



Twinning Project Fiche

***Empowerment of the Tertiary Level Education of the
Republic of Armenia for European Higher Education
Area Integration "EHEA"***

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Glossary

ANQA	AM National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation
ANFQ	Armenian National Qualifications Framework
APL	Adaptable Program Loan (WB)
BC	Beneficiary Country
BP	Bologna Process
CTM	Common Twinning Manual (CTM), Revision 2012, Institution Building in the Framework of European Union Policies http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/overview/documents/twinning_manual_2012_en.pdf
ECTS	European Credit and Transfer System
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EC	European Commission
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ESG	European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA
EU/EUD	European Union / EU Delegation to Armenia
GIQAC	Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity (WB & UNESCO)
HEIs	Higher Education Institution(s)
ICR	Implementation Completion and Results (WB)
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia
MS/MSP	Member State(s) of the EU / Member State(s) Partner(s)
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PAO	EU Programmes Division (PAO), Ministry of Economy of RA
PCA	(AM-EU) Partnership and Co-operation Agreement
PL	Project Leader
SC	(Twinning) Steering Committee
QA	Quality Assurance
RA	Republic of Armenia / "Armenia"
RTA	Resident Twinning Adviser
STE	Short-term Expert(s)
TES	Tertiary Education System
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WB	World Bank
WG	Working Group (set up by the Minister of Education and Science)

1. Basic Information

1.1. Programme

European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)
Framework Programme - ENPI/2011/23010

1.2. Twinning Number

AM/13/ENP/OT/13

1.3. Title

Empowerment of the Tertiary Level Education of the Republic of Armenia for European Higher Education Area Integration "EHEA"

1.4. Sector

Higher Education

1.5. Beneficiary country

Republic of Armenia

2. Objectives

2.1. Overall Objective(s)

The overall objective of the project is to enhance the tertiary/third level education system of the Republic of Armenia through its integration with the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

Integration with the EHEA will be of benefit to all graduates of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Armenia by the improvement of their programmes through the design of programmes based on learning outcomes, the adoption of European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance, the facilitation of mobility within the EHEA for Armenian students and staff, enhanced recognition of their qualifications within member states of EHEA (47 countries at present) and improved employability for graduates.

The project will also be of benefit to the EHEA by having Armenia as an active and fully-fledged member thereby contributing to the image of EHEA as the leading grouping in the world of higher education.

2.2. Project purpose

This project will seek to assist the full implementation of an Armenian National Framework of Qualifications (ANFQ) by the national authorities, by specialist agencies and by HEIs which meets all the requirements of the Bologna Process, ensures Armenia's full membership of the EHEA and thereby improves the quality of higher education to the benefit of students, graduates and employers.

2.3. Contribution to the EU-Republic of Armenia Partnership and Co-operation Agreement, the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan, and the Republic of Armenia Strategy Action Plan

Strengthening the quality of education system is referred to in Armenia-EU strategic documents as a broad priority. The PCA outlines the priority for raising the level of general education and professional qualifications in Armenia (Title VI. Economic Cooperation, Article 52. Education and Training).

The EU-Armenia ENP Action Plan fosters People to People Contacts (4.7) via Education, Training and Youth (4.7.1.). That implies modernization of the education and training systems towards convergence with the EU standards and practices, i.e. it highlights the importance of higher education sector reforms in line with the principles of the Bologna Process that Armenia joined in May 2005 (ENP AP Article 4.7.1, § 2 – Reform the higher education sector in line with the principles of the “Bologna process” in order to facilitate the recognition of Armenia's higher education degrees and qualifications in the European higher education area and strengthen local capacities for policy development and implementation).

Furthermore, the Armenia ENPI National Indicative Programme 2011-2013 in its Priority Area 3: Socio-economic reform and sustainable development – Sub-priority 3.3: Human development, including education and science, social services, sets as a specific objective “Modernisation of education and training system in order to enhance socio-economic development, to facilitate integration into the European Higher Education Area”.

