

Supporting Reforms in Central Asia

Higher Education (HE) and Vocational Education & Training (VET)

Joint Communiqué of the meeting of Ministers responsible for the higher education and vocational education and training of the European Union and Central Asian countries

Riga 25th – 26th June 2015

It sounds counterintuitive, but by 2030, many of the world's largest economies will have more jobs than adult citizens to do those jobs.Source: Rainer Strack, Boston Consulting Group





- 5) Они выразили свою удовлетворенность тем, что основной темой прошедшей в Стамбуле 16 и 17 марта 2015 года встречи стали вопросы «Трудоустраиваемости», «Качества» и «Мобильности» в области ВО и ПОО Центральной Азии, что было решено по результатам проведенных исследований и широких консультаций между заинтересованными сторонами из стран Центральной Азии и их партнеров из ЕС.
- 5) They expressed appreciation that the focus of the meeting on "Employability", "Quality" and "Mobility" in Central Asian HE and VET, held 16th and 17th March 2015 in Istanbul, was determined through carrying out studies and extensive consultations of Central Asian stakeholders and their EU counterparts.

Key findings up to May 2014

- There is much legislation on quality of teaching (schools, VET, universities) but implementation is poor
- Degradation of the secondary school system, quality of school leavers is low
- Ensure high quality in secondary education
- Independently run monitoring of teachers and nationwide testing system
- VET infrastructure in particular is poor
- Many VET graduates migrate to other countries (no jobs at home), so regional labour markets should be considered
- VET sector more successful in working with employers than universities
- Universities should be graded internationally

“Labour Market Needs and Best Practices in Central Asia for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education & Training (VET) and Higher Education (HE)”

11th to 12th December 2014, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan



Workshop topics

- Workshop 1: *"Best practices in matching of labour market requirements within VET and HE"*
- Workshop 2: *"Best practices for quality assurance in VET and HE"*
- Workshop 3: *"Best practices for Teacher training and improving qualifications"*





"Employability, Quality and Mobility in Higher Education and Vocational Education & Training"

16th & 17th March 2015, Istanbul





Alignment of qualification frameworks (QF) and standards

10)...qualification frameworks do exist in some Central Asian countries.

....cooperation on mutual recognition of qualifications would promote HE and VET student and graduate mobility and employability within Central Asia

....alignment with European Quality Frameworks would be a positive development.

11)....stock-taking of the QF situation in Central Asia.

....the new Erasmus+ programme, like Tempus in the past, should continue promoting the alignment of qualification frameworks (QF)

Quality Assurance and Accreditation

- 12) ...importance of independent and transparent external quality assurance (EQA) and accreditation bodies as necessary to creating public and private sector employer trust in the quality of Central Asian HE & VET graduates.
 - 13)a common Central Asia accreditation system for VET teacher training schools would enable VET student and workforce mobility within Central Asia.
 - 14)need for the training of education personnel on internal quality assurance (IQA) methodologies
- ...Erasmus+ to prioritise the training of education personnel on IQA methodologies and to fund "train-the-trainers" programmes for Central Asian QA personnel.

Labour markets and employers' needs

- 15) ...understanding of labour markets and the needs of employers.
...measures to promote effective collaboration between VET/HE/employersprovide a bridge between the labour market and the education and training systems
- 16)...importance of responding to the dynamics of labour markets and changes in migrant worker patterns.
- 17)...VET is undervalued as a means to address high youth unemployment in both Central Asia and the EU.
...need for work-based learning in VET (internships).
...need programmes to fund study visits and/or short-cycle internships
- 18)...need to adopt common regional standards for data collection.
...importance of mobility of students and staff, as a driving force for internationalisation.....

Conclusions

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21) Ministers looked forward to specific proposals being developed under the "Central Asia Education Platform" aimed at leveraging EU funds to implement programmes addressing the needs identified in this joint ministerial communique.

22) They welcomed the funding and cooperation opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ programme, for strengthened mobility of students and staff, and capacity building. They agreed to adapt jointly the national and regional priorities defined for the next Erasmus+ call.