



VET Caucasus

Strengthening VET systems in Armenia and Georgia for skills and workforce development

Work Package 2 – Training development, Deliverable 2.1

VET-Caucasus Cooperation Model

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DISCLAIMER

How the Cooperation Model Was Developed

The Cooperation Model presented in this document is the result of several iterative drafting and consolidation phases initiated at the official launch of the project. Its structure is grounded in the original project application, while being progressively refined to reflect the project's operational context, partners' needs, and practical considerations for effective collaboration. Key inputs and insights were further consolidated during the training mobility and project meeting held in Yerevan, hosted by ASUE from 7 to 10 April.

Purpose and Use of the Cooperation Model

The Cooperation Model has been conceived as a practical yet strategic framework to support collaboration among vocational education and training (VET) institutions, national stakeholders, and industry representatives from Armenia, Georgia, and the European Union within the VET Caucasus project. Rather than functioning as a static or prescriptive document, it serves as a shared reference point that guides how partners engage, interact, and jointly progress throughout the project lifecycle.

At its core, the Cooperation Model aims to facilitate a structured and meaningful cooperation process. It supports partners in developing a common understanding of existing VET systems, identifying areas for improvement, and working collectively towards strengthening institutional and pedagogical capacities. At the same time, it promotes closer alignment between VET provision and labour market needs, while laying the foundations for sustainable cooperation mechanisms that can extend beyond the duration of the project.

Importantly, the document does not impose predefined solutions or rigid methodologies. Instead, it offers a flexible structure that is intentionally designed to evolve. Through continuous dialogue, joint reflection, and practical engagement, Armenian and Georgian partners play a central role in shaping and refining its content, ensuring that the Cooperation Model remains grounded in real institutional contexts and responsive to local needs.

The Cooperation Model is designed to be used actively by all partners, in different but complementary ways:

By Caucasus Partners	Serves as a framework to present and reflect on their national VET systems, identify priorities, and actively shape cooperation activities based on their institutional realities and needs.
By EU Partners	Acts as a support tool to facilitate analysis, guide knowledge exchange, and contribute methodological expertise grounded in European practices and frameworks.
During workshop and meetings	Functions as a shared reference point to structure discussions, validate inputs, and collectively agree on priorities, actions, and next steps.

To support this collaborative approach, several sections of the document deliberately include guiding questions and open elements. These are not gaps, but rather invitations for partner input, to be progressively completed through Annex 1, workshops, and bilateral exchanges. This design ensures that the Cooperation Model remains a living document, co-created by all partners rather than developed in isolation.

The objectives of the Cooperation Model reflect this philosophy. It seeks to clarify roles and responsibilities, enabling structured and transparent collaboration across the partnership. It supports the modernisation of VET systems by identifying concrete areas for improvement and development, while also strengthening institutional capacity through training, governance enhancement, and quality assurance practices. In parallel, it fosters the development of long-term partnerships, encourages mobility and exchange among staff and learners, and ensures that all proposed solutions are co-created, locally relevant, and owned by Armenian and Georgian institutions.

Within the broader logic of Work Package 2 and the overall project, the Cooperation Model performs multiple interconnected functions. It structures the collection and interpretation of national-level information, guides the design of training and support activities, and provides a common basis for



collaboration across partners. At the same time, it operates as a practical working tool that supports day-to-day cooperation, while also contributing to the development of longer-term institutional relationships.

The completion and refinement of the Cooperation Model rely heavily on the active contribution of Armenian and Georgian partners. Inputs collected through Annex 1 will play a crucial role in informing and enriching all sections of the document. Through this iterative and participatory process, the Cooperation Model is expected to remain partner-driven, context-sensitive, and directly applicable to the realities of VET systems in Armenia and Georgia.

Analytical Foundations for Cooperation

This section establishes the analytical foundations of the Cooperation Model and provides the basis upon which all subsequent cooperation and capacity-building activities are developed. Its purpose is not to carry out a detailed or technical assessment of national VET systems, but rather to offer a shared, simple, and accessible framework through which partners can collectively gather and interpret essential information on VET in Armenia and Georgia.

The analysis is conceived as a practical and collaborative exercise, designed to support the project in three key ways:

- **Building a common understanding of national VET contexts**, allowing partners to develop a shared awareness of how systems function, what their key characteristics are, and how they are shaped by institutional, economic, and social factors.
- **Identifying strengths, challenges, and gaps that are directly relevant for cooperation**, with a focus on aspects that can realistically be addressed through joint activities, knowledge exchange, and capacity-building within the project.
- **Supporting the joint definition of priorities for capacity-building and collaboration**, ensuring that project activities are not predefined but emerge from a grounded understanding of needs and opportunities identified by partners themselves.

In line with this approach, the section does not require partners to conduct independent research or produce formal analytical reports. Instead, it aims to create a shared reference point that facilitates discussion, reflection, and alignment among partners. The emphasis is placed on usability and participation rather than on technical depth.

The analytical inputs that inform this section will be collected through a dedicated Annex (Annex 1), structured around guiding questions addressed to Armenian and Georgian partners. These inputs will be gathered prior to, and further refined during, joint workshops and bilateral exchanges. The Annex will therefore act as the main evidence base supporting subsequent project activities, including the design of capacity-building actions and cooperation mechanisms.

This approach ensures that the Cooperation Model remains:

- **Partner-driven**, as the analytical content is shaped directly by the perspectives, experiences, and priorities of Armenian and Georgian institutions.
- **Context-sensitive**, reflecting the diversity of institutional realities and avoiding generic or externally imposed interpretations.
- **Focused on practical use**, privileging actionable insights and shared understanding over formal reporting requirements.

To maintain clarity and focus, the analysis is structured around a limited number of core dimensions that are directly relevant to cooperation within the VET Caucasus project:

- **Context and expectations for cooperation**, capturing partners' perspectives on current priorities, challenges, and anticipated benefits of international collaboration.
- **Analytical foundations for cooperation**, providing a structured overview of key system features, governance arrangements, and operational realities.

- **Capacity-building needs**, identifying priority areas where institutional and individual competences can be strengthened.
- **Operational cooperation inputs**, outlining practical elements that can support joint activities, exchanges, and peer learning.
- **Partner contributions to project work packages**, clarifying expected roles and levels of engagement across the different phases of the project.

These dimensions reflect the priorities outlined in the project proposal and have been intentionally designed to remain concise and accessible, in order to facilitate active partner engagement and meaningful participation.

Information feeding into this analytical process will be collected through multiple, complementary channels:

- **Guiding questions included in Annex 1**, which provide a structured yet flexible tool for gathering partner inputs.
- **Direct contributions from national VET institutions and relevant authorities**, ensuring that institutional perspectives are accurately reflected.
- **Validation through bilateral exchanges and joint workshops**, allowing partners to collectively review, refine, and confirm the emerging analysis.

A key element of this process is the clear articulation of roles and contributions among different partner groups. The table below provides a structured overview of how knowledge exchange is organised within the project, ensuring transparency and a shared understanding of responsibilities:

Partner Group	Role in Knowledge Exchange	Expected Contribution
EU partners	Provide methodological support and comparative perspective based on experience from European VET systems	Share concrete practices and reference models related to quality assurance, teacher training, governance and system organisation; support interpretation of findings and facilitate structured knowledge exchange
Caucasus partners	Lead the provision of contextual knowledge and ensure relevance of analysis to national realities	Describe national VET systems, highlight institutional strengths and challenges, validate interpretations, and ensure that analytical outputs accurately reflect local contexts and priorities
Joint review team	Ensure coherence, alignment and shared understanding across all inputs and perspectives	Facilitate dialogue among partners, support synthesis of findings, refine analytical outputs and ensure that conclusions are collectively validated and agreed

This collaborative and complementary approach reflects the co-creation logic underpinning the VET Caucasus project. It ensures that different perspectives are not only represented, but effectively integrated into a shared analytical foundation that informs all subsequent activities.

The analytical inputs collected through Sections 1 and 2 of Annex 1 will be used to progressively inform and complete this section. In doing so, the Cooperation Model will remain firmly grounded in



partner-provided information and will accurately reflect the realities, priorities, and development trajectories of VET systems in Armenia and Georgia.

Capacity-Building Framework

This section outlines the capacity-building framework underpinning the Cooperation Model and defines how partners will work together to strengthen institutional, pedagogical, and organisational capacities within the VET Caucasus project. The framework is designed to be practical and actionable, while remaining closely aligned with the specific needs, priorities, and constraints of VET systems in Armenia and Georgia.

Within the project, capacity-building is not approached as a one-off intervention or a predefined training package. Instead, it is understood as a gradual, collaborative, and iterative process. It is built on continuous exchange among partners, allowing institutions to learn from one another, test new approaches, and progressively refine their practices over time. This perspective recognises that meaningful institutional change requires time, adaptation, and ownership, particularly in diverse and evolving educational contexts.

In this sense, capacity-building activities are not imposed externally but co-designed by partners, based on identified needs and opportunities. They are implemented step by step, beginning with small-scale pilot actions and progressively evolving into more structured and scalable practices. This ensures that improvements remain realistic, feasible, and adaptable to different institutional environments.

The framework does not introduce rigid models or predefined solutions. Rather, it provides a common reference structure that supports partners in discussing, planning, and reflecting on capacity-building activities in a shared and structured way. At the same time, it maintains sufficient flexibility to accommodate the diversity of institutional realities across Armenia and Georgia, allowing each partner to adapt approaches according to their own context.

To operationalise this approach, the capacity-building framework is organised around three interconnected pillars:

Implementation	Focusing on the practical introduction and testing of new approaches and cooperation activities within VET institutions. This pillar emphasises action and experimentation, creating opportunities to explore what works in real settings.
Capacity	Centred on strengthening the skills, competences, and organisational readiness of staff and institutions. It ensures that partners are equipped not only to adopt new practices, but also to adapt and sustain them over time.
Sustainability	Addressing the longer-term dimension of change by supporting the integration of successful practices into institutional routines and promoting the continuation of cooperation beyond the project lifecycle.

Together, these three pillars provide a clear and intuitive structure for organising activities and monitoring progress, without placing an additional burden on partners in terms of technical reporting or complex analytical requirements. Each pillar addresses a distinct aspect of institutional strengthening, yet none operates in isolation.

On the contrary, the strength of the framework lies in the dynamic relationship between these pillars:

- **Implementation activities create the space for experimentation**, allowing partners to test new methods, tools, and forms of cooperation in a controlled and supportive environment.

- **Capacity-building processes ensure that these experiences translate into learning**, enabling staff and institutions to understand, adapt, and internalise new approaches.
- **Sustainability efforts ensure that successful practices are not temporary**, but are progressively embedded into everyday institutional routines and longer-term cooperation mechanisms.

For this reason, the framework should not be interpreted as a sequence of separate steps, but rather as a continuous and evolving process, where each pillar reinforces and informs the others. Implementation generates experience, capacity-building transforms that experience into knowledge and skills, and sustainability ensures that these gains endure over time.

The table that follows should therefore be read as a representation of this integrated and progressive process. Taken together, the three pillars form a simple yet comprehensive framework that supports partners in planning, implementing, and reflecting on capacity-building activities within the VET Caucasus project in a coherent and coordinated manner.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation pillar represents the operational dimension of the capacity-building framework. It focuses on the concrete actions through which cooperation takes shape within VET institutions, translating ideas, discussions, and shared objectives into practical experiences. Rather than remaining at a conceptual level, this pillar is concerned with what partners actually *do* during the project.

Implementation is therefore understood as a process of experimentation and learning by doing. It allows partners to introduce and test new approaches in real institutional settings, including classrooms, training environments, and organisational processes. These activities may involve piloting innovative teaching methods, exploring new forms of cooperation, or engaging with external stakeholders such as employers.

