy. Already in 2007, the Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR) launched the Italian Strategy for Digital Schools by. The aim of the project running until 2011 was to enhance the training and the support of the use for digital skills for educators as well as to improve the digital literacy of learners. Hence, prior to SELFIE, Italy was already investing intensively in digital skills of teachers and learners and

equipping schools and classrooms with the corresponding hardware such as digital whiteboards.

In 2015, the **National digital school plan (PNSD)** was launched, and it is still valid. The plan sets out a series of actions intended to foster innovation within the education system, including: enhancing the learning environment through the use of technologies and improving schools' innovation processes; developing teacher training actions to support educational innovation; promoting digital culture for teaching and learning, and for students' cognitive, social and professional skills; and identifying and disseminating best practices in school innovation in order to create a national school network for training and research. One aim of this plan was also to designate digital coordinators in each school which are responsible for developing and implementing a school-specific curriculum on digital competences in accordance with the national standards of the PNSD. The digital coordinators are supported by coordinators mostly from the regional Education ministries. At the same time, the call for proposals to participate in the SELFIE pilot was launched. This provided Italian schools with an opportunity to self-reflect and self-evaluate on their current actions in line with PNSD priorities and captured by the DigCompOrg framework behind SELFIE.

Before the SELFIE pilot, the national Ministry of Education was using a **National Evaluation System (SNV)** to evaluate schools under the coordination of the school evaluation agency (INVALSI). The system required each school to present a Rapporto di autovalutazione – RAV (self-assessment report), following a common format with the aim of identifying strengths and weaknesses and setting out a three-year improvement plan for innovation. Since 2016/2017 RAV has become mandatory for schools at all levels of compulsory education. Based on RAV, each school sets up improvement actions and targets to be achieved then detailed in the Piano di Miglioramento - PdM (improvement plan). However, for a lot of schools this self-evaluation is considered more as a formal tool for self-inspection. On top of that, only a few members of school staff are involved in preparing the RAV report – such as the school director and 2-3 teachers. Due to its clear structure and the involvement of all stakeholders (i.e. all school's teachers, students and the school leader), SELFIE was perceived by piloting schools as a helpful tool for self-evaluating their existing strategies and practices, pointing to potential synergies and complementarities between the RAV and SELFIE approaches.

Contribution and impact of ET2020

As a tool which gives schools the opportunity to self-reflect on their digital competences in a holistic way, SELFIE helps reveal their strengths and weaknesses. Based on these results, schools can then find out how previous activities materialized and at the same time become aware of where to intervene next. The direct result of the tool is hence a process of self-reflection which may lead to corresponding activities in the long-run. The **impact of ET2020** regarding SELFIE was that Italy adopted a more systemic approach to make schools participate in SELFIE. CNR-ITD (Institute for Educational Technology, National Research Council of Italy) established a network of local associated partners, composed of two regional education authorities (USR Umbria and USR Calabria), representing the Ministry of Education; two Institutes of Educational Research (INDIRE and IPRASE); a regional schools network for digital-age learning (Polo Formativo AT-Varese), and a private foundation for education run by the Intesa San Paolo Bank (La Fondazione per la Scuola, Compagnia di San Paolo). Moreover, the SELFIE pilot in Italy was carried out under the auspices of the Director General, Education Buildings, Structural Funds and Digital Innovation, of the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (MIUR). While CNR-ITD, as national coordinator, was in charge of overseeing the overall implementation of the SELFIE pilot in Italy, the associated partners functioned as local-level coordinators during the piloting phase, by (i) activating their local networks of schools and informing them about the SELFIE pilot, and (ii) supporting school coordinators during the pilot running phase.

Original plans for the pilot implementation in Italy envisaged the involvement of 21 schools in three regions, expecting to cover roughly 1 900 total users (about 1 470 students, 420 teachers and 17 school leaders). At the end of the pilot phase, a total of 31 912 Italian users participated in SELFIE (1 507 school leaders and staff, 5 690 teachers and 24 715 students), reaching an exponential growth (about 1 680 %). Overall, 201 schools took part in the SELFIE pilot in Italy; of these schools, 59 were primary (29 %), 66 were lower secondary (33 %), 62 were upper secondary general (31 %) and 14 were upper secondary vocational (7 %). Distributed across 10 different Italian regions, 67 schools were located in the Northern area, 33 schools were located in the Central area, and 101 schools were located in the Southern area.

Participating in SELFIE is only the first step for creating a larger impact on the **digital transformation of schools**. It mainly stimulates activities or policy reforms at the national and school level as a response to the outcomes of the SELFIE school-specific reports. However, some interviewees could already see that some schools have responded to the results from the self-assessment by deepening the discussions on creating a “digital culture” at their schools or integrating them in their school-specific curricula on digital innovation.

The value and impact of SELFIE is also reflected and recognised in the new Digital Education Action Plan for Schools recently approved by the Autonomous Province of Trento (Reg. delib. n. 1941, approved on 24 November 2017), which includes SELFIE among key actions (Action #28) that schools should implement in the next years.

Influence of other European or international activities/ initiatives

International developments also inspired and promoted the leverage for change at the national level in Italy. As described above, although increasing the digital capabilities of schools was already on the national agenda before ET2020, SELFIE was perceived as a good way to make the overall approach more streamlined and integrated in schools’ practice, in line with the national digital school plan.

Success factors for change

SELFIE in Italy is considered to be a success because the tool was applied widely. As a consequence, more schools gained insights about their digital capabilities and may in a next step be able to adopt changes addressing their specific needs. As the main success factors for such a wide participation in SELFIE, interviewees point to the involvement of various stakeholders at different levels of the system. In Italy, this means especially regional educational authorities and the school networks which motivated and supported schools to participate in SELFIE for instance by organising national and regional events. In the framework of some regional events for instance, regional authorities invited school leaders and one member of the teaching staff for each participating school to attend a 2h seminar in which the main ideas of SELFIE were explained. This ensured that school’s representatives involved in this initial seminar were able to properly understand and convey the key concepts and added value of the SELFIE approach to guarantee and facilitate the tool’s application in their respective schools. To this end, there was a designated liaison person for each school (“SELFIE-school coordinator”) who was responsible for the set-up of SELFIE in his or her school as well as for encouraging colleagues and students to become involved. For those schools which were not able to participate in these seminars, online events were organized.

Several events at the regional and national level were also used to promote SELFIE, including at the educational fair Didacta organized by INDIRE and the Ministry of Education. During this fair, a 3h workshop was organized to present the SELFIE tool to teachers and school leaders. In Umbria, since the launch of the pilot version, around 10 regional and sectoral events related to digital innovations ran sessions focussing on SELFIE. Preparing presentations on SELFIE in Italian which could then be used by teachers to present the

approach in their schools effectively minimized the workload of the disseminators at the school level.

The combination of ad hoc events (promoted by regional authorities and school networks) and supporting materials, as well as the support and commitment of the school leader and the SELFIE coordinator in each participating school ensured that the main ideas and added value of SELFIE could properly reach each school community, hence increasing the uptake of SELFIE and high-level of stakeholder engagement.

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- Regional School Office for Umbria, Italy

Lifelong Learning Labs – the Netherlands

Executive summary

The Netherlands is generally performing well in the field of education, training and informal learning, with comparatively high participation in formal and non-formal forms of training, as well as informal learning. However, this overall picture masks lower participation rates among some groups, such as older people, the low-skilled, flexiworkers and workers in small businesses. In response to this, the Dutch Government has allocated more than EUR 10 million (annually) to support the implementation of the national strategy on lifelong learning.