Finally the Progress Report published on 25 of May 2011 by the European Commission for the implementation of ENP in 2010 in Armenia indicates progress in the development of a comprehensive national qualifications framework comparable to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

3. Description

3.1. Background and justification

The Republic of Armenia is one of 47 countries participating in the Bologna Process for the reform of higher education in Europe. The process commenced with 29 countries in 1999 and the success of the process attracted other countries to join. Armenia joined in 2005 and has quickly implemented all the major initiatives that had been agreed by the ministers of education of the member states except the design and implementation of a NQF and the demonstration of its compatibility with the Qualifications Framework of the EHEA. Once such a national framework was implemented, it was agreed that all programmes should be designed in terms of learning outcomes which are aligned to the various levels of the NQF.

The 1st version of the Armenian NQF was adopted in 2011 together with the timetable for implementation of the framework. But already the first milestones identified the problems not only with the implementation, but also related to the framework itself. Moreover, the education institutions still have to rewrite their education programmes to have them based on learning outcomes. They require assistance for this task. The Bologna Process Stocktaking Report (2009) recognised that “linking programmes with learning outcomes and designing procedures to measure achievement of the intended learning outcomes are the most difficult parts and will take longer to implement” (page 8).

The main purpose of the project is to ensure that Armenian higher education is compatible with higher education throughout Europe and that students, staff and graduates will benefit from greater mobility, international recognition of qualifications and collaboration opportunities with HEIs in the other 46 EHEA countries.

Overall context in the field of Higher Education / Bologna Process

Armenia joined the Bologna Process in 2005 in Bergen. By this act, it committed itself to overhauling its higher education system to comply with all the dimensions of the Bologna

framework, with a view to becoming a full member of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). In 2006 the Government of RA adopted the agenda for Bologna Process implementation principles for higher education system which reflects the proposals of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) as launched by the European Commission in September 2006. As the majority of EU Member-states have agreed to develop their National Qualifications Frameworks in line with the EQF provisions, this trend is the most important challenge for Armenia to achieve and thus, to integrate into the European Higher Education Area. The challenge for the Armenian tertiary level education system at this stage is to design a holistic system that is capable of preparing the highly qualified specialists with transferable skills and capacity to function in an ever-changing environment.

The European Qualifications Framework is to serve the objectives of lifelong-learning, and is considered to be a meta-framework. It is a starting point, and a conversion mechanism, which makes the qualifications more readable within and between the countries that use this system as a standard for their home/national framework. It reflects the expected learning outcomes for a specific qualification; it indicates what learners know, understand and are able to do with the qualification.

Armenia has been chosen to host the next meeting of Ministers of Education in regard to the Bologna Process. It will take place in Yerevan in 2015.

Institutional and legal framework in the field of Higher Education/The Bologna Process

Institutional framework in the field of Higher Education

The Ministry of Education and Science is a central government body that has an overall authority to design education policies, i.e. national policy in all levels of education. Following the Lisbon Recognition Convention, the Armenian National Information Centre for Academic Recognition and Mobility was founded in 2006 and a diploma supplement (as recommended by the Council of Europe, UNESCO and EC) was introduced in the 2006-2007 academic year.

The main administrative division within the MoES, which plays a crucial role in the development, implementation and enforcement of the tertiary level education, is the Higher and Post-graduate Professional Education Department. Its participation is extremely important. The Department will be one of the key beneficiaries of the project as a central-level administration.

After joining the Bologna process in 2005 the need to establish an independent quality assurance agency surfaced. Therefore, in November 2008, the National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA) Foundation was established by a Decree of the Government of the RA. ANQA has a key responsibility for quality assurance processes according to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) in the European Higher Education Area. In view of ANQA's key role in the accreditation of education institutions and of programmes offered by them; it is important that it is involved in the development of the methodology by which HEIs will design all future programmes.

To ensure the participation of all the key stakeholders in the project, a Working Group chaired by the Deputy Minister of Education has been established.