Importantly, implementation is designed to be gradual and realistic. It does not aim for large-scale transformation from the outset, but instead encourages partners to start with manageable and feasible actions. These initial pilot experiences create a safe space for testing ideas, identifying what works, and understanding what may need adjustment before any further scaling.

At this stage, flexibility and reflection are essential. Partners are encouraged to approach implementation as an iterative process, where feedback, adaptation, and shared learning play a central role. The emphasis is not only on achieving results, but also on capturing experience and building confidence in applying new practices.

The table below outlines the main areas of focus within the implementation pillar, together with illustrative examples of activities that partners may carry out. These examples are indicative and should be adapted to the specific context and capacity of each institution.

Implementation focus	What partners may do (examples as per application form)
Piloting joint activities	Partners may organise small-scale collaborative initiatives, such as workshops, peer-learning sessions, or exchange activities with other institutions. These activities provide an opportunity to test cooperation formats in practice, while also documenting key lessons learned for future refinement.



Testing improved practices	Selected teaching methods, learning activities, or training tools can be introduced in real classroom or institutional settings. Partners are encouraged to observe their usability, relevance, and effectiveness, and to reflect on how they can be adapted to their specific context.
Early cooperation with employers (where feasible)	Institutions may initiate simple and targeted forms of collaboration with local employers, such as inviting guest speakers, organising short company visits, or designing small practical assignments linked to real work environments. These initial interactions help build trust and explore longer-term cooperation opportunities.
Feedback and adjustment	Continuous feedback should be collected from teachers, trainers, and institutional staff involved in implementation activities. This feedback is essential to refine approaches, improve tools, and ensure that activities remain relevant and effective.
Documentation of experience	Partners are encouraged to keep concise and practical records of their experiences, noting what has been tested, what has worked well, and what challenges have emerged. This documentation supports shared learning and informs future actions within the project.
Progressive scaling	Based on the results of pilot activities, partners may jointly assess whether certain approaches can be repeated, adapted, or expanded to other departments, institutions, or contexts. Scaling is therefore gradual and evidence-based, building on what has proven effective.

CAPACITY

The capacity pillar represents the human and organisational dimension of the Cooperation Model. While implementation focuses on *doing*, this pillar focuses on *enabling*: ensuring that individuals and institutions have the necessary skills, competences, and internal conditions to effectively adopt, adapt, and sustain new practices.

Capacity-building is therefore not limited to formal training activities. It encompasses a broader process of professional development, organisational learning, and institutional strengthening. It aims to empower teachers, trainers, managers, and institutional teams to engage with new approaches confidently, reflect on their practices, and progressively improve their performance.

A key objective of this pillar is to ensure that improvements introduced during the implementation phase do not remain isolated or temporary. Instead, they should become embedded within the knowledge base and working culture of institutions. This requires not only individual skill development, but also collective learning processes and supportive organisational environments.

Capacity-building activities are designed to be practical, participatory, and closely linked to real institutional needs. They build on the experiences generated during implementation, allowing partners to reflect on practice, exchange perspectives, and translate lessons learned into more structured and sustainable improvements.

The table below outlines the main areas of focus within the capacity pillar, together with indicative support actions that may be implemented throughout the project:

Capacity focus	Typical support actions (examples as per application form)
Teaching methodologies	Partners may organise training sessions focused on modern, learner-centred pedagogical approaches, complemented by peer-learning

	exchanges among teachers. These activities allow educators to share classroom experiences, explore innovative practices, and gradually adapt their teaching methods to better support student engagement and learning outcomes.
Institutional management	Support may be provided to strengthen planning, coordination, and internal organisation within institutions. This can include discussions on roles and responsibilities, as well as exchanges of management practices, helping institutions improve their operational effectiveness and responsiveness.
Quality assurance (QA)	Partners may be introduced to key quality assurance concepts and practices, with a focus on continuous improvement. Discussions can explore simple and adaptable monitoring tools, encouraging institutions to reflect on their performance and progressively strengthen internal QA systems in line with their capacity.
Mentoring and coaching	Targeted coaching sessions can support staff in applying newly introduced practices, offering personalised guidance and addressing challenges encountered during implementation. Follow-up discussions provide space for reflection, problem-solving, and consolidation of learning.
Team collaboration	Activities may be organised to foster collaboration among staff within and across institutions, such as joint working sessions or thematic groups. These interactions help build a shared understanding, encourage peer support, and strengthen institutional cohesion.
Learning from practice	Structured reflection moments allow partners to analyse lessons learned from implementation activities and translate them into improved practices. This reinforces the link between experience and learning, ensuring that capacity-building remains grounded in real situations.

SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability pillar represents the long-term dimension of the Cooperation Model. While implementation focuses on action and capacity-building on learning, sustainability ensures that the results achieved through the project are not temporary, but continue to generate value beyond its duration. It is concerned with how improvements are maintained, adapted, and progressively embedded within institutional systems.

Sustainability is therefore not treated as a final phase, but as a continuous consideration throughout the project lifecycle. From the outset, activities are designed with the intention that they can be integrated into existing institutional practices, rather than remaining isolated or dependent on external support. This approach reinforces the idea that lasting impact is achieved when institutions themselves take ownership of change processes.

A central element of this pillar is **local ownership**. Armenian and Georgian VET institutions are not only beneficiaries of the project, but active agents responsible for continuing, adapting, and expanding the practices introduced. This implies a gradual transition from supported experimentation to autonomous implementation, where institutions gain the confidence and capacity to sustain improvements independently.

At the same time, sustainability is closely linked to **institutionalisation**. Rather than creating parallel or temporary structures, the project encourages partners to build on existing systems, routines, and organisational mechanisms. By integrating new approaches into everyday teaching, management, and quality assurance processes, institutions can ensure continuity without additional structural burden.

Another key dimension is the strengthening of **long-term cooperation relationships**. The project aims to go beyond short-term collaboration by fostering professional networks and partnerships that can continue after the project ends. These relationships provide a foundation for ongoing exchange, mutual support, and future joint initiatives.

Finally, sustainability also involves the potential for **scalability and transferability**. Practices that prove effective in one context can be adapted and replicated in other departments, institutions, or regions, contributing to a broader impact on VET systems over time.

The table below illustrates how sustainability can be understood and operationalised in practice, through a set of concrete and context-sensitive actions:

Sustainability focus	Sustainability in practice (examples as per application form)
Embedding practices	New approaches introduced during the project are progressively integrated into everyday teaching, management, and quality assurance routines. This is done by building on existing institutional processes, ensuring that changes become part of standard practice rather than remaining project-based initiatives.
Local ownership	Institutions gradually assume responsibility for continuing activities and adapting practices independently. Over time, reliance on external guidance decreases, and partners develop the confidence and capacity to manage and evolve improvements on their own.
Staff continuity	Knowledge and competences acquired through the project are shared internally among staff members, reducing dependency on individual actors. This helps ensure that practices remain in place even in the event of staff turnover.
Long-term cooperation	Partnerships established during the project are maintained beyond its duration, enabling continued exchange of experiences, mutual learning, and the potential development of future joint initiatives.
Use of existing structures	Sustainability efforts rely on existing committees, teams, and coordination mechanisms within institutions, rather than creating new or parallel structures. This enhances feasibility and long-term integration.
Scalability	Successful practices are progressively extended to other departments or institutions, or adapted to different contexts. This allows the impact of the project to grow beyond the initial pilot environments.

Complementary Roles of Partners

Capacity-building within the VET Caucasus project is grounded in a principle of complementarity and shared responsibility. Rather than relying on a one-directional transfer of knowledge, the project adopts a collaborative approach in which each partner contributes according to their expertise, experience, and institutional context. This ensures that cooperation remains balanced, mutually beneficial, and aligned with the overall work plan.

The distribution of roles reflects both the structure of the project's work packages and the diversity of the partnership. While EU partners bring methodological experience and familiarity with European VET frameworks, Armenian and Georgian partners play a central role in shaping, adapting, and implementing activities within their national contexts. This balance is essential to ensure that capacity-building efforts are not only technically sound, but also relevant, feasible, and sustainable.

In this context, capacity-building is not seen as a process delivered *to* partners, but rather developed *with* them. Each partner group contributes to the process in a distinct yet interconnected way, as outlined below:

Partner group	Role	How this role is reflected in practice
EU partners	Provide methodological guidance and facilitate structured knowledge exchange	EU partners contribute experience and reference practices from European VET systems, particularly in areas such as teaching methodologies, quality assurance, and institutional organisation. They support the process by introducing tools, frameworks, and practical examples, while also facilitating workshops, peer-learning activities, and exchanges. Where relevant, they provide mentoring and coaching support to help partners translate concepts into practice.
Caucasus partners	Lead contextualisation and ensure effective implementation within national and institutional settings	Armenian and Georgian partners play a central role in interpreting and adapting inputs in line with their national frameworks and institutional realities. They identify priorities, define feasible actions, and pilot practices within their own institutions. Through continuous feedback, they assess the relevance and applicability of proposed approaches and contribute to the validation and refinement of project outputs.
Joint project coordination structures	Ensure coherence, coordination, and alignment across activities and work packages	Coordination bodies support the overall consistency of the project by linking analytical work (WP2), capacity-building actions (WP3), and broader cooperation mechanisms. They facilitate dialogue among partners, monitor progress, and ensure that activities remain aligned with project objectives, timelines, and expected outcomes.

This reciprocal approach reflects the division of roles established in the project design, where EU partners contribute methodological expertise and facilitation, while Armenian and Georgian partners lead contextualisation, implementation, and validation. It ensures that capacity-building activities are grounded in real institutional needs and that outcomes are not only technically robust, but also locally owned and applicable.

By emphasising shared responsibility and active participation, the project moves away from traditional models of knowledge transfer and instead promotes a co-creation process. This strengthens partner engagement, enhances the relevance of activities, and increases the likelihood that results will be sustained over time.

The capacity-building priorities and activities described in this section will be further informed and refined through the inputs collected in Section 3 of Annex 1. These inputs ensure that the framework



remains responsive to the actual needs and expectations of Armenian and Georgian partners, reinforcing its practical value and long-term impact.

Cooperation Model

This section describes how cooperation will be operationalised in practice within the VET Caucasus project. Building on the shared objectives of the project and the three capacity-building pillars—implementation, capacity, and sustainability—it translates these elements into concrete, realistic, and flexible ways of working together.

The Cooperation Model serves as the practical expression of the project’s collaborative approach. It defines not only *what* partners aim to achieve together, but also *how* they will interact, coordinate, and progressively develop joint activities throughout the project lifecycle. In doing so, it fully respects the diversity of national systems and institutional contexts, allowing each partner to engage in a way that is both meaningful and feasible.

Rather than prescribing fixed procedures, the model provides a structured yet adaptable framework that supports cooperation as an evolving process. It encourages dialogue, joint reflection, and continuous adjustment, ensuring that activities remain aligned with both project objectives and local realities.

The Cooperation Model is articulated through three interconnected components, each addressing a different dimension of collaboration:

1. **A Collaboration Statement**, which sets out the shared vision, values, and guiding principles of the partnership, providing a common foundation for all activities.
2. **A Commitment Agreement**, which translates this vision into operational terms by outlining how partners contribute across the different work packages and cooperation areas.
3. **A Cooperation “Contract” (also referred to as a Declaration of Intent)**, which clarifies roles, responsibilities, and the principles underpinning coordination and sustainability, while reinforcing a shared understanding of how cooperation is maintained over time.

These three components are designed to function together as a coherent system. The Collaboration Statement provides direction, the Commitment Agreement structures action, and the Cooperation “Contract” supports continuity and alignment.