The ongoing debate and the political willingness to support lifelong learning helped the Netherlands' ability and appetite to learn from good practices in other countries and to develop their own project. One such project is the Lifelong Learning Labs which draws heavily on the approach adopted by the UK Citizens' Curriculum.

The evidence and learning from the UK Citizens' Curriculum project have been frequently shared within the ET2020 WG on Adult Learning and was also mentioned at the PLA on "Policies promoting basic skills in the workplace" in February 2017. However, the activity that ultimately led to the development of the Lifelong Learning Labs project was a conference organised within the context of the European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL) which is part of ET2020.

The project is still ongoing, but it is expected that the measure will lead to proposals that will make lifelong learning more interesting and relevant to those with low educational attainment and low basic skills. Importantly, there is a commitment from the Dutch Minister to pilot some of the proposals that emerge from the Lifelong Learning Labs.

Case study overview

| | |
|---|--|
| Thematic area or Working Group | Adult Learning |
| Country | The Netherlands |
| ET2020 activity(ies) and deliverable(s), including year | ET2020 Working Group on Adult Learning PLA on "Policies promoting basic skills in the workplace", February 2017, United Kingdom |
| Type of outcome/ impact | Informing/ influencing new policy initiative |

National context

For many years, there has been an emphasis on lifelong learning among European policy makers, but many Member States lack a coherent policy on adult learning. Specifically, there is a need for awareness raising, participation and access for those groups most in need of learning, including the low-skilled and unemployed adults, migrants and older people, as highlighted by the ET2020 priorities in this sector and reinforced in the European Agenda for Adult Learning¹⁰⁴.

¹⁰⁴ European Commission Staff Working Document (2015) Draft 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020): New priorities for European cooperation in education and training; COM(2015) 408 final. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A52015SC0161>

Several Member States have recently introduced measures to raise participation in adult learning by focusing on the individual adult, through a range of activities: counselling, flexibility in learning - evening courses, part-time courses, personalised training programmes or e-learning, broadening the variety of courses, recognition and certification of prior learning¹⁰⁵. However, despite such measures, motivation, outreach, access and participation remain key challenges facing adult learning in many Member States¹⁰⁶.

In the Netherlands, as in many other Member States, adults are faced with considerable shifts in the required knowledge and skills on the labour market, partly due to trends such as digitalisation, automation, technological progress and climate change. This has led to skills shortages/ mismatches in various sectors, which in turn has resulted in some job seekers finding it difficult to secure employment, whilst others are faced with the threat of losing their jobs.

In this context, the 2018 Dutch national strategy for lifelong learning (LLL) states that LLL is not a “nice-to-have”, but an “absolute must”. It goes on to say that only through LLL can people prepare for changes in their work in time and remain employed in an increasingly dynamic labour market. Moreover, in a society that is becoming increasingly complex, partly due to the ongoing digitalisation, LLL is also important for people to be able to participate in society more broadly.

In an international context, the Netherlands is generally performing well in the field of education, training and informal learning. Participation in formal and non-formal forms of training, as well as informal learning, is comparatively high. For example, 54 percent of all workers have completed one or more courses in the past two years. Notably, older people are now also starting to be involved in lifelong learning opportunities. Most of such learning takes place in the workplace: of all the time adults spend on learning and development, about 85 percent is in the workplace.

Despite these positive trends, there are still obstacles that stand in the way of further breakthroughs. Too often informal learning, upskilling or reskilling is not prioritised or prioritised too late (by individual adults as well as policy makers), resulting in unemployment (including long-term unemployment). Older people, the low-skilled, flexiworkers and workers in small businesses, in particular, participate less often in training and informal learning.

More than EUR 10 million has been made available to support the implementation of the national strategy on LLL. For the years after 2019, the amount for this multiannual action programme can be adjusted if necessary.

Contribution and impact of ET2020

One of the measures used to support the Dutch national strategy on LLL is the Lifelong Learning Labs project. This project was a direct result of the sharing of evidence and learning from the UK Citizens’ Curriculum project. The evidence and learning from the UK Citizens’ Curriculum project have been frequently shared within the ET2020 Working Group on Adult Learning and was also mentioned at the PLA on “Policies promoting basic skills in the workplace” that was held in Manchester (United Kingdom) in February 2017. However, the activity that ultimately led to the development of the Lifelong Learning Labs project was a conference organised jointly by the Learning and Work Institute (L&W) and EPAL UK - Adult Learning: Setting the Agenda 2017 –in October 2017 within the context of the European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL)¹⁰⁷. Whilst not directly a result of the ET2020

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ European Union; EACEA, Eurydice (2015) *Adult Education and Training in Europe: Widening Access to Learning Opportunities*. Available at: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/adult-education-and-training-europe-widening-access-learning-opportunities_en, [accessed 15 February 2019]

¹⁰⁷ At the conference over 100 delegates from 11 countries had the opportunity to discuss and engage with the evidence on the impact of adult learning. The conference gave space to develop ideas as to what a lifelong learning approach to wider policy development could offer.

tool or deliverable, it could have quite easily been picked as part of those exchanges as well. In fact, Finland has also successfully applied for ESF funding to implement a project that draws heavily on the evidence and experiences of the Citizens' Curriculum project in the UK.

The UK Citizens' Curriculum project was not a formal part of the agenda of the 2017 final conference, but it was mentioned as a good practice example during the discussions and additional information material was also available for the participants. The project caught the attention of a Dutch Ministry official, who had been invited as a speaker, and on the basis of the material gathered and received at the conference, he prepared a proposal for a similar Dutch project (Lifelong Learning Labs). The proposal was presented to his immediate manager and eventually got approved by the senior management team.

The project involves a series of meetings across the Netherlands with around 150 participants (10 locations with about 8-20 participants each). The meetings took place between June and October 2018. The results of the meetings are expected in November 2018 and a closing event is scheduled for 4 December 2018. The meetings are targeted at adults with an educational attainment up to MBO-4 level (equivalent to ISCED level 3). The target group includes a mixed group of adults aged 25-60 years, including individuals in employment, unemployed, those wishing to retrain and entrepreneurs. Participation is voluntary, but participants are compensated for travel costs and are provided with food and drink. Participants will also receive a personal certificate signed by the Dutch Minister as proof of participation. At the meetings (or "labs"), participants are challenged to make concrete proposals for obstacles that they experience in relation to LLL, with a view on making LLL more interesting and relevant for learners (particularly low skilled individuals).

Whilst the UK Citizens' Curriculum project was not copied in full, important aspects of the approach were used in the Dutch project. Unlike the UK example, the purpose of the Dutch Lifelong Learning Labs measure is not to co-design the curriculum content. Instead, the focus is on increasing motivation among potential learners and creating a better learning culture. Ultimately, the aim is to increase participation in LLL, particularly among low skilled adults. The project worked with the target group, through a series of meetings in various locations in the Netherlands, to better understand their needs and motivation/ incentives for learning.

It took about four to five months from hearing about the UK project to having the final approval to appoint a company for the recruitment of participants (around March 2018). Participants were recruited in May 2018.

It is expected that the measure will lead to proposals that will make LLL more interesting and relevant to this target group. Emerging proposals include allowing adult learners a period (e.g. a month) during which they can test a course without having to pay. Some course can be quite a long-term commitment, and this can sometimes put learners off, so by allowing adult learners to gain a better understanding of the course material and whether it is of interest and relevance to them they may be more likely to participate in LLL. Another emerging proposal is to introduce flexibility in the learning (e.g. through evening courses, part-time courses, personalised training programmes or e-learning). Importantly, there is a commitment from the Dutch Minister to pilot some of the proposals that emerge from the Lifelong Learning Labs.

