Overview

- Established 1990 as part of the EU’s external assistance to countries surrounding the EU
- Set up as part of the EU response to the collapse of the economies of Central and Eastern Europe
- Based in Turin, northern Italy
Geographical coverage
Thematic scope

Human resources development in a lifelong perspective and links with the labour market
Objectives

- To provide policy advice to partner countries
- To support European Commission programming
- To help partner countries develop and implement their own reforms
EU skills developments and learning policies

- Lisbon strategy
  - Aims to make Europe the most competitive knowledge based economy in the world
  - Human resources development major aspect of this

- Increase investment in human capital through better education and skills
The importance of education and training in the Lisbon objectives

Tertiary education holders have a higher rate of employment than those with lower education levels (19% difference with upper secondary and 31% with lower secondary).
EU goals

- Role of vocational education and training in delivering the knowledge-based economy
  - Promotion of mobility
  - Dialogue and use of common criteria to channel national policies

- Open method of coordination
EU targets

- 85% of 22 year olds and 80% of 25-64 year olds complete upper secondary education

- Average participation in lifelong learning 12.5% of the adult working age population.

- No more than 10% early school leavers

- Halve the rate of early school leavers between 2000 and 2010

- Halve low-achieving 15 year olds in the areas of reading, mathematics and scientific literacy
Commitment of Member States

- Ensuring access to lifelong learning requires an increased level of investment and fair sharing of costs between all those who benefit.

- Public investment to concentrate on those most in need e.g. low skilled, disadvantaged groups and people working in small firms.
Key messages

- Investment in learning is critical in the context of a "knowledge based society".

- Investment in learning benefits the state, the employer and the individual.

- Coherent and comprehensive strategies are needed to give access to lifelong learning. Public intervention should target those most in need.
Copenhagen Process

- A process to improve the performance, quality and attractiveness of vocational training
- Key process in skills development and learning policies
- Provides a platform for
  - Sharing ideas
  - Considering policies in the light of experience from other countries
  - Common work
Key Copenhagen developments

- European qualifications framework as transparency tool
- Common quality assurance framework
- Common principles for learning validation
- Emphasis on learning outcomes
- Emphasis on middle levels skills
- Credit transfer for higher education and VET sector
The main elements of the EQF
EU external assistance dimensions

- Development cooperation countries
- Neighbourhood countries
- Candidate and potential candidate countries
- EU education and training policies
EU external assistance

- Instrument for Pre-Accession
- European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
- Development Cooperation Instrument
Relevant developments

- The Instrument for Pre-Accession has the perspective of integration into the internal EU market.

- For the ENPI, integration can be supported by shared approaches or understanding the EU framework for education and training.
Overall aim in partner countries

- In some cases instruments are not appropriate
- More emphasis on capacity building or governance in the countries
- Policy learning is the strongest facilitator
Use of EU approaches in partner countries

- In South Eastern Europe policy facilitation in entrepreneurial learning on the European Charter for Small Enterprises

- In the ENPI area, reviewing labour market policies drawn from the Lisbon Strategy.

- In Central Asia (DCI), skills development for poverty reduction
Two main approaches

- EU accession context: EU approaches to skills development and learning policy used to inform policy developments and support professional practices

- Low priority national agenda: policy learning focused on capacity building for local problem identification and solution finding