Higher education institutions (HEIs): The higher education system in Armenia is represented by a number of higher education institutions, both state and private. At present there are 26 state and 41 private higher education institutions operating in the Republic of Armenia, of which 35 are accredited institutions, 6 are non-accredited institutions in addition to which there are some branches of foreign universities.

State higher education institutions operate under the responsibility of several ministries but most of them are under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Science. Among 26 state higher education institutions, 16 with their 14 branches belong to the system of the Ministry of Education and Science and 4 HEIs, founded by interstate agreements and state participation, are funded by the Ministry of Education and Science. There are six HEIs that operate under the supervision of other ministries, three in the system of the Ministry of Defence and one higher education institution in the system of each of the following Ministry/Bodies: Police, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Mother See of Holy Etchimiadzin.

Higher education is provided by many types of institutions: universities, institutes, academies and conservatory.

University: HEI providing higher, postgraduate and supplementary education in different branches of natural and sociological fields, science, technology, and culture, as well as providing opportunities for scientific research and studies.

Institute: HEI conducting specialized Bachelor and postgraduate academic programmes and scientific research in a number of scientific, economic and cultural branches.

Academy (educational): HEI, the activity of which is aimed at the development of education, science, technology and culture in an individual sphere; it conducts programs preparing and re-training highly qualified specialists in an individual field, as well as postgraduate academic programs.

Conservatory: HEI preparing specialists in the field of music, providing qualification development and postgraduate academic programs.

The state HEIs in Armenia are autonomous, not-for-profit legal state entities, which possess, utilize and manage the property allocated to them according to their mission and policies developed by the founder (the government).

Legal framework in the field of Higher Education

To properly implement reforms in the higher education system, an appropriate legal framework was adopted. In particular the “Law on Education” was adopted in 1999, which, since its adoption, was amended from time to time based on priorities of problems that arose.

The RA Law on Education was followed by the development and adoption of laws, by-laws and decrees regulating subsectors of education system. In particular, the following RA Laws create a framework for reforming the subsectors of the education system:

- “Law on Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education” (2004),
- “Law on Preliminary and Middle Level Professional (Vocational) Education” (2005),
- The Government of Armenia Protocol Decisions “On Strategy of the RA Higher Education Reforms” (2003), “Preliminary and Middle Level Professional education and Teaching Strategy” (2004), etc.

Moreover, “General State Standard of Professional Higher Education” was adopted in 2001 as an initial attempt to establish a qualifications framework. This General State Standard also outlines the mandatory minimum for academic programmes.

In 2011 RA Government adopted a decree on “National Education Qualifications Framework of the RA”. According to the document the ANQF consists of 8 levels:

1. Elementary Education
2. Basic Education
3. Craftsman
4. Secondary Education
5. Specialist
6. Bachelor
7. Master
8. Researcher (Scientific Degree – Candidate of Science)

However, this NQF was found not to be compatible with the QF-EHEA and accordingly is currently being revised. It is hoped to have a revised framework by early, 2013.

3.2. Linked activities (*other international and national initiatives*)

The **Bologna Process** seeks to develop a European Higher Education Area which ensures comparability in the standard and quality of higher education qualifications; it is being implemented in 47 countries with important support from the European Commission.

The Armenian Education system has benefitted or is benefiting from several foreign technical assistance projects. In particular:

- **Vocational Education and Training system** benefitted from the substantial EU sector policy support programs' (Budget Support) inputs from 2007 to 2009. In addition, the European Training Foundation (ETF) has worked very closely with the Armenian authorities in the field of VET reform..

Higher education reform in Armenia continues to benefit from participation in the EU-funded **Tempus programme**. **Tempus IV (2007-13) has financed 22 projects involving Armenian institutions for a total amount of 8.34 million Euro. And it is hoped that further projects will be funded in the next round of funding (March 2013).** Armenia also continued its active participation in the **Erasmus Mundus** programme and benefitted from 13 new scholarships for Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses under Action 1, while 2 scholarships for joint doctorates and a further 259 mobility grants for students and academics under Action 2 were awarded. For the first time, in 2010 a **Jean Monnet** interdisciplinary module was awarded to Yerevan State University to increase understanding of EU relations with the Southern Caucasus in the context of the ENP.