Influence of other European or international activities/ initiatives

As noted above, this change came about as a result of participation in a final conference organised within the context of the EAAL. EAAL is part of the ET2020 framework for European cooperation in education and training and supports the overall priorities and targets of ET2020. However, the activities organised under this EU policy initiative are not technically covered by the scope of this study.

Success factors for change

The above example has highlighted a number of success factors for change. For the sharing of good practices to be effective in informing/ influencing national policy initiatives, it is important that there is already a debate on the specific issue in the country and that the good practice example can be introduced as part of such ongoing discussions. For example, in the Netherlands there was already an ambition to improve lifelong learning and this project complemented other planned actions.

When participating in mutual learning activities it is also important to have an open mind to new and innovative ideas. Equally, and perhaps even more importantly, there also has to be a willingness from high-level policy makers and/ or the political leadership to pilot new and innovative ideas. This political or high-level commitment also needs to extend beyond the initial project so that any follow-up activities also can be funded. In this particular case, it has given the participants some confidence that some of the ideas that they put forward will be implemented as additional pilots.

The speedy approval of this project was also supported by the fact that it has a fairly small operational budget (about EUR 200,000). For larger projects, it may take longer and require a few additional steps to secure funding.

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Teacher education and career reforms – Lithuania

Executive summary

ET2020 peer counselling activities influenced the national reform package in Lithuania relating to the changes in the system of teacher remuneration, initial education and continuous professional development. Alongside other support from the OECD and European Commission, the national Ministry of Education used the targeted advice and support from a small set of peer country experts to inform the modelling and contents of the national reforms. The outcome of the ET2020 input was a direct application of the advice received from the peer country experts into the reform package on the teacher remuneration and career development prepared by the national Ministry.

The key success factors affecting the impact of ET2020 input were related to the strong national needs for such advice and support, driven by the strategic commitment to the reform. It was facilitated by the timely intervention of ET2020 peers as the national officials were drafting the reform, the helpful format of peer counselling inputs, evidence-based exchange of different country experiences, and targeted and focused exchanges. Challenges included the linguistic barriers to participation and information sources and the rapid implementation of the reform which reduced time available for further reflection and communication of intended reforms.

Case study overview

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|---|--|
| Thematic area / Working Group | Schools |
| Country | Lithuania |
| ET2020 activity(ies) and deliverable(s), including year | Peer counselling, Teachers' career pathways, November 2015, Lithuania Peer counselling on "Creating more coherent career pathways for teachers", November 2016, Lithuania |
| Type of outcome/ impact | Informing / influencing new policy initiatives and legislation |

National context

The contribution and impact of ET2020 took place in the national context where the officials in the national Ministry of Education, supported by the senior management and political directions from a newly appointed minister of education, were considering a reform to address a series of challenges facing the teaching profession in Lithuania.

The key challenges faced and discussed in the national debates in relation to the teaching profession were complex and multifold. To start with, the age profile of the teachers in the country was concentrated on older age groups, with few young entrants into the profession. For example, in 2015-2016, more than 50% of teachers were older than 50 years.¹⁰⁸ This affected also the quality of teaching process, as older teachers were less open to reforms and innovations in the teaching process. In addition, due to the economic crisis in 2008, salaries of teachers were reduced in 2009 and only in 2016 have been raised by 3%.

¹⁰⁸ http://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/Pedagogams/PEDAGOGU_RENGIMAS%20papildytos.pdf, [accessed 15 February 2019], in 2016, the average age of all teachers was 48 years, and the average age of subject teachers in secondary education was 55.

Schools tended to retain staff, so teachers continued having jobs, but with reduced teaching load, thus, resulting in lower salaries. Thus, the key challenges related to the low salaries of teachers, need to increase the quality and innovation in the teaching process and act preventively to address the ageing issues of the teaching profession workforce. This also involved the challenge of adequately preparing the new entrants into the teaching profession in the initial teacher education process to deliver modern and qualitatively good teaching. This meant that national reforms were needed to make teaching an attractive career choice and to review the career structure for teachers with the different types and levels of expertise.

At a strategic level, these challenges have been systematically acknowledged. The need to ensure better professionalisation and quality of the teachings was acknowledged as one of the key aims of the national Education Strategy 2013-2020.¹⁰⁹ The programme of the current government adopted in 2016 has also included the need to improve the financing of the education system and teacher salaries amongst the key actions to be implemented to ensure a better quality education experience in the general education system.¹¹⁰ The annual management plans of the national Ministry of Education have included actions to address the multifold challenges affecting the teaching profession since 2012.¹¹¹

Contribution and impact of ET2020

The key ET2020 tool which was used in Lithuania was peer counselling on the particular aspects of the teacher salary reform planned and developed. The officials from the national Ministry of Education became aware of the peer counselling possibility through their involvement in the WG on Schools and requested the implementation of the instrument from DG EAC. In practice, the instrument brought together professional peers from a small number of national administrations in other European countries (Ireland, Flanders, Finland, Slovenia and Wales). Thus, they provided external advice to the officials in the national Ministry of Education in Lithuania who were in the process of developing the new system for teacher remuneration, initial education and continuous professional development.

The peer counselling provided a forum for collectively brainstorming solutions to specific national challenges through participatory workshop formats and direct advice to the national officials. The countries chosen to provide advice were of a similar size, having broadly similar education systems and having developed good quality teacher education, qualification and remuneration systems.

The outcome of the ET2020 input was a direct application of the advice received from the peer country experts into the reform package on the teacher remuneration and career development prepared by the national Ministry. The results of peer counselling were used to generate ideas and reflections based on other countries' experience on how to reform teacher employment, performance evaluation, teacher education, and integrated career support / consultancy system. The key reforms implemented reflecting the ET2020 inputs include:

- In relation to remuneration: instead of the previous system where teachers' remuneration depended on the number of hours taught, the system is now dependant on the overall duties carried out in the teacher's post, both hours taught as well as other activities carried out at schools.¹¹²
- In terms of teacher initial education and continuous professional development¹¹³: instead of previous 20, the reform concentrated the ITT centres in three locations in the country, aiming to ensure a better

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.smm.lt/web/lt/administracine-informacija/planavimo-dokumentai>, [accessed 15 February 2019]

¹¹⁰ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/ed6be240c12511e6bcd2d69186780352>, [accessed 15 February 2019]

¹¹¹ <http://www.smm.lt/web/lt/administracine-informacija/planavimo-dokumentai>, [accessed 15 February 2019]

¹¹² Modelio aprašymas, <https://www.etatinis.lt/modelio-aprasymas/>, [accessed 15 February 2019]

¹¹³ <http://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogu-rengimo-pertvarka>, [accessed 19 February 2019]

concentration of innovations, quality improvements and renewal of ITT programmes, reflecting best practice internationally. Other key reforms related to the introduction of teachers trained to teach two subjects (previously, one teacher taught one subject only), expected to lead to the increased workload and hence high remuneration, which in turn would make the profession more attractive to new entrants. Also important was the introduction of a one-year induction period for the newly qualified teachers, accompanied by mentoring / tutor support to ensure a better integration into the school environment. Another innovation was to establish multiple pathways to become a teacher, both as a first profession as well as entrants from other professions. At the strategic planning level, the forecast of teacher demand and anticipation of teacher education needs has been reformed to be based on the analytical evidence, reflecting the practice elsewhere in Europe (the establishment of this has been supported by the SRSS project, see below).