It is important to underline that the Cooperation Model does not constitute a legal or binding agreement. It does not replace the formal provisions of the project proposal or the Grant Agreement. Instead, it is conceived as a practical working tool, intended to facilitate mutual understanding, strengthen coordination, and support effective collaboration among partners.

By combining structure with flexibility, the Cooperation Model aims to create a shared operational space where partners can engage constructively, contribute according to their capacities, and collectively work towards the project’s objectives.

1. Collaboration Statement [VISION OF THE PROJECT]

The Collaboration Statement of the VET Caucasus project is grounded in a shared and forward-looking vision: to strengthen vocational education and training (VET) systems in Armenia and Georgia through meaningful, sustained, and mutually beneficial cooperation with European partners.

This collaboration goes beyond a purely technical exchange of knowledge and practices. It represents a collective effort to bring together diverse perspectives, institutional experiences, and cultural approaches, creating a shared space for dialogue, learning, and innovation. Within this space,

partners are encouraged not only to exchange ideas, but also to jointly explore solutions to common challenges, with the ambition of shaping VET systems that are more responsive, inclusive, and aligned with evolving social and labour market needs.

At its core, this cooperation is driven by the aspiration to turn collaboration into a catalyst for positive and lasting change. By fostering trust, open dialogue, and a shared sense of purpose, the project seeks to generate tangible benefits for institutions, staff, and learners alike.

The mission underpinning this vision is to support Armenian and Georgian VET institutions in strengthening teaching quality, enhancing institutional capacity, and improving labour market relevance. At the same time, it aims to promote mutual learning and establish long-term partnerships with EU institutions, laying the foundations for continued cooperation beyond the project lifecycle.

A key principle of this collaboration is that it does not rely on the transfer of predefined models. Instead, it is based on a process of co-creation, where ideas, tools, and practices are jointly explored, adapted, and implemented in ways that reflect national frameworks and institutional realities. Through continuous reflection, experimentation, and gradual implementation, partners aim to achieve improvements that are both practical and sustainable.

In this context, the VET Caucasus project offers a valuable opportunity to:

- **Connect institutions facing similar challenges across different contexts**, enabling the exchange of perspectives and the identification of shared solutions.
- **Combine European experience with local knowledge and expertise**, ensuring that cooperation is both informed and contextually relevant.
- **Test new approaches in a supportive and collaborative environment**, where experimentation is encouraged and learning is shared.
- **Build professional relationships that extend beyond the project itself**, contributing to long-term networks and continued cooperation.

Through their engagement in this collaboration, partners contribute not only to the achievement of project results, but also to the development of a shared professional community committed to the continuous improvement of VET systems across regions.

More specifically, through the Cooperation Model, partners aim to:

- **Improve teaching quality and learning outcomes in VET institutions**, by introducing and adapting more effective and learner-centred approaches.
- **Strengthen institutional and organisational capacity**, enabling VET providers to operate more effectively and respond to emerging challenges.
- **Enhance alignment between VET provision and labour market needs**, supporting employability and relevance of training programmes.
- **Foster sustainable cooperation beyond the project duration**, ensuring that collaboration continues to generate value over time.

The vision, objectives, and guiding principles outlined in this Collaboration Statement are informed by partner perspectives collected through Section 4 of Annex 1, which captures expectations, priorities, and anticipated benefits of cooperation. This section also includes a Statement Template to be formally endorsed by the Project Coordinator, reinforcing the shared commitment of the partnership.

The collaboration is guided by a set of core principles that underpin all activities and interactions within the project:

1. **Mutual learning** – All partners actively contribute knowledge and experience, engaging in a continuous process of exchange and collective learning.
2. **Local ownership** – Armenian and Georgian institutions play a central role in shaping, implementing, and sustaining activities, ensuring relevance and long-term impact.
3. **Practical focus** – Cooperation prioritises feasible and actionable solutions that address real institutional needs and constraints.
4. **Flexibility** – Approaches and mechanisms are continuously adapted based on experience, feedback, and evolving contexts.
5. **Sustainability** – Priority is given to actions and practices that can be maintained and further developed beyond the project's duration.

2. Commitment Agreement [MISSION OF THE PROJECT]

The Commitment Agreement defines how cooperation is translated into practice within the VET Caucasus project. Building on the shared vision outlined in the Collaboration Statement, it provides a clear and structured framework for how partners will work together on a day-to-day basis, ensuring that cooperation remains both operational and results-oriented.

Rather than introducing new or additional obligations, the Commitment Agreement reflects and operationalises what has already been defined in the approved project proposal. Its purpose is to make these commitments more explicit and accessible, clarifying how each partner contributes to the implementation of activities and how collaboration is organised across the project lifecycle.

To ensure clarity and coherence, commitments are structured according to the project's Work Packages (WPs). This approach allows partners to easily identify where their involvement is expected, what type of contribution is required, and how their role connects to the overall project logic. At the same time, it preserves a necessary degree of flexibility, enabling partners to adapt their level and form of engagement in line with national frameworks and institutional capacities.

In this sense, the Commitment Agreement functions as a practical roadmap for cooperation. It supports coordination, facilitates shared understanding, and ensures that all partners are aligned in terms of expectations, roles, and contributions, without constraining their ability to respond to contextual needs.

The structure and content of the Commitment Agreement are fully aligned with the core elements of the project, namely:

- **The overall project objectives**, ensuring that all commitments directly contribute to the intended outcomes and impact of the VET Caucasus initiative.
- **The capacity-building framework**, including the three pillars of Implementation, Capacity, and Sustainability, which provide the methodological backbone for all activities.
- **The activities and deliverables defined in the official project form**, guaranteeing consistency with the approved work plan and facilitating monitoring and reporting processes.

The Commitment Agreement ensures that cooperation is not only well-coordinated, but also purposeful and coherent. It reinforces a shared understanding of how the project is implemented in practice, while maintaining the collaborative and adaptable spirit that characterises the VET Caucasus approach.

WP1: Project Coordination and Quality Control

Work Package 1 provides the organisational and managerial foundation of the VET Caucasus project. It ensures that all activities are effectively coordinated, that communication flows smoothly among partners, and that the project is implemented in a coherent, timely, and high-quality manner.

This work package plays a central role in maintaining alignment across all project components. It supports shared decision-making, facilitates collaboration between partners from different countries and institutional contexts, and ensures that progress is continuously monitored and adjusted when necessary. By doing so, WP1 contributes to creating a stable and well-functioning environment in which all other work packages can be implemented effectively.

Beyond administrative coordination, WP1 also promotes a culture of transparency, accountability, and collective responsibility. It ensures that partners remain actively engaged, informed, and aligned with the project's objectives, while providing the necessary structure to address challenges and maintain overall quality.

The table below outlines the main focus areas of WP1 and the corresponding roles of partners in supporting its implementation:

Focus area	What this involves	Partner's role
Project coordination	The day-to-day management of project activities, including planning timelines, organising meetings, and ensuring that tasks are implemented according to the agreed schedule.	Partners actively participate in regular coordination meetings, follow agreed timelines, and contribute to the smooth progression of activities by respecting common procedures and commitments.
Internal communication	Ensuring a continuous and effective flow of information among all partners, allowing for timely updates, clarification of tasks, and alignment of actions.	Partners share relevant information in a timely and transparent manner, maintain regular contact with the coordinating team, and ensure that communication channels remain active and responsive.
Monitoring and reporting	Tracking the progress of activities and assessing the quality of implementation, including the preparation of internal and external reports.	Partners contribute to monitoring processes by providing accurate and timely inputs, supporting data collection where needed, and participating in reporting activities as requested.
Quality control	Ensuring consistency, coherence, and quality across all work packages, including the identification of challenges and the implementation of corrective measures when necessary.	Partners take part in reflection and quality review moments, provide constructive feedback, and support the adoption of corrective actions to maintain high standards of implementation.

WP2: Training Development

Work Package 2 focuses on the development of the core conceptual and methodological elements of the VET Caucasus project. It is within this work package that the key frameworks guiding cooperation and capacity-building are defined, including the Cooperation Model and the Governance Model, as well as the exploration and adaptation of relevant European tools and approaches.

WP2 therefore plays a foundational role in the project. It establishes the common language, reference frameworks, and methodological orientation that underpin all subsequent activities, particularly those related to capacity-building and piloting. By structuring how partners analyse, design, and approach cooperation, it ensures that project actions are coherent, evidence-based, and aligned with both European standards and local realities.

A central feature of this work package is its emphasis on co-creation. Rather than developing models in isolation, WP2 is built on continuous partner engagement, ensuring that all outputs are informed by national contexts, institutional needs, and practical considerations. This approach strengthens relevance, ownership, and applicability across different VET systems.

In addition, WP2 supports the integration of selected EU tools and frameworks—such as EntreComp—encouraging partners to explore their potential while critically assessing how they can be meaningfully adapted to Armenian and Georgian contexts.

The table below outlines the main focus areas of WP2 and the corresponding roles of partners:

Focus area	What this involves	Partner's role
Cooperation model	The co-creation, refinement, and validation of the Cooperation Model as a shared framework guiding collaboration across the project.	Partners actively participate in discussions and validation workshops, providing feedback, contextual insights, and practical input to ensure that the model reflects real institutional needs and conditions.
Governance framework	Reflection on governance approaches and coordination mechanisms that can support effective cooperation within and beyond the project.	Partners contribute perspectives on national and institutional governance systems, discuss feasibility, and assess how proposed mechanisms can align with existing structures and practices.
EU tools	Exploration and analysis of relevant European tools and frameworks that may support VET development and cooperation.	Partners reflect on the relevance, applicability, and potential added value of selected EU tools within their own contexts, identifying opportunities as well as possible limitations.
EntreComp integration	Use of the EntreComp framework as a reference for fostering entrepreneurial competences within VET systems.	Partners engage in discussions on how EntreComp principles can be interpreted, adapted, and applied within training contexts, ensuring alignment with institutional priorities and learner needs.

WP3: Capacity Building and Piloting

Work Package 3 represents the implementation phase of the VET Caucasus project, where concepts, frameworks, and approaches developed in WP2 are translated into concrete practice. It focuses on

testing, validating, and refining these approaches through real-life application within partner institutions.

This work package plays a crucial role in bridging theory and practice. It provides partners with the opportunity to experiment with new methods, tools, and cooperation models in authentic settings, allowing them to assess their relevance, feasibility, and effectiveness. Through this process, WP3 ensures that project outputs are not only conceptually sound, but also practically applicable and responsive to institutional realities.

A key feature of WP3 is its iterative nature. Activities are designed to generate experience, which is then analysed, discussed, and used to refine approaches. This cycle of testing, feedback, and adjustment supports continuous improvement and strengthens the overall quality of project results.

In addition to piloting activities, WP3 places strong emphasis on capacity-building and mobility. Training sessions, peer-learning opportunities, and mentoring activities are closely linked to implementation, enabling staff and learners to engage directly with new practices while developing their competences. Mobility activities, where foreseen, further enrich this process by exposing participants to different institutional environments and perspectives.

The table below outlines the main focus areas of WP3 and the corresponding roles of partners:

Focus area	What this involves	Partner's role
Testing and piloting	The implementation of selected practices, tools, and approaches within real institutional settings, allowing partners to explore their practical application and effectiveness.	Partners implement pilot activities within their institutions, adapting them to local contexts and documenting key experiences, including successes, challenges, and lessons learned.
Validation	The assessment of the relevance, feasibility, and impact of tested approaches, with a view to refining and improving them.	Partners participate in validation activities, providing structured feedback on what works well, what requires adjustment, and how approaches can be improved or adapted.
Capacity-building activities	The organisation of training sessions, peer-learning exchanges, and mentoring activities linked to the implementation of new practices.	Partners actively engage staff in training and peer-learning processes, fostering professional development and supporting the adoption of improved methods and approaches.
Mobility participation	The organisation and participation in mobility activities for staff and learners, where foreseen within the project framework.	Partners take part in mobility activities in line with project planning and feasibility, contributing to knowledge exchange, exposure to new practices, and the strengthening of institutional cooperation.