Two on-going Tempus projects, DIUS and PICQA, focus on internal and external quality assurance methodology which assists the implementation of the Bologna Process.

Moreover, Armenia is involved in nine Tempus projects for the period October 2012 to October 2015 including:

- **Industrial Cooperation and Creative Engineering Education based on Remote Engineering and Virtual Instrumentation (2012-2015)**
This 3-year project aims to equip engineering students in Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine with the skills necessary for a successful career. The project will forge partnerships between universities and industry and will be based on EU best practice. The coordinator is Ilmenau University Germany and partner institutions include three universities in Armenia and two industrial partners (Synopsys and National Instruments).
- **Masters in Higher Education Management: Developing Leaders for Managing Educational Transformation (2012-2015)**
This 3-year project is coordinated by Armenian State Pedagogical University and involves partners in Georgia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy and UK.
- **Armenian Coordination Agency “University- Employer” (2012-2015)**

A 3-year project to improve the relevance of higher education to the ever-changing labour market and to establish and operationalise university-employers cooperation in Armenia. The coordinator is Armenian State University of Economics with partners in EU (Germany, Italy, Latvia, Austria, Estonia and Poland) and many Armenian partners (universities and employers).

- **ENQA – UNESCO-GIQAC project: Capacity building activities for quality assurance networks in the field of higher education in the regions of Central Asia and the Balkans (2012)**

Within the frames of UNESCO-GIQAC project a technical support in the form of advice for the Accreditation Commission establishment and promoting alignment between ANQA, Governing Board and Accreditation Council and the Ministry of Education and Science is necessary and this should be done while endeavouring to establish alignment with the ESGs. Thus, Armenia has been approved for the grant and the visits are planned shortly.

TAIEX

In addition to the projects listed above, there were some short term actions funded by the European Union under its TAIEX Programme, i. a. the following workshops held in Armenia:

- Continuous Medical Education Systems in the European Union (May 2010 – with a study visit in Italy in September 2012);
- Quality assurance in higher education (February 2010);
- Mobility for Life Long Learning and employment among EU member states joined the Bologna process (July 2011);

3.3. Results

The Twinning will aim to reach its goal through the following objectives:

- a) Development of a legal framework and institutional arrangements for the RA's NQF to comply with the Bologna Process key documents. In close cooperation with stakeholders the project should help MoES and ANQA to anchor the priorities for the tertiary education alignment processes;
- b) Institutional building assistance for NQF institutions of Armenia, in particular MoES and ANQA, to properly implementing the new regulative documents and to establish and upgrade its internal operational modalities for the adoption of best practices in the field;
- c) Training and awareness raising to assist HEIs in developing their institutional capacity to effectively assume the upcoming obligations.

- R1. The legislative framework for higher education will have been reviewed with a view to facilitating flexible curricula in universities, to identifying gaps that impede the implementation of the Bologna initiatives and to supporting to overcome the gaps and implementing the reforms. The institutional arrangements for the development and maintenance of the NQF will have been reviewed, recommendations made and support provided for the implementation of the amendments and reforms.
- R2. Designated staff in MoES will have been trained in writing learning outcomes for higher education programmes and will adopt the regulations for higher education to accommodate a learning outcomes approach.
- R3. Designated staff in ANQA will have been trained in writing learning outcomes for higher education programmes and will have developed a methodology for the evaluation of higher education programmes based on learning outcomes and their relationship with the ANQF.
- R4. Some staff in each of the 26 public universities will have been trained to write learning outcomes for programmes, to assess student achievement of those outcomes and to relate those learning outcomes to the levels in the ANQF.
Each university will have developed a methodology to apply ECTS credits to modules and programmes and to evaluate the extent to which each programme meets the requirements for the appropriate level in the ANQF. Better use of ECTS will facilitate greater flexibility of curricula and improved student mobility.
- R5. The ANQF will meet the requirements of employers and graduates for the labour market in Armenia (thereby improving employability of graduates) and enable Armenia to meet its obligations for the Bologna Process when it is assessed as part of the Bologna Process Stocktaking for the 2015 meeting of ministers in Yerevan.