Influence of other European or international activities/ initiatives

ET2020 peer counselling was one of the several instruments from EU/international level that the national ministry has used to support the reform. Other tools included:

- The OECD School Resources Review in 2014¹¹⁴ provided an independent and impartial analysis of the key challenges and problems facing education system financing in the country.
- The EC Structural Reforms Support Service financed a project to ensure better anticipation and forecast of teacher demand in the country.

The interaction between the different EU/international tools used by the Lithuanian officials was fruitful in maximising the strengths of each tool:

- The results of the OECD analysis were used by the peer country experts providing the peer counselling to better understand the country's context and key challenges faced. Without the OECD research, peer experts would have very little information to base their advice on as most of analyses available were in Lithuanian.
- The results of ET2020 peer counselling which showed a need for changing how the initial teacher education was organised were then followed up through a SRSS support to develop a forecasting instrument to anticipate better the teacher education demand.

Success factors for change and challenges faced

Success factors can be identified at the national level and ET2020 level.

At the national level, the key factors ensuring success included:

- National interests and needs in obtaining advice and support from European peers, supported by the senior management and political interest in the reform, which ensured that a strong ownership of ET2020 inputs and commitment to use the results directly in the process of developing the reform package. This ensured that the national participants were motivated to learn and focussed on obtaining concrete advice on modelling the national reforms. The peer counselling stemmed from a real identified need for policy input.

¹¹⁴ OECD, OECD Reviews of School Resources: Lithuania 2016, 25 May 2016, available at https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/oecd-reviews-of-school-resources-lithuania-2016_9789264252547-en, [accessed 15 February 2019]

- Timing of ET2020: the peer counselling took place at the appropriate time and the national officials were able to use the advice and outcomes of ET2020 inputs directly in the programming and development of the new reform.
- Inter-departmental working within the Ministry: the reform package required a cross departmental working within the ministry and it was also stimulated through a joint involvement of officials from different units in the peer counselling process.

At the ET2020 level, the key factors ensuring success included:

- The advice provided from other countries to Lithuania was fact based, stemming from the real experiences of other countries which have faced similar issues and challenges in modernising the teaching profession. This evidence-based approach ensures that the national reform process in Lithuania was less “emotional” and subjective, and based on an in-depth consideration of evidence from other countries.
- The country and expert selection was appropriate, based on a combination of different experts’ expertise in education financing and other key areas considered in the Lithuanian reform package. For example, Ireland was close to Lithuania in terms of education system and cultural background, also having faced an issue of unsatisfactory education system quality. The administrative experience of the Irish Teaching Council was considered by the Lithuanian officials to be very helpful. Experiences of Flanders and Finland were useful with respect to the initial teacher education. Expert from Slovenia was very knowledgeable about the different aspects of education system financing.
- The format of peer counselling: time-bound, in-depth and open discussions and direct exchanges between the national participants and the peer country experts was helpful in allowing to focus on key aspects of interest to the national participants. The possibility to have in-depth and direct exchanges, follow up questions and clarifications were useful in this respect and added significant value in contrast to extracting information on practices in other countries from written reports.¹¹⁵ This is also important reflecting the important differences in education system set-up and terminology which differ between the countries.

The key challenges identified pertain to:

- Linguistic: such an intensive exchange as the peer counselling requires linguistic capacities of the national officials to be able to participate in intense and interactive exchange formats. This requires substantial English language skills amongst the public officials, which is not always the case. On the other hand, most of the information sources which the peer experts needed were available only in Lithuanian. Without the OECD research (see above), the knowledge base for the peer counselling to inform the preparation of targeted advice would have been less strong.
- Timing: due to political pressures, the national reform package had to be adopted very quickly affecting the time available for further reflection and dissemination / communication of the reform proposals. In general, a certain follow-up of the peer counselling after a period of time could be helpful to check the progress of the initiated reforms and the impact of peer counselling, as well as ways to improve it for the future activities.

¹¹⁵ This was also reflected in the participant feedback forms after the events.

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Higher education graduate tracking system – Poland

Executive summary

Between 2010 and 2014, Poland developed the methodology and tools for a national graduate tracking system in order to generate reliable data on the situation of graduates in the labour market as a basis for policy-making. Graduate tracking has also been a subject of discussion in the ET2020 Working Group on Higher Education (2014-15). A Peer Learning Seminar on “Tracking graduates’ career paths” was held in Warsaw on 3-4 September 2015. Even though graduate tracking in Poland has been discussed for years and the general concept for the Polish tracking system was at this point already developed, the ET2020 activity proved to be a productive kick-off for further peer learning and networking between experts dealing with graduate tracking. The sharing of best practices in the framework of ET2020 did not stimulate the idea of the tracking system in Poland per se, but immensely facilitated the implementation process by discussing various aspects with other experienced Member States and reaching consensus among Polish stakeholders in light of the success stories of other countries. International validation was thus very beneficial to strengthen the commitment to the project and overcome reservations amongst some national stakeholders, including universities located in regions with a comparatively weak labour market. Since then, there has been considerable interest from other Member States in the Polish approach. For example, ideas and practices regarding tracking systems were exchanged in mutual visits between Poland and Lithuania. The Polish system was also presented to other Member States on several occasions, including an event hosted by the University of Vienna.

Case study overview

| | |
|---|---|
| Thematic area or Working Group | Higher Education |
| Country | Poland |
| ET2020 activity(ies) and deliverable(s), including year | WG Higher Education Peer Learning Seminar “Tracking graduates’ career paths”, September 2015, Poland |
| Type of outcome/ impact | Informing national system on graduate tracking, international validation |

National context

Graduate tracking systems aim to provide the general public, prospective students, public authorities and other relevant stakeholders such as employers with reliable data on the situation of graduates on the labour market, including their employment and salaries. The acquisition of hard data helps Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to tailor their curricula to the needs of the labour market and understand the causes of employability problems of graduates from specific HE disciplines or institutions. The Polish government has envisioned the implementation of a tracking system for years, considering various labour market issues such as a rising number of unemployed HE graduates linked to a skills mismatch.

In the past, panel surveys among graduates were centrally conducted, however there was a low response rate which was considered a weak foundation for planning public policies. Thus, the surveys were discontinued. Instead, the University of Warsaw and the

Educational Research Institute designed the methodology and tools for a national graduate tracking between 2010 and 2014. As a novelty, the main source of information for the tracking system is administrative data from the Social Insurance Institution system and the POL-on system, an information system on Higher Education supporting the work of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. The system was introduced in 2014 by the rule of the Law on Higher Education (Bożykowski et al., 2017) and is being further developed by the National Information Processing Institute of the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education. Crucially, the legislative basis removed any concerns about the legality of using such private data for this purpose.

As of now, the results of three years of graduate tracking have been released: The system provides publicly available data on those who graduated in 2014, 2015 and 2016. Three types of reports are created corresponding to three levels of analysis: a field of study, a higher education institution report and a country report. The system is frequently evaluated and expanded. During the National Congress of Science in 2017, the significance of tracking the employment of graduates was stressed, which is why amendments to legal provisions have enabled widening the monitoring process; for example, the 2019 tracking results will for the first time include employment paths not only of graduates, but also of doctoral students and PhD graduates. The Polish system of data gathering is widely used by national researchers and market analysts (Reisz, 2017).

Contribution and impact of ET2020

Graduate tracking was a subject of discussion in the ET2020 Working Group on Higher Education (2014-15). Subsequently, the subject was a main theme of the Peer Learning Seminar on „Tracking graduates’ career paths” held in Warsaw on 3-4 September 2015. The main objectives of the seminar were to share good practices in graduate tracking and to discuss challenges related to the implementation of schemes ensuring reliable and meaningful information on graduates’ career patterns. Thirty-six representatives from 15 European countries as well as representatives from the European Commission, European University Association and the EUROGRADUATE project¹¹⁶ participated in the seminar. Even though graduate tracking in Poland has been discussed for years and the general concept for the Polish tracking system was at this point already developed, the ET2020 activity, according to interviewees, proved to be a productive kick-off for further peer learning and networking between experts dealing with graduate tracking.