WP4: Dissemination, Valorisation and Sustainability

Work Package 4 focuses on ensuring that the results of the VET Caucasus project are effectively communicated, widely shared, and sustainably embedded within institutional and national contexts. It addresses not only the visibility of project activities, but also the uptake, transferability, and long-term use of the knowledge, tools, and practices developed throughout the project.

WP4 therefore plays a key role in extending the impact of the project beyond its immediate partnership. It supports the dissemination of results to relevant stakeholders, including VET providers, policymakers, industry representatives, and broader educational communities, while also encouraging their active engagement with project outputs.

At the same time, this work package emphasises **valorisation and exploitation**, ensuring that results are not only shared, but also used in meaningful ways. This involves promoting the integration of project outputs into institutional practices, supporting their adaptation to different contexts, and exploring opportunities for scaling and replication.

A central dimension of WP4 is sustainability. By linking dissemination and exploitation activities with institutional and systemic processes, the work package contributes to ensuring that project outcomes continue to generate value over time, reinforcing the long-term impact of the VET Caucasus initiative.

The table below outlines the main focus areas of WP4 and the corresponding roles of partners:

Focus area	What this involves	Partner's role
Communication	The continuous sharing of information about project activities, progress, and results through appropriate channels, ensuring visibility and awareness.	Partners contribute content, updates, and materials, and actively support visibility actions, helping to ensure consistent and transparent communication across the project.
Events	The organisation of and participation in project-related events, such as workshops, conferences, and dissemination sessions, aimed at engaging stakeholders and sharing results.	Partners participate in events and, where relevant, support their organisation, contributing to outreach and stakeholder engagement at local, national, and international levels.
Dissemination	The targeted sharing of project results with relevant stakeholders, including VET institutions, policymakers, and industry actors.	Partners disseminate outputs through their institutional and national networks, ensuring that results reach appropriate audiences and contribute to broader awareness and uptake.
Exploitation and sustainability	The promotion of the long-term use and integration of project results within institutional practices and systems.	Partners support the uptake of results within their organisations, explore opportunities for continuation and scaling, and contribute to identifying sustainable pathways for maintaining project outcomes.

3. Cooperation “Contract” a/k/a Declaration of Intent

This section clarifies how cooperation within the VET Caucasus project is expected to function in practice, providing a shared operational reference for all partners. The term “Cooperation Contract” is used here in a purely conceptual sense: it does not imply any legal status, but rather reflects a common understanding of how collaboration is organised, maintained, and sustained throughout the project.

It is important to emphasise that this “contract” does not constitute a legal agreement, memorandum of understanding, or enforceable commitment. It does not introduce obligations beyond those already

defined in the approved project proposal and the Grant Agreement. Instead, it serves as a practical and transparent framework that supports coordination, mutual understanding, and consistency in the way partners work together.

In this sense, the Cooperation “Contract” plays a bridging role within the overall Cooperation Model. It connects the strategic orientation provided by the Collaboration Statement with the operational structure defined in the Commitment Agreement. More specifically, it aims to:

- **Ensure continuity between vision and implementation**, linking shared principles with concrete actions across the project.
- **Clarify how cooperation is organised and sustained over time**, providing a stable yet flexible reference for collaboration.
- **Support transparency, predictability, and coordination among partners**, helping to align expectations and facilitate effective joint work.

Within the VET Caucasus project, cooperation is understood as a collaborative, flexible, and adaptive process, grounded in mutual respect and shared responsibility. Partners contribute within the framework of the agreed work plan, taking into account their respective institutional roles, capacities, and national contexts. This approach ensures that cooperation remains both structured and responsive to evolving needs.

In practical terms, cooperation under this shared understanding is based on a set of core practices:

- **Active participation in agreed project activities and meetings**, ensuring continuity and engagement across all phases of the project.
- **Democratic and inclusive decision-making processes**, where different perspectives are valued and taken into account.
- **Continuous dialogue and exchange of information**, supporting transparency and collective problem-solving.
- **Joint reflection, monitoring, and adjustment of activities**, allowing partners to adapt approaches based on experience and feedback.

In line with the project’s objectives, this operational framework also supports sustainability by encouraging partners to progressively integrate project results into their institutional environments. In particular, partners are encouraged to:

- **Integrate relevant outputs and practices into their institutional activities**, where feasible, ensuring that project results continue to be used and developed.
- **Promote continuity of cooperation beyond individual project activities**, maintaining contact and exchange even after specific actions are completed.
- **Align project-related actions with national frameworks, policies, and institutional priorities**, strengthening the relevance and long-term impact of results.

Sustainability is approached in a gradual and pragmatic manner, without imposing formal obligations or long-term commitments beyond the project scope. Instead, it relies on voluntary engagement, institutional interest, and the perceived value of cooperation.



Ultimately, this “Cooperation Contract” reflects a shared intention among partners to collaborate in a constructive, transparent, and inclusive way throughout the project lifecycle. It confirms their willingness to contribute actively to project activities, in line with their roles and capacities, while respecting the diversity of national and institutional contexts.

Any continuation of cooperation beyond the duration of the project remains open and voluntary, to be explored through future opportunities and mutual interest.

This agreement does not create legal or financial obligations. Rather, it serves as a common reference point that supports coordination, strengthens mutual understanding, and facilitates effective joint implementation.

A Standard Declaration of Intent, to be formally endorsed by all partners, is provided in Section 6 of the Annex.

Conclusion

The VET Caucasus Cooperation Model has been designed as a practical, flexible, and partner-oriented framework to support collaboration among VET institutions and stakeholders from Armenia, Georgia, and the European Union throughout the project lifecycle. It provides a structured yet adaptable foundation that enables partners to engage in meaningful cooperation while respecting the diversity of national systems and institutional contexts.

Rather than prescribing fixed solutions, the model offers a shared framework that supports partners in navigating the cooperation process in a coherent and progressive way. In particular, it helps to:

- **Develop a common understanding of national VET contexts**, creating a shared basis for dialogue and informed decision-making.
- **Jointly identify priorities for capacity-building and cooperation**, ensuring that activities are grounded in real needs and opportunities.
- **Translate project objectives into realistic and feasible ways of working together**, linking strategic ambitions with practical implementation.

A key strength of the Cooperation Model lies in its **partner-driven and context-sensitive approach**. The document is intentionally designed to evolve through partner input, collected via Annexes, workshops, and bilateral exchanges. This ensures that Armenian and Georgian partners play a central role in shaping both the content and direction of cooperation, while EU partners contribute methodological expertise and reference practices in a supportive and complementary manner.

The three pillars of the Capacity-Building Framework—**Implementation, Capacity, and Sustainability**—provide a clear and intuitive logic for organising activities, monitoring progress, and reflecting on results. Together, they promote a gradual, experience-based, and learning-oriented approach to institutional strengthening, without imposing unnecessary reporting or administrative burdens on partners.

At the same time, the Cooperation Model is explicitly **non-binding**. It does not create legal or financial obligations, nor does it replace the formal provisions of the approved project proposal or the Grant Agreement. Instead, it functions as a shared reference tool that supports coordination, enhances transparency, and fosters mutual understanding among partners.

Ultimately, the value of the Cooperation Model lies in its ability to create a common space for collaboration—one that is structured yet flexible, guided yet open, and firmly rooted in the principles of co-creation, trust, and shared responsibility. Through this approach, the model contributes not only to the effective implementation of the VET Caucasus project, but also to the development of sustainable partnerships and lasting improvements in VET systems across the region.

Annex

This Annex is designed to support the co-creation and progressive refinement of the VET Caucasus Cooperation Model by collecting structured inputs from Armenian and Georgian partners. It serves as a practical tool through which partners can share their perspectives, experiences, and priorities, ensuring that the Cooperation Model is firmly grounded in real institutional contexts.

The structure of the Annex follows the same core dimensions and terminology used in the Cooperation Model, namely:

- **Context and Expectations for Cooperation**, capturing partners' views on national priorities and the added value of international collaboration.
- **Analytical Foundations for Cooperation**, providing key insights into the functioning and characteristics of national VET systems.
- **Capacity-Building Needs**, identifying areas where institutions and staff require further support and development.
- **Operational Cooperation Inputs**, outlining practical elements that can inform joint activities and exchanges.
- **Partner Contribution to Project Work Packages**, clarifying expected roles and levels of engagement across the project.

This alignment ensures full consistency between the information collected through the Annex and the analytical and operational sections of the Cooperation Model. It allows partner inputs to be directly integrated into the document, strengthening its relevance, coherence, and usability.

The Annex is intentionally designed as a **practical and accessible working tool**, rather than a technical or statistical questionnaire. Its purpose is not to collect exhaustive data, but to facilitate reflection and dialogue. Partners are therefore encouraged to provide concise and indicative responses, focusing on key insights rather than detailed reporting.

Where detailed information is not readily available, **qualitative descriptions, examples, or brief explanations are fully acceptable and equally valuable**. The emphasis is placed on capturing meaningful perspectives that can inform cooperation, rather than on formal completeness.

Section 1: Context and Expectations for Cooperation

This section aims to capture partners' perspectives on the current national VET context, as well as their expectations regarding international cooperation within the framework of the VET Caucasus project.

It provides an opportunity for partners to reflect on the broader environment in which their institutions operate, including key priorities, ongoing developments, and structural challenges affecting VET systems. At the same time, it invites partners to express what they hope to gain from cooperation with European institutions and how they perceive its potential added value.

The information collected in this section will help establish a shared understanding of the context in Armenia and Georgia, while also identifying common themes, needs, and expectations across partners. This, in turn, will inform the design of cooperation activities and ensure that they are aligned with both national priorities and institutional realities.

Partners are encouraged to provide concise but meaningful insights, drawing on their experience and perspective. Where relevant, examples or brief explanations can help illustrate key points and enrich the overall understanding of the context.

1. Main Priorities for VET Development over the Next Few Years

This section highlights the main priorities shaping the development of VET systems in Armenia and Georgia, as identified by partners. It reflects both shared regional trends and country-specific dynamics, offering a comprehensive overview of the strategic directions that are likely to influence cooperation within the project.

Common Priorities	Across both contexts, several key priorities emerge as central to the modernisation and strengthening of VET systems: • Expansion of work-based learning (WBL) and dual education models, with a stronger integration between classroom-based instruction and practical training in real work environments. This approach aims to ensure that learners develop not only theoretical knowledge but also hands-on skills that are directly applicable in the labour market. • Strengthening employer engagement in curriculum design and training processes, enabling closer alignment between education provision and evolving labour market needs. This also contributes to increasing the relevance and employability value of the skills acquired by learners. • Improving teaching methodologies and investing in continuous professional development for teachers, particularly through the adoption of learner-centred, competency-based approaches and more innovative pedagogical practices. • Integrating digital skills and emerging technologies into VET programmes, including the use of digital tools, platforms, and advanced technologies to enhance both teaching and learning processes. • Enhancing quality assurance systems and alignment with European standards, ensuring that VET provision meets recognised benchmarks and supports continuous improvement across institutions.
	In the Armenian context, priorities reflect both systemic challenges and ongoing reform efforts aimed at strengthening the relevance and attractiveness of VET: • Addressing the mismatch between graduate skills and labour market needs, by improving the relevance of training programmes and strengthening the transition pathways from education to employment. • Promoting internationalisation and alignment with European frameworks, supporting the recognition of qualifications and fostering cooperation with international partners. • Integrating green skills into VET provision, ensuring that training programmes reflect sustainability priorities and respond to emerging environmental and economic transitions. • Increasing the attractiveness and social perception of VET, positioning it as a viable and valuable career pathway, particularly among young people and their families.
	In Georgia, priorities highlight a strong focus on inclusion, innovation, and system responsiveness: • Strengthening inclusion and equal access to VET, particularly for vulnerable groups and learners from disadvantaged or remote areas, in order to reduce inequalities in participation and outcomes.