Note: this project envisages capacity building for Ministry staff and staff of the state agency for quality assurance, While the objectives for the two groups are not identical, they do overlap in some respects. Accordingly, some activities will be undertaken jointly where it

provides economic efficiencies.

3.4. Activities

Note: the number of working days mentioned in the present section and in the logical framework are only indicative.

3.4.1. General Activities

Besides the activities related to the five components mentioned below, the project will also organise two general activities in order to ensure some visibility of the project at the beginning and discuss the project's impact at the stage of completion. Furthermore, in order to ensure an effective management and monitoring mechanism, regular meetings of the Steering Committee will be organised.

Activity 0.1: Kick-off Meeting

Method:

The first month of the project will be used to allow the installation of the Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA) in the Republic of Armenia. The RTA will have to be installed in his/her office at the MoES. S/he will be introduced to the Armenian stakeholders of the project and to his/her counterparts and staff. S/he will also hire two assistants (RTA Assistant and Language Assistant) through an appropriate selection procedure (See Section 3.5 hereafter).

During the first quarter of the project, the project team will organise a Kick-off Meeting in Yerevan, with the purpose of providing a first official contact to all stakeholders involved in the project and presenting the project to the media and the public at large. In order to guarantee large public information about the start of the project, the meeting will be concluded with a press conference and a press release. The nature of this meeting will be operational, and will be attended by the Project Leaders, the RTA and the RTA Armenian counterparts, representatives of all the stakeholders, PAO representative, EU Delegation representatives and representatives from the MS Embassy in Armenia, other donor organisations. The Kick-off Meeting will give the participants the opportunity to be informed in detail about the project objectives, purposes and implementation plan.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	RTA, Project Leader (PL)
BC:	Project Leader (PL), RTA counterpart
Other resources:	Offices for the RTA, RTA Assistant and Short-term Experts, Conference room for the kick-off meeting, Interpretation, translation and documentation
Month:	2-3 (possibly back-to-back with the first quarterly Steering Committee – See 6.3. hereafter)
Benchmarks:	Stakeholders, media and public informed about the start and content of the project, Press release, Project visibility material produced

Activity 0.2: Closing Conference

Method:

During the last two months of the project, a closing conference will be organised at which the results of the project will be presented. The purpose of this activity is to disseminate the results of the implemented project. The conference will take place in Yerevan and all the stakeholders participating in the activities, authorities from the MS, BC and other EU experts, a selected group of trainees, PAO representatives, representatives from the EU Delegation, media, etc. will be invited to participate. The conference will be concluded with some recommendations for possible follow-up and lessons learned for similar projects.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	RTA, PL, Short Time Experts (STEs)
BC:	PL, RTA counterpart
Other resources:	Conference venue, Simultaneous interpretation, catering
Month:	24 (possibly back-to-back with the last quarterly Steering Committee – See 6.3. hereafter)
Benchmarks:	Closing Conference organised, Recommendations and Lessons learned formulated and discussed Stakeholders, media and public informed about the results of the project at its end.

3.4.2. Specific Activities under Components

Preliminary remark:

Twinning partners have to keep in mind that the Bologna Ministerial Meeting (BMM) will be held in Yerevan mid 2015 and arrange the schedule of the project accordingly. Depending on the actual starting date of the Twinning (end of 2013), it is supposed to take place during the penultimate quarter of the Twinning project. Outcomes of the BMM will be highlighted during the Closing Conference (A.0.2) and will also be reflected in the final report of the Twinning project as a part of the assessment of the undertaken activities. At the same time, the MoES should take advantage of the Twinning upshot for drafting the self-assessment to be prepared in early 2015 for the BMM.

Besides, each activity upon completion will issue an outcome/deliverables with recommendations on which the Beneficiary/the Working Group is expected to give its considered opinion and take appropriate measures for a forthcoming implementation.