In 2015, prior to the ET2020 Peer Learning Seminar, the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education launched a pilot project in order to build a reliable national system of graduate tracking. In May 2016, the Ministry officially published the first results of tracking graduate employment outcomes. According to the interviewees, the ET2020 activity helped convince various stakeholders of the reliability and feasibility of the Polish approach: Not all stakeholders (HEIs, but also the government to some extent) considered the use of administrative data sensible, but upon seeing that other European countries have been using a similar approach for years, a consensus could be reached.

After all, the use of administrative data to research educational and professional processes is a proven and successful practice in various European countries, e.g. Scandinavian countries, Spain, Austria, Lithuania and Hungary¹¹⁷. For the Polish graduate tracking solutions, the Italian and Scandinavian graduate tracking systems were particularly inspiring, according to the Ministry officials. For example, the seminar in Warsaw was the start of further cooperation between Sweden and Poland as five representatives from the Polish ministry visited the Swedish Higher Education Authority two weeks later to continue the conversation started at the ET2020 meeting (UKÄ, 2015). For the Polish representatives, the use of multiple databases for the Swedish tracking system was

¹¹⁶ See EUROGRADUATE for more information: <http://www.eurograduate.eu> (last accessed: 26.11.2018)

¹¹⁷ See Polish Graduate Tracking System, Third Edition: About the research. Online: <http://ela.nauka.gov.pl/en/>, [accessed: 26 November 2018]

considered to be a particularly interesting aspect. They also exchanged ideas with Austrian and Hungarian ministry officials. The Hungarian approach to presenting the data in infographics inspired the Polish side to do the same, but implementation has been slow.

All in all, it can be concluded that the sharing of best practices in the framework of ET2020 did not stimulate the idea of the tracking system in Poland per se, but immensely facilitated the implementation process by discussing various aspects with other experienced Member States and reaching consensus among Polish stakeholders in light of the success stories of other countries. International validation was thus very beneficial to strengthening the commitment to the project as it helped overcome reservations among some Polish stakeholders such as universities in regions with a comparatively weak labour market.

What is more, according to the interviewees, the Polish system is by now one of the most developed systems of its kind in Europe, which is why there is considerable interest among other Member States in the Polish approach. Representatives from Lithuania, for example, have been interested in establishing a graduate tracking system, however the implementation is not supported by the legislation (i.e. legitimacy of the broad use of databases) as in Poland. Useful ideas and practices could be exchanged in mutual visits between Poland and Lithuania. The Polish system was also presented to other Member States on several occasions, e.g. in a presentation at the University of Vienna¹¹⁸. Moreover, the Ministry representatives are approached by, for example, Slovenia, Estonia and Belgium in OECD meetings on Higher Education.

Success factors for change

According to the interviewees, several factors facilitated the success of the implementation of the tracking system. Most prominently, the close cooperation with stakeholders ensured their acceptance of the system. After all, the Ministry cooperated closely with various stakeholders such as the Social Insurance Institution system, employers and HEIs during the design of the measure. Furthermore, the availability of relevant data that had been collected for other purposes as well as information technology tools which enabled the use of the databases proved to be highly relevant to the success of the project.

There were also a few challenges in implementing the system. For example, the compliance with data protection policies, i.e. the safe and anonymous use of the collected data, needed to be ensured. The amendment of the legislative basis as well as strict compliance with the EU Data Protection Policy resolved the data protection issues. Moreover, considering that Poland is an economically and regionally diverse country, a strong emphasis on geographical disparities must be placed in the tracking system, which has been taken into account for the annual data analysis.

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Peer learning activity on integration of Roma through education – Slovakia

Executive summary

In September 2017, a PLA 'Identifying Challenges and Methods of Prevention of Discrimination and Segregation in Education' was held in Bratislava to address long-standing problems with integrating Slovakia's Roma minority into mainstream education. At the PLA, Mark Penfold from Babington Academy, UK, presented their approach to the integration of Roma pupils in education. This focuses on improvements to the classroom experience and the promotion of inclusive values and measures to boost pupils' confidence. The demonstrable success led a delegation of officials from the Slovakian Ministry of Education to visit Babington Academy in June 2018 to identify transferable lessons. Several follow-up activities are planned.

Draft legislation is under preparation to improve the monitoring of progress, provide more funding to schools integrating Roma pupils, and extend coverage of existing support measures. The reform process is however slowed down by the fact that attitudes by which factors other than the failure of the education system are blamed for Roma pupils' poor performance are hard to overcome.

The key factors allowing the PLA to translate into real change in the country are likely to have been the UK's good practice example showing that real improvements are achievable, and the opening up of the debate between policy makers and NGOs on the issue during and after the PLA on how to achieve inclusive education on the ground. This created a momentum for reform.

The recent policy changes may have also been influenced by an infringement procedure launched by the EU in 2015 against Slovakia because of discrimination against Roma in the education system. Slovakia also participates in the international INSCHOOL project co-funded by the European Commission and the Council of Europe aimed at improving education outcomes of Roma children.

Case study overview

| | |
|---|---|
| Thematic area or Working Group | Citizenship and Inclusive Education |
| Country | Slovakia |
| ET2020 activity(ies) and deliverable(s), including year | PLA "Identifying Challenges and Methods of Prevention of Discrimination and Segregation in Education", September 2017, Slovakia |
| Type of outcome/ impact | Stimulating national debate, informing new policy initiative, review/ revision of national legislation |

National context

Slovakia's Roma minority may account for up to population 7% of the total population. Roma people face substantial structural and systemic discrimination in the education system. They are often sent to 'special' schools for disadvantaged people, excluding them from mainstream schooling, or have to attend a class '0' before entering the first class alongside non-Roma Slovakian pupils. This segregation starts in kindergarten and extends to secondary school. Many Roma pupils in Slovakia do not complete schooling and hence do not take up vocational or higher education.

Slovakia already had policies in place to address segregation in the education system prior to the PLA. This includes legislation integrating socially disadvantaged pupils in 'common classes', and laying down the conditions that need to be put in place in schools for such pupils to thrive. Dedicated funding is provided to schools that educate such pupils.

In 2012, a strategy and action plan were adopted to integrate Roma into the education system by 2020. In June 2018, the Slovakian government approved a national programme for development of education including several new action plans for the next 10 years, one of which focuses on inclusive education.

In this context, a relevant ongoing national project is 'School Open to All' which supports inclusive education in 150 schools and helps prepare local desegregation plans. The project demonstrates the importance of inclusive management teams in schools that include pedagogical specialists. Schools with such teams are more successful than others in integrating Roma pupils, according to the Slovakian Ministry of Education. Another project, Teach for Slovakia, aims to improve education in socially disadvantaged communities.

Slovakia also joined the international Council of Europe and European Commission project '[Inclusive Schools: Making Difference for Roma Children – INSCHOOL](#)'. The project is implemented in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and the United Kingdom.

In sum, even before the PLA in 2017, the topic of inclusive education was already on the political agenda in Slovakia, which may have contributed to an openness about learning from other countries on this issue.

Contribution and impact of ET2020

The change was triggered by a PLA 'Identifying Challenges and Methods of Prevention of Discrimination and Segregation in Education' that was proposed by the Slovakian member of WG Citizenship and Inclusive Education and held in Bratislava in September 2017. The PLA was attended by the Slovakian National Centre for Human Rights, an independent publicly funded watchdog. Another organisation attending was the Pedagogical Centre which administers the aforementioned School Open to All.