- **Promoting lifelong learning and upskilling/reskilling opportunities**, enabling individuals to continuously adapt to changing labour market demands and technological developments.
- **Integrating artificial intelligence (AI) and digital innovation into VET delivery**, with the aim of enhancing both the quality and relevance of teaching and learning processes.
- **Strengthening partnerships across education, industry, and public institutions**, improving coordination and ensuring that the VET system remains responsive to economic and social needs.
- **Supporting mobility of students and staff**, facilitating knowledge exchange, exposure to international practices, and the development of broader professional perspectives.

2. Ongoing VET Reforms and Initiatives Relevant to the Project

This section provides an overview of the main policy developments, reform processes, and strategic initiatives currently shaping VET systems in Armenia and Georgia. It highlights both shared reform directions and country-specific efforts, offering important context for understanding how the VET Caucasus project can align with and contribute to ongoing developments.

Common Priorities

Across both countries, ongoing reforms reflect a clear commitment to modernising VET systems and strengthening their responsiveness to labour market needs. Key common directions include:

- **Strengthening work-based learning (WBL) and dual education systems**, by embedding practical training components within formal education pathways and enhancing structured cooperation with employers.
- **Improving quality assurance systems**, through the development of clearer standards, more structured evaluation processes, and increased institutional accountability.
- **Enhancing governance and institutional coordination**, with a focus on clarifying roles, improving communication between stakeholders, and reducing fragmentation within the system.
- **Increasing alignment with European standards and practices**, supporting convergence with EU frameworks and facilitating international cooperation and recognition.



In Armenia, recent reforms demonstrate a strong strategic effort to modernise the education system and reinforce the role of VET as a key component of economic development:

- **Implementation of the Education Development Strategy 2022–2030**, which provides a comprehensive roadmap for modernising the education system and strengthening the position of VET.
- **Adoption of the new Law on VET (2024)**, which formalises and institutionalises dual education models, reinforcing the integration of work-based learning approaches.
- **Active coordination by the National Centre for Vocational Education and Training Development**, which plays a central role in supporting reforms, institutional cooperation, and system-level improvements.
- **Planned introduction of a credit system (ECTS)**, aimed at facilitating transitions between VET and higher education and improving permeability within the education system.

	• Strong engagement in EU-funded capacity-building projects, contributing to system modernisation, international cooperation, and the adoption of innovative practices.
	In Georgia, reforms reflect a focus on improving system quality, flexibility, and alignment with labour market demands, alongside efforts to strengthen institutional structures: • Implementation of the VET Strategy 2024–2030, which emphasises quality, adaptability, and labour market relevance as key pillars of system development. • Ongoing restructuring of VET governance systems, aimed at improving coordination, efficiency, and overall system coherence. • Alignment with the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQAVET), supporting the strengthening of quality assurance mechanisms and fostering convergence with European standards. • Expansion of integrated VET programmes within schools, improving access to vocational pathways and creating more flexible learning trajectories for students. • Development of sectoral and regional initiatives, such as training programmes in the construction sector in Imereti, which respond directly to local labour market needs and priorities.

3. Expected Outcomes from Cooperation with EU VET Institutions

This section outlines the key outcomes that Armenian and Georgian partners expect to achieve through cooperation with EU VET institutions within the VET Caucasus project. It reflects both shared aspirations and country-specific priorities, highlighting how international collaboration is perceived as a driver for system improvement, institutional development, and innovation in VET.

Overall, cooperation with EU partners is expected to provide not only access to experience and good practices, but also opportunities for reflection, adaptation, and long-term alignment with European standards and approaches.

Common Priorities	Across both countries, partners anticipate several common benefits from cooperation with EU VET institutions: • Exchange of best practices in work-based learning, competency-based education, and labour market-oriented curricula, supporting the modernisation of VET systems and improving the relevance of training provision. • Capacity-building for teachers, trainers, and institutional staff, through training activities, peer learning, and international cooperation, enabling professional development and strengthening institutional performance. • Strengthening of quality assurance systems, contributing to improved institutional practices and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. • Improved alignment with European frameworks, such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQAVET), supporting convergence and enhancing the comparability of qualifications.
	In Armenia, expected outcomes reflect a strong focus on enhancing system relevance and strengthening international integration:



	• Stronger alignment of VET provision with labour market needs, achieved through structured cooperation with EU partners and increased engagement with industry stakeholders. • Enhancement of institutional capacity, supported by knowledge exchange, exposure to European practices, and the adoption of innovative approaches. • Improved recognition and comparability of qualifications at international level, facilitating mobility and strengthening the position of Armenian VET within a broader European context.
	In Georgia, expected outcomes highlight a particular emphasis on innovation, digitalisation, and the application of EU frameworks: • Adoption and implementation of EU tools and frameworks, including the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), ESCO, EntreComp, and Europass, supporting system alignment and modernisation. • Development of digital learning ecosystems, including initiatives such as Digital Learning Hubs, aimed at enhancing access, flexibility, and quality of learning. • Innovation in pedagogy through the use of AI-supported tools and digital resources, contributing to more engaging and effective teaching and learning processes. • Structured pilot implementation of modern teaching methodologies and cooperation models, enabling the practical testing and adaptation of new approaches within institutional contexts.

4. Key Areas of Cooperation

This section identifies the main thematic areas where cooperation between partners is expected to take place within the VET Caucasus project. It reflects both shared priorities and country-specific interests, highlighting where joint efforts, knowledge exchange, and capacity-building activities can generate the most meaningful impact.

The areas outlined below are not intended to be exhaustive or restrictive. Rather, they provide a focused framework to guide cooperation activities, ensuring that they remain aligned with both project objectives and the evolving needs of VET systems in Armenia and Georgia.

Common Priorities	Across both countries, several key areas emerge as central to cooperation, reflecting shared challenges and development ambitions: • Teaching and pedagogical innovation, with a strong focus on improving learning outcomes through the adoption of modern, learner-centred approaches. This includes moving towards more competency-based education models, increasing learner engagement, and promoting more interactive and practice-oriented teaching methods. • Strengthening labour market links and employer engagement, ensuring that VET provision remains closely aligned with current and emerging skills needs. This involves not only involving employers in curriculum design, but also fostering ongoing collaboration through practical training opportunities and feedback mechanisms. • Improving governance and quality assurance mechanisms, supporting the overall effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of VET systems. Strengthening these areas contributes to more consistent standards, better
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	monitoring of outcomes, and a stronger culture of continuous improvement across institutions.
	In Armenia, cooperation priorities reflect a strong focus on enhancing system relevance and strengthening the connection between education and employment: • Updating curricula and teaching methods, ensuring that training programmes are responsive to labour market needs while integrating modern pedagogical approaches. This includes adapting content to emerging sectors and aligning learning outcomes with real occupational profiles. • Strengthening collaboration with industry professionals, enabling more structured and consistent involvement of employers in the training process. This helps ensure that learners acquire skills that are directly applicable in professional environments. • Improving coordination between education providers and labour market stakeholders, fostering a more coherent and responsive VET system. Enhanced coordination can support smoother transitions from education to employment and improve overall system efficiency.
	In Georgia, cooperation priorities highlight a strong orientation towards innovation, system responsiveness, and forward-looking skills development: • Promoting digitalisation and technological innovation, including the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced digital tools into VET systems. This supports both the modernisation of teaching practices and the development of digital competences among learners. • Supporting entrepreneurship and labour market competitiveness, through the development of transversal and entrepreneurial skills that enable learners to adapt to dynamic economic environments and create new opportunities. • Strengthening institutional quality assurance systems and governance frameworks, contributing to more robust, transparent, and effective VET provision. This includes improving internal processes, strengthening accountability, and aligning with international standards.

Section 2: Analytical Foundations for Cooperation

This section aims to provide essential contextual information that supports the development of a shared understanding of VET systems in Armenia and Georgia. Rather than focusing on detailed or technical analysis, its purpose is to highlight the key structural, organisational, and operational elements that are most relevant for cooperation within the VET Caucasus project.

The information gathered in this section helps partners move beyond general descriptions and focus on aspects that directly influence how VET systems function in practice. These insights are particularly important for identifying opportunities for collaboration, as well as potential constraints that may need to be considered when designing joint activities.

By capturing this information in a structured yet accessible way, the section contributes to building a common analytical basis for the project. This shared understanding supports more informed discussions, facilitates the identification of priority areas for capacity-building, and ensures that cooperation activities are aligned with both institutional realities and system-level dynamics.

Partners are encouraged to provide concise but meaningful inputs, focusing on key features, challenges, and examples that can help illustrate how their VET systems operate. The emphasis is placed on relevance and clarity, rather than on exhaustive detail.

5. VET Governance and Institutional Framework

This section provides an overview of the governance structures and institutional frameworks that shape VET systems in Armenia and Georgia. Understanding how responsibilities are distributed, how institutions interact, and how decisions are made is essential for designing effective and feasible cooperation activities.

While governance systems differ in their level of maturity and organisation, both countries share a broadly centralised approach, complemented by specialised agencies and increasing stakeholder involvement. These structures play a key role in ensuring policy coherence, implementation capacity, and alignment with labour market needs.

Common Priorities	Across both countries, VET governance is characterised by a central coordination role of the Ministry of Education, supported by specialised bodies responsible for implementation, quality assurance, and system development. This centralised structure helps ensure strategic alignment and consistency across the system. At the same time, there is a growing emphasis on: • Strengthening the role of specialised agencies, particularly in areas such as quality assurance, accreditation, and system coordination, contributing to more structured and transparent governance processes. • Increasing the involvement of stakeholders, including employers, sectoral councils, and social partners, in order to better align VET provision with labour market needs. • Improving coordination between different levels of governance, reducing fragmentation and enhancing communication between national authorities, institutions, and external actors.
	In Armenia, the governance framework reflects a structured and evolving system, with clearly defined institutional roles: • The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport is responsible for overall policy development and strategic direction, ensuring alignment with national priorities and reform agendas. • The National Centre for Vocational Education and Training Development plays a key role in supporting implementation, coordination, and system-level initiatives, acting as a bridge between policy and practice. • The National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA) is responsible for accreditation and quality assurance, contributing to the standardisation and continuous improvement of VET provision. • In addition, the involvement of sectoral councils and employers is gradually increasing, supporting better alignment between training programmes and labour market requirements. The Armenian system shows a clear effort to strengthen coordination mechanisms and integrate different actors within a more coherent governance framework.
	In Georgia, the governance framework is also centrally coordinated, while undergoing ongoing reforms aimed at improving efficiency and stakeholder engagement: • The Ministry of Education, Science and Youth holds primary responsibility for overall governance and policy direction of the VET system.



- The **National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE)** oversees quality assurance and accreditation processes, playing a central role in maintaining standards and supporting institutional development.
- There is an **increasing involvement of stakeholders**, particularly in relation to labour market alignment, reflecting a broader shift towards more inclusive and responsive governance models.

At the same time, the system continues to evolve, with ongoing efforts to strengthen coordination mechanisms, clarify institutional roles, and enhance the responsiveness of VET provision to economic and social needs.

6. Types of VET Providers

This section provides an overview of the different types of VET providers operating within the systems of Armenia and Georgia. Understanding the diversity, distribution, and characteristics of these providers is essential for designing cooperation activities that are both inclusive and adaptable to varying institutional capacities.

VET provision in both countries is characterised by a mixed system, where different types of institutions coexist and contribute to the delivery of vocational education and training. This diversity creates opportunities for flexible learning pathways and innovation, but may also require differentiated approaches to capacity-building and cooperation.

Common Priorities

Across both contexts, VET systems include a combination of:

- **Public providers**, which typically represent the core of the VET system and are closely aligned with national policies and strategies.
- **Private institutions**, often operating in specific sectors and contributing to the diversification of training provision, particularly in areas linked to emerging economic activities.
- **Public-private partnerships**, which aim to bridge the gap between education and the labour market by combining institutional training with practical, industry-based experience.

This mixed structure offers potential for dynamic cooperation, particularly in strengthening links between education providers and employers, while also requiring coordination to ensure consistency in quality and standards.



In Armenia, the VET landscape is largely characterised by a **strong presence of public colleges**, which play a central role in delivering vocational education across the country. These institutions are key actors in implementing national strategies and reforms.

At the same time, **private providers are active in specific sectors**, particularly in areas such as IT, services, and other specialised fields. Their presence contributes to diversifying training opportunities and responding to niche labour market demands, although their role within the broader system remains more limited compared to public institutions.

This configuration suggests a system where public provision remains dominant, but where there is growing potential for collaboration with private actors, especially in sectors requiring specialised or rapidly evolving skills.

	In Georgia, the VET system is characterised by a more diverse range of providers, reflecting varying levels of institutional capacity, specialisation, and regional coverage. This diversity can be seen as a strength, as it allows for greater flexibility in responding to local labour market needs and supports the development of regionally adapted training solutions. At the same time, it also highlights the need for targeted support to ensure consistent quality and to address disparities between institutions. The variation in institutional capacity suggests that cooperation activities may need to be tailored, taking into account the different starting points, resources, and development levels of VET providers across the country.
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7. Challenges in Adopting Innovative Teaching Methods

This section highlights the main challenges faced by VET institutions in Armenia and Georgia in adopting and implementing innovative teaching methodologies. While there is a clear recognition of the importance of modern, learner-centred approaches, the transition from traditional teaching models to more innovative practices remains complex and multifaceted.

These challenges are not only technical, but also organisational and cultural. They affect how teachers engage with new methodologies, how institutions support innovation, and how learning processes are structured and assessed. Understanding these barriers is essential for designing effective capacity-building activities that are both realistic and impactful.

Common Priorities	Across both countries, several shared challenges can be identified: • Limited access to continuous professional development opportunities for teachers, which restricts their ability to acquire and apply new pedagogical approaches. Without regular training and support, teachers may lack both the confidence and the practical tools needed to innovate. • Insufficient infrastructure and limited availability of digital tools, which can hinder the implementation of modern and technology-enhanced teaching methods. This includes both physical infrastructure and access to updated digital platforms and resources. • Difficulties in adopting competency-based and learner-centred approaches, particularly where traditional teaching models remain dominant. This transition requires not only new methodologies, but also a shift in mindset and institutional practices.
	In Armenia, challenges are closely linked to both structural and motivational factors: • Low salary levels and limited professional incentives for teachers, which can affect motivation and reduce engagement in innovation processes. This may also impact the attractiveness of the teaching profession more broadly. • Resistance to change in teaching practices, often linked to long-established pedagogical traditions and a lack of exposure to alternative approaches. Change processes may therefore require sustained support and gradual adaptation. • Limited access to training opportunities, particularly in areas related to modern pedagogy, digital tools, and innovative teaching methods. This

	reinforces the need for structured and accessible capacity-building initiatives. These factors suggest that innovation in Armenia is not only a technical challenge, but also one that requires addressing broader systemic and motivational dynamics.
	In Georgia, challenges are more strongly associated with systemic alignment and organisational conditions: • Misalignment between innovative teaching approaches and traditional assessment systems, which can discourage teachers from adopting new methods if evaluation frameworks do not support them. This creates a gap between pedagogical innovation and institutional expectations. • Time constraints and administrative workload, which limit the capacity of teachers to experiment with and implement new approaches. Innovation often requires additional preparation, reflection, and adaptation, which may not be sufficiently supported. • Need for a broader cultural shift towards learner-centred teaching, recognising that innovation is not only about introducing new tools or methods, but also about redefining the role of teachers and learners within the educational process. These challenges highlight the importance of addressing not only individual competences, but also institutional and systemic conditions that enable or constrain innovation.

8. Quality Assurance Mechanisms in VET

This section provides an overview of the main quality assurance (QA) mechanisms in place within the VET systems of Armenia and Georgia. Quality assurance plays a critical role in ensuring the effectiveness, credibility, and continuous improvement of VET provision, particularly in the context of increasing alignment with European standards and practices.

Across both countries, QA systems are evolving towards more structured, transparent, and data-informed approaches. However, differences remain in terms of institutional maturity, implementation capacity, and the degree of integration between external and internal quality processes.

Understanding these dynamics is essential for identifying opportunities for cooperation, particularly in strengthening institutional QA systems and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Common Priorities	Several common trends can be observed across both contexts: • Combination of external and internal quality assurance mechanisms, where national bodies are responsible for accreditation and oversight, while institutions develop their own internal systems to monitor and improve performance. This dual structure supports both accountability and institutional autonomy. • Increasing use of employer feedback and labour market data, reflecting a growing emphasis on aligning training provision with real economic needs and improving the relevance of learning outcomes. • Stronger focus on continuous improvement and data-driven approaches, with institutions gradually moving towards more systematic monitoring, evaluation, and use of evidence to inform decision-making.
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	These developments indicate a shift from compliance-based QA systems towards more dynamic and improvement-oriented models.
	In Armenia, the quality assurance system is relatively structured, with clearly defined roles and mechanisms: • The National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA) plays a central role in accreditation and external quality assurance, ensuring that institutions meet established standards. • Institutions are increasingly developing structured internal QA systems, including mechanisms such as audits, surveys, and performance reviews. These tools support internal reflection and continuous improvement processes. • The use of state qualification exams with employer involvement further strengthens the link between assessment processes and labour market expectations, contributing to the credibility and relevance of qualifications. The Armenian system demonstrates a solid foundation in QA structures, with ongoing efforts to enhance their effectiveness and integration.
	In Georgia, the QA system is also well established, but characterised by varying levels of institutional maturity: • The National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) plays a central role in overseeing accreditation and external QA processes, ensuring system-wide standards and accountability. • There is a strong emphasis on alignment with the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQAVET), reflecting a strategic commitment to European integration and the adoption of recognised quality standards. • At the same time, there is variability in the maturity of internal QA systems across institutions, with some providers demonstrating more advanced practices than others. This creates a need for targeted support and capacity-building in certain contexts. This variation highlights the importance of strengthening institutional QA capacities and promoting more consistent implementation of quality assurance practices across the system.

9. Experience with International Mobility Activities

This section provides an overview of the experience of Armenian and Georgian VET institutions with international mobility activities. Mobility is a key component of international cooperation, offering valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange, skills development, and exposure to different educational and professional environments.

Understanding the current level of experience, as well as existing challenges, is essential for designing mobility activities within the VET Caucasus project that are both accessible and impactful.

Common Priorities	Across both countries, international mobility is primarily supported through European programmes, particularly Erasmus+ and Capacity Building in VET (CBVET) initiatives. These programmes have played a significant role in introducing institutions to international cooperation and facilitating initial mobility experiences. However, several common characteristics can be observed:
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	• Mobility experience remains uneven across institutions, with some partners actively engaged in international activities, while others are still at an early stage of participation. This variation highlights the need for differentiated support and inclusive approaches to mobility. • Challenges related to the recognition of learning outcomes, particularly in relation to frameworks such as ECVET, can limit the effectiveness and perceived value of mobility experiences. • Language barriers, including limited proficiency in foreign languages among both staff and learners, may also affect participation and the quality of mobility outcomes. These factors suggest that mobility should be accompanied by appropriate preparation, support, and follow-up mechanisms to maximise its impact.
	In Armenia, experience with mobility activities is relatively heterogeneous across institutions: • Some institutions have developed active engagement in international cooperation, participating regularly in mobility programmes and benefiting from knowledge exchange opportunities. • Others have more limited exposure, often due to constraints such as lack of experience, limited institutional capacity, or administrative barriers. In addition, challenges related to recognition of learning outcomes and language skills continue to affect participation, highlighting the importance of building institutional capacity in managing mobility processes and supporting participants.
	In Georgia, participation in international mobility activities is increasing, reflecting a growing openness to international cooperation: • There is a positive trend towards greater involvement, with more institutions engaging in mobility opportunities over time. • However, participation remains concentrated in specific sectors, such as ICT, tourism, and agriculture, where international cooperation is more established or aligned with labour market demand. This indicates both progress and potential, suggesting that mobility activities could be further expanded to other sectors and institutions, with appropriate support and strategic planning.

Section 3: Capacity-Building Needs

This section focuses on identifying partners' capacity-building needs in relation to the three core pillars of the Cooperation Model: **Implementation, Capacity, and Sustainability**. It aims to capture the areas where institutions and staff require support in order to effectively participate in, benefit from, and contribute to the project.

The purpose of this section is not only to list needs, but to encourage partners to reflect on the conditions required to successfully introduce, adopt, and maintain new practices within their institutions. By structuring inputs around the three pillars, the section ensures a comprehensive perspective that covers both immediate operational needs and longer-term institutional development.

- **Implementation-related needs** focus on the practical aspects of introducing and testing new approaches, including the types of activities and tools that institutions are ready to pilot.
- **Capacity-related needs** address the skills, competences, and organisational conditions required for staff and institutions to effectively engage with and sustain innovation.
- **Sustainability-related needs** consider how improvements can be embedded over time, ensuring continuity, ownership, and long-term impact beyond the duration of the project.

The information collected in this section will directly inform the design of capacity-building activities under WP3, ensuring that they are tailored to the real needs and priorities of Armenian and Georgian partners.

Partners are encouraged to provide concise but thoughtful inputs, focusing on areas where support is most needed, as well as on opportunities for development and improvement within their institutions.

10. Priority Areas for Pilot Implementation Activities

This section identifies the main priority areas for pilot implementation activities within the VET Caucasus project. It reflects partners' readiness and interest in testing specific approaches, tools, and cooperation mechanisms in real institutional settings, in line with the **Implementation pillar** of the Cooperation Model.

The areas outlined below represent concrete entry points for experimentation and learning. They are designed to be practical and adaptable, allowing institutions to test new practices on a manageable scale while generating valuable insights for further development and potential scaling.

These pilot activities are expected to play a crucial role in bridging theory and practice, enabling partners to explore innovative approaches, assess their feasibility, and refine them based on direct experience.

Common Priorities	Across both countries, several key areas have been identified as particularly relevant for pilot implementation: • Pilot implementation of work-based learning (WBL) and dual education models, aimed at strengthening the integration between education and real work environments and improving the employability of learners. • Joint curriculum development with employers, fostering closer collaboration between VET institutions and industry actors to ensure that training programmes reflect current and emerging labour market needs. • Testing of modern teaching methodologies, including learner-centred and competency-based approaches, to enhance the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning processes. • Development and use of digital tools and learning platforms, supporting innovation in delivery methods and increasing flexibility and accessibility of training.
	In Armenia, pilot priorities reflect a strong focus on pedagogical innovation and the gradual integration of new approaches within institutional practice: • Focus on teaching methodologies and quality assurance pilots, allowing institutions to test improvements in both classroom practices and internal quality processes. • Integration of digital tools in teaching, supporting the modernisation of delivery methods and enhancing the learning experience.