At the PLA, Mark Penfold from Babington Academy, UK, presented on their approach to the integration of Roma pupils in education. Babington Academy also participates in the aforementioned INSCHOOL project. At Babington, they were faced with a large influx of Roma pupils from the Czech Republic and Slovakia in the mid-2000s. Initially, these pupils struggled to integrate and did not perform well. This changed after Babington Academy put systems in place that allowed these pupils to thrive. According to the Academy's vision, inclusive values are key to improving education outcomes of Roma pupils. The successful model demonstrated by Babington Academy is centred on a positive classroom experience for Roma children, that had previously felt excluded. Teachers at Babington have high expectations for their pupils, and try to raise their ambitions. Now, several of their former pupils are in vocational or higher education, and the Academy has won the European Roma Spirit Award for its efforts to integrate Roma pupils. Due to this demonstrable success, Mr Penfold was invited to the PLA. The example of Babington which is situated in a deprived area where integration of minorities is not necessarily a priority for the entire population shows that integration can succeed even in an adverse external environment. This refutes the perception many decision makers in Slovakia still appear to have according to which Roma children underachieve due to their families' poverty. Indeed, some research¹¹⁹ suggests that the amount of money spent does not determine educational attainment, putting into question some of the priorities set in the draft legislation in Slovakia.

As a result of Mr Penfold's presentation at the PLA, a delegation from Slovakia including State Secretary Peter Krajnak visited the Academy in June 2018 to learn more about their approach. At the same time as the delegation visit, two Slovakian journalists also visited

¹¹⁹ McKinsey, 2010, "How the World's Most Improved Schools systems keep getting better"

different places around the UK where Roma pupils are integrated in the education system. Following the delegation visit, further collaboration with teachers from Slovakia visiting the Academy is envisaged. It is also envisaged for Babington staff to deliver training and advice in Slovakia. There is also an expectation that successful Roma pupils from Babington with Slovakian roots may act as ambassadors for the inclusive education approach and to help the Index for Inclusion adopted in Babington to Slovakian audiences.

In the context of the visit to the UK, the delegation was made aware of an Index for Inclusion guiding inclusive school development and allowing schools to self-review their approach, identify priorities for change, and improve existing development policies.¹²⁰ This index was highlighted by the Slovakian Ministry of Education as inspiring them to collect more data to monitor progress on Roma integration in their own country, even if they did not copy the indicators used in the UK. They intend to translate the book that outlines the Index and invite the author to Slovakia.

In the assessment of the Slovakian Ministry of Education, the PLA was a success in that it provided an impulse for Slovakian policy makers and NGOs to focus their efforts on improving the situation for Roma pupils in kindergartens and schools. It also helped assess Slovakian policy measures in a European context and to identify good practice examples from other countries, including the one presented by Babington Academy. The PLA also provided encouragement to Slovakian NGOs to continue their advocacy work for inclusive education and opened up a debate with the Ministry of Education on this matter. Consultation takes place more regularly now (three took place since the PLA), including on legislative changes and how policy makers can support the work of NGOs. The State School Inspectorate also cooperates with NGOs to address concerns about segregation practices in schools.

A range of legislative changes first tabled in June 2018 are in preparation that can be linked to the PLA and the ensuing delegation visit to the UK.

- Financial contributions to primary schools with disadvantages children shall be raised, and coverage shall be extended to all pupils facing poverty, effectively increasing the number of beneficiaries from a current 25,000 to 80,000.
- Schools teaching classes in the Romani language shall be eligible for a higher financial contribution per capita.
- Data shall be collected to monitor progress with regard to the integration of Roma pupils in primary and secondary schools.
- The age from which children from disadvantages families enrolled in Kindergarten are eligible for financial support shall be lowered from the current five to three years.

The UK example demonstrated the feasibility of successful Roma integration and that children from different backgrounds can thrive together. The PLA added impact to what was already going on in Slovakia in that it opened up the national debate to NGOs and encouraged policy makers and stakeholders to approach inclusive education more forcefully. This created a momentum for reform. The impact can be extended through the ten-year-national action plan which envisages further measures to promote inclusive education.

A challenge slowing down the reform process is the fact that it is necessary to secure buy-in from sceptical head teachers of schools and to convey to them the importance of inclusiveness as a value that can realistically be achieved. Moreover, where Roma pupils are taken out of 'special schools' and put into regular schools, some parents of non-Roma

¹²⁰ <http://www.csie.org.uk/resources/inclusion-index-explained.shtml>

pupils take their children out of these schools once the share of Roma pupils reaches around 30%, reinforcing segregation in the education system.

Influence of other European or international activities/ initiatives

In 2015, the EU initiated an infringement procedure against Slovakia for its failure to address the exclusion of Roma children in the education system. This procedure is linked to potential cuts in EU funding and hence created external pressure on the Slovakian government to tackle this issue.

The INSCHOOL project, co-funded by the European Commission and the Council of Europe, is another relevant activity influencing the reform debate in the country and contributing to reform efforts. In the context of this project, the Slovakian government exchanged ideas with their Czech and Hungarian counterparts.

The Ministry of Education also mentioned various activities by groups of countries in the framework of the Council of Europe that address specific aspects of inclusive education and can be seen as complementing ET2020 activities.

Success factors for change

Slovakia's participation in the aforementioned INSCHOOL project may have contributed to an 'enabling environment' for the work of WG Citizenship to have an impact in the country. The key success factors are likely to have been the demonstration of good practice example showing that real improvements are achievable and the opening up of the debate between policy makers and NGOs on the issue during and after the PLA.

The dissemination of information both by the Slovakian participants of the PLA and the two aforementioned journalists visiting the UK helped create awareness of possibilities to integrate Roma pupils into the school system. In view of the Slovakian Ministry of Education, the report produced as a result of the PLA including recommendations could however be disseminated more effectively and presented better to schools in the country in order to maximise the impact of the activity.

There are some concerns that the impact so far has been mainly 'on paper' and little has changed in many Slovakian schools in practice. Using an index to monitor developments and increasing funding can be implemented more easily than actually trying to change attitudes that systematically discriminate against Roma children. This is best demonstrated by the issue of non-Roma Slovakian parents taking their children out of schools that fully integrate Roma children, thus reinforcing segregation. Another issue is that to date too many Roma children are still sent to schools for children with 'special needs' and/or are put into special preparatory classes which in fact keeps them out of the mainstream education system. While the Slovakian government is aware of these problems and the need to address them, the same sense of urgency has not yet been diffused to local authorities and schools. The national school inspectorate has a key role to play in identifying schools with a low performance on integration and supporting these schools in changing their approach.

Indicators for the long-term of reforms in Slovakia could include the share of Roma children completing primary education, and the numbers of them then progressing to vocational or higher education. At Babington Academy, 97% of Roma children continue their education at least until the age of 18, according to Mr Penfold.

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High-performance apprenticeships and work-based learning – Belgium, Romania and EU

Executive summary

This case study explores the impact of the ET2020 deliverable *High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles* (2015) at EU level – influence on the Council Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (March 2018) – and at national level (Belgium (Flanders) and Romania). The document was the output of the Working Group on Vocational Education and Training (WG VET) during its mandate in 2014-2015. Apprenticeships were the main focus of the WG. The guiding principles were developed during a series of meetings, in-depth country focus workshops and webinars.