	• Collaboration with industry through guest lectures and external input, providing learners with exposure to real-world perspectives and strengthening links with the labour market.
	In Georgia, pilot priorities highlight a more structured and system-oriented approach to implementation: • Development of structured WBL pilots, supported by clear training and assessment frameworks to ensure consistency and quality in practical learning experiences. • Teacher exchanges and peer-learning visits, enabling staff to gain exposure to different practices and strengthen professional competences through direct experience. • Development of EU-aligned learning outcomes, supporting alignment with European frameworks and enhancing the transparency and comparability of qualifications.

11. Key Capacity-Building Needs of Institutions

This section identifies the main capacity-building needs of VET institutions in Armenia and Georgia, focusing on the **skills, competences, and organisational conditions** required to effectively implement and sustain improvements. It reflects partners' perspectives on where targeted support is most needed in order to strengthen institutional performance and enable meaningful participation in the project.

The needs outlined below are closely aligned with the **Capacity pillar** of the Cooperation Model. They highlight not only individual training requirements, but also broader organisational and systemic dimensions that influence how institutions operate, adapt, and innovate.

Common Priorities	Across both countries, several key capacity-building needs emerge as particularly relevant: • Strengthening teaching methodologies, with a focus on adopting learner-centred, competency-based, and practice-oriented approaches that improve learning outcomes and student engagement. • Enhancing quality assurance capacities, supporting institutions in developing and applying internal QA mechanisms that promote continuous improvement and accountability. • Developing digital skills, both at the level of teachers and institutional systems, enabling the effective use of digital tools, platforms, and technologies in teaching and management. • Improving cooperation with employers, fostering stronger links with the labour market and supporting the integration of real-world perspectives into training provision. • Reinforcing institutional management capacities, including planning, coordination, and organisational effectiveness, to ensure that institutions can implement and sustain change processes.
	In Armenia, capacity-building needs reflect a strong focus on strengthening both pedagogical and organisational foundations: • Enhancing teacher training and digital competences, including the integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) into teaching practices. This is essential for modernising delivery methods and improving the quality of learning.

	• Improving strategic planning and coordination at institutional level, enabling institutions to better align their activities with national reforms, labour market needs, and long-term development objectives. These priorities highlight the importance of building both individual competences and institutional capacities to support sustainable development
	In Georgia, capacity-building needs are more strongly oriented towards system-level strengthening and alignment with European standards: • Strengthening governance and management capacities, supporting institutions in improving internal organisation, leadership, and decision-making processes. • Applying EU frameworks, such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), EQAVET, and ESCO, to enhance system alignment, transparency, and comparability. • Improving data-driven decision-making, enabling institutions to collect, analyse, and use data more effectively to inform planning, monitoring, and continuous improvement processes. These needs reflect a strong emphasis on institutional maturity, system alignment, and the development of more evidence-based practices.

12. Factors Supporting Sustainability of Project Results

This section identifies the key factors that can support the long-term sustainability of the VET Caucasus project results. It reflects how partners envision maintaining, adapting, and further developing project outcomes beyond the implementation phase, in line with the **Sustainability pillar** of the Cooperation Model.

Sustainability is understood here as a gradual and embedded process, where project results are not treated as standalone outputs, but are integrated into institutional practices, systems, and cultures. The factors outlined below highlight the conditions that can enable this transition from project-based activities to long-term institutional value.

Common Priorities	Across both countries, several core elements are recognised as essential for ensuring sustainability: • Integration of project results into institutional practices, allowing new approaches, tools, and methods to become part of everyday teaching, management, and quality assurance processes. This ensures continuity beyond the project lifecycle. • Continuous professional development, supporting staff in maintaining and further developing the competences acquired during the project. Ongoing learning is key to sustaining innovation over time. • Long-term partnerships with employers, which reinforce the relevance of VET provision and create stable cooperation mechanisms that extend beyond project activities.
	In Armenia, sustainability is closely linked to the internalisation of practices and knowledge within institutions: • Embedding practices into daily operations and institutional culture, ensuring that innovations introduced through the project are not temporary, but become part of standard working routines.

	• Sharing best practices across institutions, promoting peer learning and facilitating the wider dissemination and replication of successful approaches within the national VET system. These priorities highlight the importance of institutional ownership and internal knowledge transfer in sustaining project results.
	In Georgia, sustainability is more strongly associated with system-level integration and structured frameworks: • Institutionalisation of project results within national frameworks and quality assurance systems, ensuring that practices are aligned with formal structures and can be maintained through existing regulatory mechanisms. • Maintaining digital resources, such as Digital Learning Hubs, to ensure continued access to tools, materials, and learning opportunities developed during the project. • Strong stakeholder engagement, involving employers, policymakers, and other actors in sustaining and further developing project outcomes, thereby reinforcing relevance and long-term impact. These factors underline the importance of aligning project outputs with broader system dynamics and ensuring continued engagement of key stakeholders.

Section 4: Operational Cooperation Inputs [VISION]

This section aims to support the definition of practical cooperation mechanisms within the VET Caucasus project. It focuses on identifying the concrete elements that can guide how partners collaborate, interact, and engage in joint activities throughout the project lifecycle.

Building on the broader vision outlined in the Cooperation Model, this section translates strategic intentions into more operational inputs. It captures partners' perspectives on priority topics, cooperation formats, and organisational approaches that can make collaboration effective, relevant, and feasible in practice.

The information collected here is particularly important for shaping the design of peer-learning activities, exchanges, and joint initiatives. It helps ensure that cooperation is not only aligned with shared objectives, but also grounded in the real interests, capacities, and expectations of participating institutions.

Partners are encouraged to reflect on both **what** areas of cooperation are most relevant and **how** cooperation can be organised in a way that is efficient, inclusive, and adaptable to different contexts. Inputs may include priority themes, preferred formats for collaboration, and considerations related to governance and coordination.

13. Priority Topics for Peer Learning, Exchanges and Joint Activities

This section identifies the main thematic areas that partners consider most relevant for peer learning, exchanges, and joint activities within the VET Caucasus project. These topics reflect shared interests and strategic priorities, and they are intended to guide the design of collaborative actions, ensuring that they are both meaningful and impactful.

By focusing on these areas, partners can engage in structured knowledge exchange, share practical experiences, and jointly explore solutions to common challenges. The selected topics also support

the alignment between capacity-building needs and implementation activities, strengthening the overall coherence of the project.

Common Priorities	Across both countries, several core topics emerge as central to cooperation: • Teaching methodologies, particularly the adoption of learner-centred and competency-based approaches that improve the quality and effectiveness of training. • Quality assurance, focusing on strengthening internal and external QA processes and promoting a culture of continuous improvement within institutions. • Digitalisation, including the integration of digital tools and technologies to modernise teaching, learning, and institutional processes. • Cooperation with employers, aimed at enhancing the relevance of training provision and strengthening links between VET systems and labour market needs.
	In Armenia, priority topics for exchange reflect a focus on strengthening institutional practices and integrating innovation into existing structures: • Institutional management and quality assurance processes, supporting improvements in organisational effectiveness and internal monitoring systems. • Integration of digital tools and artificial intelligence (AI), enabling institutions to modernise teaching practices and enhance learning environments.
	In Georgia, priority topics highlight a strong interest in structured approaches and system-level development: • Work-based learning (WBL) implementation models, focusing on how to design and manage effective practical training systems. • AI-supported learning tools, exploring the use of advanced technologies to support more engaging and adaptive learning processes. • Regional VET development, addressing the need to tailor training provision to local economic and social contexts. • Implementation of EU frameworks, supporting alignment with European standards and enhancing system transparency and comparability.

14. Governance and Organisational Aspects for Cooperation

This section highlights the key governance and organisational aspects that partners consider important for ensuring effective and well-coordinated cooperation within the VET Caucasus project. It focuses on how collaboration is structured, managed, and sustained across different institutional and system levels.

Strong governance and clear organisational arrangements are essential for enabling cooperation to function smoothly. They help ensure that activities are well-coordinated, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and decision-making processes are transparent and inclusive. This is particularly important in a multi-country context, where partners operate within different institutional frameworks and administrative cultures.

The priorities outlined below provide guidance on how cooperation can be organised in a way that supports both efficiency and flexibility, while strengthening institutional capacity and fostering long-term collaboration.

Common Priorities	Across both countries, several governance-related priorities emerge as central to effective cooperation: • Strengthening coordination mechanisms, ensuring that communication flows efficiently across partners and that activities are aligned with project objectives and timelines. • Improving institutional management, supporting better planning, organisation, and internal coordination within VET institutions. • Enhancing quality assurance systems, ensuring that cooperation activities are implemented consistently and that their outcomes are monitored and improved over time.
	In Armenia, governance priorities reflect a focus on strengthening internal organisational capacity and institutional collaboration: • Strategic planning and resource management, enabling institutions to better allocate resources, prioritise activities, and align their development with national reforms and project objectives. • Institutional networking, supporting stronger connections between VET providers and other stakeholders, and fostering collaboration at both national and international levels. These elements highlight the importance of reinforcing institutional structures and creating more cohesive networks for cooperation.
	In Georgia, governance priorities are more strongly oriented towards multi-level coordination and system-wide alignment: • Multi-level stakeholder coordination, ensuring effective collaboration between national authorities, regional actors, institutions, and industry stakeholders. • Employer engagement structures, supporting more systematic and organised involvement of employers in governance and decision-making processes. • Regional governance models, promoting decentralised approaches that allow VET provision to better respond to local economic and social needs. These priorities underline the importance of strengthening coordination across different levels of the system and ensuring that governance arrangements are both inclusive and responsive.

15. Priority Sectors for Cooperation with Employers

This section identifies the key economic sectors in which cooperation with employers is considered most relevant within the VET Caucasus project. It reflects partners' perspectives on where stronger links between VET provision and labour market needs can generate the greatest impact.

Cooperation with employers is a central component of modern VET systems, as it ensures that training programmes remain relevant, up-to-date, and responsive to evolving economic demands. By focusing on priority sectors, partners can develop more targeted and effective collaboration, supporting both employability outcomes and regional development.

Common Priorities	Across both countries, there is a clear and shared emphasis on: • Focusing cooperation on sectors that are strongly aligned with labour market needs, ensuring that training provision responds to current and
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	emerging economic demands. This approach supports the development of relevant skills and enhances the employability of VET graduates.
	In Armenia, priority sectors for cooperation with employers are primarily linked to areas of economic growth and technological development: • IT and digital services, reflecting the increasing importance of digital skills and the expansion of the technology sector. • Web design, robotics, and engineering, representing specialised fields where demand for skilled professionals is growing and where innovation plays a key role. These sectors highlight the country's focus on digital transformation and the need to equip learners with advanced technical competences.
	In Georgia, priority sectors reflect both traditional economic strengths and emerging areas of development: • Construction, identified as a key sector with strong demand for skilled labour and significant potential for work-based learning opportunities. • Manufacturing, supporting industrial development and requiring a range of technical and vocational skills. • Tourism and hospitality, a major sector in the national economy, where service-oriented skills and practical experience are particularly important. • ICT and digital services, reflecting ongoing digitalisation trends and the need for modern technical competences. • Agriculture and agro-processing, representing a vital sector for regional development and employment, particularly in rural areas. These priorities underline the importance of aligning VET provision with both national economic strategies and local labour market needs.

Section 5: Partner Contribution to WPs[MISSION]

This section aims to capture how partners expect to contribute to the different Work Packages (WPs) of the VET Caucasus project. It provides an opportunity for institutions to reflect on their potential roles, areas of engagement, and level of involvement across the project's implementation.

The purpose of this section is not to define formal commitments, but to gather indicative inputs that can support better planning, coordination, and alignment of activities. By understanding how partners see their contribution, the project can ensure a more balanced distribution of tasks and a more effective use of available expertise and resources.

Partners are encouraged to consider their strengths, experience, and institutional capacity when providing inputs. Contributions may vary across work packages and can include both active implementation roles and supportive or participatory involvement.