At the national level, the ET2020 deliverable provided real added value to the elaboration of a dual learning framework in Flanders. It helped to confirm key orientations taken by the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training. Coupled with other sources of information (in particular, an ESF project), it contributed to highlight which areas should be prioritised, and provided an opportunity to compare the Flemish reform to similar reforms in other Member States in an objective way.

Similarly, in Romania the ET2020 deliverable was one of the elements that contributed to the development of the dual VET system in Romania, together with the strong recommendations from the European Commission and the national political agenda.

The deliverable was also one of main sources which the Commission used to draft the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. In particular, it fed into the drafting of the system-level criteria listed in the Framework. The 20 guiding principles was a strong basis for the draft as it had already gone through a consensus building exercise between Member States' experts (taking part in the WG) regarding the most important aspects of apprenticeship systems.

Case study overview

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| Thematic area or Working Group | Vocational Education and Training |
| Country | Belgium (Flanders), Romania and EU |
| ET2020 activity(ies) and deliverable(s), including year | ET2020 deliverable <i>High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles</i> (2015) |
| Type of outcome/ impact | Informing the drafting of a new legislation at national level; feeding into the elaboration of a draft Council Recommendation. |

Background

In 2014-2015, the Working Group on Vocational Education and Training (WG VET), operating within the framework of ET2020, composed of the representatives of Member States, Candidate Countries, EFTA countries and social partners, and supported by Cedefop and ETF, provided peer advice to countries in introducing and reforming apprenticeship systems. Apprenticeships were the main focus of the WG. In 2015, the WG produced the ET2020 deliverable *High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles* (structured around four areas: national governance and social partner

involvement; support for companies, in particular SMEs; attractiveness and improved career guidance; and quality assurance in apprenticeships). These principles were developed during a series of meetings, in-depth country focus workshops and webinars.

Impact at national level: the Flemish case

National context

In Belgium (Flanders), the ET2020 activity took place while the Ministry was already preparing an important reform of the legislation governing apprenticeship. The existing legislation dated back to 2008 and it was clear that important bottlenecks hindered the system. The existing framework for 'learning in working' was organised by different education providers according to their own regulations.

In 2014, the Flemish Government therefore set itself the objective of implementing a reform that would strengthen the dual system in Flanders. In particular, they wanted to integrate these education providers under one legislative framework and to upgrade apprenticeship schemes to a higher level given, beyond craftsmanship (e.g. bakers etc.). As a first step of the reform towards a new dual learning system, the two different apprenticeship statutes for pupils were integrated into one regulative framework. The introduction of a single framework was an important administrative simplification for both the educational field as well as the business world.

Contribution and impact of ET2020 at national level

In Belgium (Flanders), the national expert taking part in the WG was an officer within the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training, within the department in charge of apprenticeships. The officer took part in WG VET (2014-2015) but also in the previous working group on VET.

The official was involved, from the start, in the process of developing the 20 guiding principles, in collaboration with the other MS representatives and the EU officials supporting the group. The ministry official took part in the discussions, contributing to develop the ideas behind the principles, and providing concrete examples from the Belgian (Flemish) context.

Given that the Flemish reform which was under discussion around the same time involved the complete overhaul of the apprenticeship system, all the issues touched by the 20 principles were relevant. The Ministry was indeed writing a new decree and so to speak, could start from scratch. One crucial aspect was that of governance structure of apprenticeship systems given that the reform aimed at addressing the fragmentation of the existing system. Other topics of particular interest were support for companies and close cooperation with the inspectorate on quality assurance were also important.

The national expert played a central role in channelling the outputs of the WG to the national authorities, as he regularly gave feedbacks to his supervisor. As the guiding principles were almost finalised, he and his supervisor discussed the document with the Cabinet. The aim was to ensure that the orientations taken by the reform were in line with the guiding principles. Although the principles were not directly copied into the Flemish regulation, they provided a confirmation that their reform was well in line with the European guiding principles. The work undertaken within the WG also offered a chance to compare the dual learning reform with similar policy reforms in other Member States, and to make sure that they were using a common language. The impact on the policy document itself is not visible in the Flemish legislation, but the so-called 'concept nota' of the reform of dual learning (starting point of the decree) refers to the European context (especially the Bruges communiqué).

The Flemish authorities could also rely on inputs from an ESF project ('Towards a reform of the system Learning and Working in Flanders' – see section below) and inputs through contacts with other Member States.

However, the WG facilitated the circulation of information. Members built a network and could continue to exchange information about specific practices beyond the WG. Finally, the 20 principles served as a confirmation that national policies and reforms 'were on the right track'.

Influence of other European or international activities/ initiatives

The Flemish authorities were also taking part in an ESF-project 'naar een hervorming van het stelsel Leren en Werken in Vlaanderen' ('Towards a reform of the system Learning and Working in Flanders'). The same officer who took part in the WG was involved in this project which provided useful insights. In particular, the project members took part in country visits in Austria, the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. Germany was a very inspiring example because of their long tradition of dual learning, but they also learned a lot from the Netherlands because of their comparable situation (in terms of history of the dual system and educational context). Denmark was interesting because of their cooperation with trade unions and social partners. These three countries provided important sources of inspiration to the reform.

Success factors for change

There are multiple factors and variables at play explaining policy changes at national level. It is difficult to isolate the role of the influence of ET2020 tools or deliverables. At national level, two factors played a positive role in making it possible for the WG and its outputs to have an impact on the Flemish dual learning reform.

- National policy context and national reform cycle. What contributed to the positive impact of the 20 guiding principles is not specifically related to the structure/ organisation of the Flemish Ministry but to the timing of the WG. The 'policy window' was crucial: a new Minister of Education had just taken office and one of the main goals of the new government was to reform the current apprenticeship system to a new dual learning system. As a reform was already in preparation while the WG was working on the deliverable, the relevant Minister was very receptive to developments at the EU level in this area. Thus, policy context is key in ensuring that inputs from ET2020 working groups translate into the policy process. With no policy reform on the agenda, it would have been more difficult to get the attention of the Minister and/ or high-level policy makers.
- Individual actors involved, their competences and relations to key national actors. Another important point is that the Flemish Ministry of Education sent a content specialist to the WG – an officer from the specialised Unit dealing with VET. Some MS send generalist officers or international policy officers to these forums (e.g. international coordination/ European affairs officers). It is then very difficult for these officers to make an active contribution to these groups – given the level of specialisation and complexity of the issues discussed – their role is then limited to collecting information and reporting to their Ministry. This is clearly an important point to bear in mind when thinking about the impact of ET2020 activities at the national level.

Finally, another important factor is the fact that the focus of the WG was defined precisely in relation to the policy context in the Member States. Around that time, apprenticeships were seen as part of the solutions to address high youth unemployment. Therefore, the WG focused on this specific topic, reflecting the demand of Member States.

Impact at national level: the Romanian case

In 2016, the Romania government issued a Government Ordinance (GO 8/2016) which updated the National Education Law, to streamline the rules for the dual-education system.

Since the initial step, of developing a proposal for a national policy change, it took approximately one and a half years for the government to agree on the changes. This was due to different constraints, in particular related to the financial implications.

Romania is facing several challenges in relation to the dual VET system. One of the main barriers is the lack of attractiveness for both students and their parents. Almost 90% of young people would not consider initial VET as a first option to getting a qualification. Work-based learning is typically the last choice for students and it is only because they have no other option – so they have very low outcomes from gymnasium or middle-school (lower-secondary). This also make it difficult to fill in the places offered by the companies.

Another barrier is the lack of interest for companies to create partnerships with schools. Although companies claim that they are having more and more difficulties in finding qualified workers, they are generally reluctant to offer work-based learning opportunities, so there is a lack of awareness of the benefits of being partners in initial VET.