The information collected in this section will help:

- **Clarify expected roles and levels of engagement across partners**, ensuring transparency and shared understanding.
- **Support the effective coordination of activities within and across Work Packages**, aligning contributions with project needs.

- **Identify areas where additional support or capacity-building may be required**, particularly where partners have limited experience or resources.

Short and indicative answers are sufficient. The focus should be on providing a realistic overview of expected contributions, rather than detailed or formal commitments.

Common Priorities	Across all work packages, partners are expected to contribute through a set of core activities that support the overall functioning and impact of the project: • Active participation in coordination and communication, ensuring continuous engagement in meetings, exchanges, and project activities. • Sharing experience and feedback from implementation, contributing practical insights that inform project development and improvement. • Testing and validating project outputs, supporting the refinement of tools, methodologies, and frameworks through real-life application. • Dissemination and stakeholder engagement, helping to ensure visibility of project results and their uptake by relevant audiences. • Supporting sustainability, by contributing to the integration of project outcomes into institutional practices and long-term strategies.
	In Armenia, partner contributions are expected to focus primarily on piloting and practical implementation activities, as well as knowledge sharing: • Focus on piloting teaching methodologies and curricula, contributing to the testing and refinement of innovative approaches within institutional settings. • Sharing best practices and institutional experience, enriching the cooperation process with context-specific insights and lessons learned. • Participation in mobility and exchange activities, supporting knowledge transfer and strengthening international cooperation. • Integration of results into institutional operations, contributing to the sustainability and long-term impact of project outcomes.
	In Georgia, partner contributions reflect a strong engagement in implementation, validation, and dissemination processes: • Active role in pilot implementation and field-based validation, ensuring that project outputs are tested in real conditions and adapted where necessary. • Contribution through stakeholder engagement and real-case feedback, strengthening the relevance and applicability of project activities. • Support to testing EU tools and frameworks, contributing to alignment with European standards and practices. • Active participation in dissemination and national-level events, supporting the visibility and broader impact of the project at system level.

Section 6: Cooperation Contract [Declaration of Intent]

We, the partners of the VET Caucasus project, acknowledge the operational commitments described above and express our shared intention to cooperate in a transparent, inclusive and constructive manner throughout the project implementation.

By endorsing this declaration, partners commit to:



- *Participate regularly in project coordination and working meetings, in line with the activities foreseen under the project work plan (WP1)*
- *Contribute according to their roles and responsibilities within the different Work Packages (WP1-WP4), as outlined in the Cooperation Model*
- *Take part in the project's decision-making processes in a democratic and collaborative way, respecting diverse perspectives, institutional roles and national contexts*
- *Support monitoring, reflection and quality assurance activities, contributing to continuous improvement across project activities*
- *Adapt, adjust and transfer project-related knowledge, tools and content within their own institutional and operational settings, where relevant and feasible*
- *Engage actively in testing, validation, communication and dissemination activities, in line with WP3 and WP4 objectives*
- *Promote mutual learning, local ownership and sustainability, with the aim of ensuring that project results generate value beyond the project duration*
- *Carry out activities always in due respect of the European Union Values*

This declaration does not constitute a legal or contractual obligation. It represents a shared statement of intent and a common understanding of how partners agree to work together within the framework of the VET Caucasus project and the operational commitments described

Collaboration statement

As Project Coordinator of the VET Caucasus initiative, We present this Collaboration Statement as the strategic vision guiding our cooperation throughout the project. We see VET Caucasus as a shared space for dialogue, mutual learning and gradual improvement in vocational education and training in Armenia and Georgia, developed in close cooperation with European partners. While our national and institutional contexts differ, We recognise that many challenges are comparable: modernising teaching approaches, strengthening institutional capacity and improving alignment between VET provision and labour market needs.

Our aspiration for this project is to enable a form of cooperation that is balanced and respectful. European experience and frameworks can offer valuable reference points, but the direction of change must remain grounded in local realities, priorities and constraints. For this reason, We consider cooperation in VET Caucasus not as the transfer of predefined models, but as a co-creation process, where partners jointly explore what is feasible, relevant and sustainable in their own contexts.

Throughout the project, We aim to foster a structured and constructive environment where partners can:

- *Share experiences and perspectives on VET development*
- *Jointly explore practical solutions to common challenges*
- *Test and adapt approaches in real institutional settings*
- *Learn from implementation, including what works well and what requires adjustment*

We also consider the human and institutional dimension of cooperation essential. Beyond project activities, We hope this collaboration will strengthen professional relationships among VET institutions and stakeholders, supporting trust, continuity and long-term exchange.

The vision We put forward through this statement is centred on:

- *Improving teaching quality and learning outcomes*
- *Reinforcing institutional and organisational capacity*
- *Enhancing the relevance of VET provision to labour market needs*
- *Supporting sustainable cooperation mechanisms that respect national contexts and institutional autonomy*



This Collaboration Statement provides the strategic orientation of the Cooperation Model. It is intentionally meant to guide our cooperation while leaving full flexibility for adaptation through partner input, joint reflection and progressive implementation during the project lifecycle.



Materials for the Co-Creation of WP2 – Yerevan Training Mobility and Project Meeting



Co-funded by
the European Union

VET CAUCASUS

Strengthening VET systems in Armenia and Georgia for skills and workforce development

[General intro](#)

Project Reference Number: 101242599

This is not a typical training

A moment to think together, share ideas, and explore what can really work in your context

Content – Objectives of the 3-day session:

Understand what is really happening in your VET system

→ not only what is written, but what actually works (and what doesn't)

Look at skills and training in a different way

→ simple ideas that can help improve learning and jobs

Work together to create practical solutions

→ based on your reality, your challenges, your experience

Leave with clear next steps

→ small, realistic actions you can try after the training



Let's be clear from the start

This is not about teaching — it's about thinking and building together

Some guiding principles for these 3 days:

1. **I am not here to teach you your job** ► you know your context better than anyone
2. **There are no magic solutions or ready-made answers** ► no secret formula that works everywhere
3. **This is a space for co-creation, not one-way learning** ► ideas will come from all of us, together
4. **What we share comes from EU experience, but must be adapted** ► every context is different, and that matters
5. **Real change takes time** ► it comes from testing, learning, adjusting, and trying again

What we often see in VET systems

Different countries, different organisations, same challenges (more or less)

1. Limited financial resources

- Strong dependence on **public funding**
- No clear **strategy to diversify income**
- High risk for **long-term financial sustainability**

2. Working in isolation

- Public authorities seen as **funders, not partners**
- Low level of **international exchange** (*sharing / learning from others*)
- Weak cooperation with **private sector and other stakeholders**

3. Difficulty engaging learners and partners

- VET often seen as **"second choice"** compared to university
- High **drop-out rates**
- Hard to build **stable partnerships with companies** → fewer job opportunities for students

4. Other important (horizontal) challenges

- Digitalisation (at **organisational** level and **competence level** of teachers)
- Sustainability – both in the sense of organisational culture and subject of training
- Inclusion and accessibility, including measures to prevent barriers to education and teaching for marginalised groups



What is VET really doing today in your country?

Not what is written... what actually happens

1. What works well? ► *What are you proud of?*
2. What doesn't work? ► *What creates problems or frustration?*
3. What is completely broken? ► *What needs to seriously change?*

The uncomfortable truth

Every system has blind spots

What we often see (in many countries):

- VET often **teaches skills that are already outdated** → the labour market moves faster than training
- VET is often **not well connected to employers** → training and real jobs don't match (*who's fault is this?...*)
- VET systems often **react too late to change** → instead of anticipating needs



Where is the real gap?

Few triggers for discussion

1. **Skills gap** ► Are people learning the right skills?
2. **System gap** ► Are structures, rules, or processes creating problems?
3. **Mindset gap** ► Are attitudes, beliefs, or habits limiting change?
Or maybe...
4. **Communication gap** ► Are stakeholders talking to each other enough?
5. **Information gap** ► Do people have access to the right data or insights?
6. **Expectation gap** ► Do education and employers expect different things?
7. **Opportunity gap** ► Do learners have real chances to apply what they learn?
8. **Innovation gap** ► Are we trying new things, or repeating the same model?

What if we looked at things differently?

Sometimes change starts with a different question

What if... **training started from real jobs, not from curricula?**

→ so that learning can be closer to real work situations

What if... **we focused on what people can do, not what we teach?**

→ so that skills can be more visible and practical

What if... **skills were clear, visible, and easy to understand?**

→ so that they can be more easily recognised by others

What if... **learning was more flexible and modular?**

→ so that people can adapt more easily to change

What if... **VET worked together with companies, not separately?**

→ so that connections with the labour market can be stronger

What if... **competences were more than just technical?**

→ so that people are prepared not only for a job but for a changing world



What if training started from real jobs?

Understanding what the labour market actually needs

Start from real occupations and skills, not only from subjects

ESCO helps to:

- ▶ identify what skills are needed for specific jobs
- ▶ connect training content with labour market needs

Useful for:

- designing courses
- updating training programmes
- talking with employers using a common language

What if we focused on what people can do?

From teaching content → to real competences

Shift from:



“What do we teach?”



“What can learners actually do after training?”

The **CEDEFOP** learning-outcomes based teaching approach valorise

- ▶ knowledge (***what you know***)
- ▶ skills (***what you can do***)
- ▶ attitudes (***how you apply it***)

Useful for:

- clearer course design
- better assessment
- more practical training



What if skills were clear and comparable?

Making competences easier to understand and recognise

EQF is a framework defining competences on an 8-layer progressions system

Helps to:

- ▶ understand how advanced a qualification is
- ▶ compare qualifications across countries

Useful for:

- mobility (students and workers)
- Transparency
- building trust between systems

What if people could clearly show their skills?

Making competences visible and understandable

EUROPASS helps students:

- ▶ create clear CVs and profiles
- ▶ describe their skills and experiences
- ▶ supports job applications, education pathways, international mobility
- ▶ makes skills more visible, easier to understand by employers



What if quality was continuous, not occasional?

Improving VET step by step

The EU VET systems adopts **EQAVET**

Focus on a simple cycle:→ Plan → Implement → Evaluate → Improve

Helps organisations to:

- ▶ monitor results
- ▶ identify what works / what doesn't
- ▶ improve over time

Not about control → **but about learning and improving**

What if learning was more flexible?

Small steps, fast learning, real impact

CEDEOP and **EU approach to “micro-credentials” (micro-learning)**: short, focused learning experiences

- ▶ Can be combined over time
- ▶ Useful for updating skills quickly, adult learners, specific job needs
- ▶ Support a more flexible, adaptable, responsive training system



What if skills were more than technical?

Preparing people not only for a job... but for a changing world

Many training programmes focus on technical competences (and rightfully so)

But today, people also need:

- Adaptability
- Critical thinking
- Collaboration
- Digital skills
- Sustainability awareness

These are often called transversal skills, life skills, future skills

Across Europe, different frameworks work on this:

- EntreComp ► entrepreneurship & initiative
- DigComp ► digital skills
- GreenComp ► sustainability
- LifeComp ► personal & social skills

Different gaps, different tools and approaches

No single solution — but many ways to move forward

Skills gap: ESCO (identify needed skills), Learning Outcomes (focus on what learners can do), EQF (define levels clearly)

System gap: EQAVET (improve quality and processes), EQF (structure qualifications), Micro-credentials (increase flexibility)

Mindset gap: Learning Outcomes (shift from teaching to doing), Competence frameworks (broaden the vision of skills)

Communication gap: ESCO (common language for skills), EUROPASS (clear presentation of competences)

Opportunity gap: EUROPASS (support employability), ESCO (align skills with jobs)

Inclusion gap: CEDEFOP guidelines (outreach and engagement strategies)

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