Another challenge is related to financial issues; however, this is not the main barrier as the government is committed to finance the scholarships and allocate resources for schools to provide initial VET programmes.

Contribution and impact of ET2020 at national level

In Romania, the national expert who took part in the Working Group, was a representative of the National Centre for TVET Development, Ministry of National Education. The *High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles* (2015) was developed in parallel with the Romanian strategy to develop a dual VET system. The ET2020 deliverable was a supporting factor in the national developments and was part of a range of elements that eventually led to the development and implementation of the of the dual VET system.

Following the Working Group, there have been a significant number of meetings, at different levels, which were followed by a large conference on the topic of the future of VET, focused on the development of more work-based learning oriented pathways in initial VET.

Different stakeholders, at national, regional and local level, have been involved in the debate, including representatives of: social partners, companies that are in partnership with schools, trade unions, school inspectors, teachers and school managers. The local communities have also been involved in the discussions, along with representatives of the ministries involved.

The ET2020 activities enabled a process of mutual learning, from which Romania benefited. The good practice examples presented provided a valuable insight on how things are done in different situations and contexts.

The ET2020 deliverable was one of the elements that contributed to the development of the dual VET system in Romania, together with the strong recommendations from the European Commission and the national political agenda.

Influence of other European or international activities/ initiatives

In terms of the dual VET system, Romania has a strong international partnership with Germany. The German system was the starting point for Romania to see how work-based learning systems are set-up. However, the history of developments is very different in the two countries, therefore Romania had to strongly adapt the German models to the national system. For example, one of the main differences is that in Germany the chambers are the main body dealing dual VET programmes, including the relations with the companies and the certification exam. In Romania, the chambers do not represent a critical mass of companies, so their role is limited.

Countries like Austria, Germany and Denmark, who have a high percentage of work-based learning oriented programmes, and a low rate of youth unemployment, also influenced the policy changes in Romania.

Success factors for change

A crucial element that enabled the changes was the political commitment. The ministers involved in the decision-making process, came to an agreement that a dual VET system would benefit the Romanian education system and issued the Government Ordinance which modified the National Education Law.

Another significant factor was the development of the continuing vocational education (CVET) system in Romania and the government's efforts to improve the way the apprenticeship system was regulated. As the CVET system has a significant component of work-based learning, it has to be coherent with the dual VET system.

Impact at EU level - the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships

In addition to the national level contribution and impact, the ET2020 deliverable - *High performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles (2015)*¹²¹ – also contributed to the Council Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (adopted in March 2018).

As noted above, WG VET developed 20 guiding principles on high-performance apprenticeships and work-based learning during its mandate in 2014-2015. These *20 guiding principles* have become well-known among European Member States and are also being referred to outside the EU. Its clear and succinct format made it easy to communicate and contributed to its success.

In 2016, one EU official who was involved in the design of the *20 guiding principles* in the framework of the Working Group contributed to the drafting of a Commission proposal for a Council Recommendation on Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. As part of the drafting of the Commission proposal, a matrix of all major frameworks guiding the design and implementation of apprenticeship schemes was elaborated. It included the deliverable on the *20 guiding principles (2015)*, but also other key documents, such as ETUC's 20 quality standards (and related criteria) for apprenticeships,¹²² a Business Europe study on the cost-effectiveness of apprenticeship schemes¹²³, the Quality Charter of the European Youth Forum and the European Quality Framework for Traineeships and the Council Declaration on the European Alliance for Apprenticeships. In parallel to the drafting process, the Commission organised a consultation with European cross-industry and sectoral social partners and the chambers of commerce, industry and crafts. The draft proposal was well received given that it was strongly inspired by the work done by MS experts (via the WG) and work done by social partners. Ultimately the proposal put forward by the Commission combined a series of 7 criteria for learning and working conditions, and 7 criteria at system level (for framework conditions) – the latter drew to a large extent on the *20 Guiding Principles* (although they were rearranged, reworked and condensed from 20 to 7), and also drew on the work done by European stakeholders, particularly European social partners, and on the tripartite Opinion of the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training adopted in December 2016.

¹²¹ The guiding principles were translated by several Member States into their national language and with the support of ETF into Armenian and Turkish, as well as into Mandarin on request by Chinese authorities.

¹²² ETUC (2016). "A European Quality Framework for Apprenticeships – a European Trade Union proposal", Available at: <https://www.etuc.org/en/publication/european-quality-framework-apprenticeships>

¹²³ Business Europe (2016). The Cost-Effectiveness of Apprenticeship Schemes. Making the Business Case for Apprenticeships (May 2016). Available at: <https://www.busineurope.eu/publications/cost-effectiveness-apprenticeship-schemes-making-case-apprenticeships>

The draft recommendation was adopted in March 2018 by Member States with the structure (7 + 7 criteria) left unchanged. Although it is too early to speculate about the impact of this recommendation, its adoption drew the attention of national ministries. For instance, in Flanders, it was seen as a positive continuation of the work done by national experts during 2014-2015 in the framework of the WG.

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- Flemish Government, Department of Education and Training, Secondary Education Department and Student Counselling Department
- National Centre for TVET Development, Romanian Ministry of National Education

Annex 5 List of relevant EU priorities and EC Communications and Council Conclusions

| Name | Description |
|--|---|
| For the assessment of the OMC relevance to the European priorities | |
| Europe 2020: A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (2010) | By proposing education as one of the five key EU targets, the strategy sets out the objectives to be met for ET2020. |
| 2009 Council Conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training | The document outlines the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training, building on the ET 2010 initiative and setting out four strategic objectives. |
| Joint reports of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (2012, 2015) | The joint reports contribute to the adjustment of ET2020 to ensure it is on track towards the Europe 2020 goals by updating its working priorities, tools and governance structure. |
| Relevant Commission Communications and initiatives (2010 – today) | Key communications outline strategies, policies and proposals such as on “Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture”, a “New Skills Agenda for Europe”, a “European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships”, and the ‘January package’ on improving key competences and digital skills of European citizens are related to the ET2020-objectives. |
| Relevant Council Conclusions and joint Member States’ declarations (2010 – today) | Various council conclusions and recommendations that contain the Council’s political position on ET2020-related policies and initiatives, e.g. on the initiative “Rethinking Education”, the “Renewed Agenda for Adult Learning” or a recent conclusion (December 2017) on Education and Culture. Moreover, joint declarations by the Member States such as the Riga Conclusions (2015) define objectives related to the ET2020 priorities. |
| A new start for Europe: My agenda for jobs, growth, fairness and democratic change (2014) | The agenda adopted by the Commission presented ten guidelines, focusing on stability, economic growth and democratic accountability. In this context, the ET2020’s framework tools adapted to the proposed priorities. |
| Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education (2016) | In response to the declaration, the ET2020 framework was adapted to |

| Name | Description |
|---|---|
| | address the role of education and training in social cohesion and common values. |
| For the assessment of the OMC relevance to the national priorities | |
| Education and Training Monitor ¹²⁴ | The working document reports on the EU and Member States' performance on the ET2020 benchmarks and elaborates on policy priorities and initiatives for education systems. Annual national reports are published for the EU28 and are examined for years 2015, 2016 and 2017. |
| Eurydice country reports ¹²⁵ | Provides a description of the national reforms in the area of education and training, as well as within the key education sectors. The description of reforms was examined for years 2015, 2016 and 2017. |
| European Semester reports ¹²⁶ | Thematic transversal fiches on education performance under Europe 2020 describe the ongoing policy reforms and outstanding challenges in the Member States: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early school leavers • Skills for the labour market • Tertiary education attainment |

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