Lastly and as a reminder, it is understood that Twinning is a “peer-to-peer” partnership which requires a strong commitment also from the Beneficiary side at each stage of the project.

COMPONENT 1 – REVIEW OF ARMENIAN LEGISLATION ON HE AND REVIEW OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF NQF

The aims of this component are: (i) to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the legislative environment of tertiary education system in Armenia, (ii) assisting the MoES in the preparation of proposals for amending current legislation and regulations taking into account BP-related policy and experience and (iii) review of the institutional arrangements for the development and maintenance of NQF and recommendation of an appropriate model for Armenia.

A.1.1. Reviewing of Armenian legislation of tertiary education system (TES)

Method:

The legislative framework for higher education will have been reviewed with a view to facilitating flexible curricula in universities and to identifying gaps that impede the implementation of the Bologna initiatives: to undertake a review of higher education legislation by MoES with a view to giving greater flexibility to HEIs to facilitate student transfers and changes of programmes.

Review and analysis of Armenian legislation should start with an overview of what the main goals of the regulatory instruments will be and how they are expected to change, based on the objectives of the Bologna Process. A framework should be provided to review the existing laws (and drafts). This shall be done with the aim of preparing proposals for consistent and sound legal framework as a basis for the NQF implementation.

Particular attention should be paid to the following:

- Regulation of the qualifications development and accreditation processes
- Regulation of the assessment and certification processes for accredited qualifications, including the responsibility of process execution and supervision and issuing qualifications
- Regulation of the accreditation of public HEIs that are entitled to provide programmes leading towards nationally accredited qualifications
- Regulation of the internal and external quality assurance processes of education/training providers, including the responsibility for external validation of the quality assurance processes
- Responsibility for ensuring and encouraging feedback from the implementation level towards the management levels
- Provision of information, guidance and counselling on qualifications, programmes and providers for accessing learners and employers
- The facilitation of the transfer of students who have completed High School diploma to enter HE
- The facilitation of the Bachelor degree holders who wish to progress to Master degree programmes
- The facilitation of students who participate in mobility programmes to have their ECTS credits transferred to their Armenian education programmes

Upon completion of the review, MS experts will prepare a report containing a comparative table on the conformity with the BP policy framework.

After the review, a joint evaluation with MoES experts should identify gaps between the Armenian legislation and BP policy framework, and assess the impact of legal approximation to the Armenian education policy. Upon completion of the assessment a report should be provided, which should include a comparison of the assessments related to the impact of the modernisation of legal standards in line with the BP policy.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STEs
BC:	Component Leader 1, Experts
Month:	3-4
Benchmarks:	Gap assessment report

A.1.2. Training on identification of TES problems

Method:

The MoES should be assisted in ensuring that the requirements of the legislation and regulations are properly understood and complied with. Therefore a set of practical workshops should be organised, covering the following issues:

- Identification of TES problems and issues and development of legislative solutions
- Development of TES policy based on EU experience

The training courses should be practical in nature and provide specific examples based on best practices of EU Member States, especially those that have been through similar transitional processes.

After the training sessions MS and BC experts will produce a report identifying particular weaknesses that are hindering the implementation of reforms. For example one such weaknesses was identified in the Bologna Process Implementation Report 2012 regarding student mobility

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STEs
BC:	Component Leader 1, Experts, Training venue
Other resources:	Simultaneous interpretation
Month:	7-8
Benchmarks:	Workshops held, Assessment report approved

A.1.3. Assisting the MoES in preparation of proposals on amending current legislation in the TES based on best practices of EU MS

Method:

This should involve a set of practical and specific recommendations for improvement of Armenian legislation and regulations related to TES. The newly developed proposals for new legislation should be harmonized with relevant BP policy and will take into account existing best practices of EU MS. They should be based on the results of legislation analysis and review. Proposals for revision should be developed where necessary. Additionally input should be given with respect to the new NQF law, if approved/or draft if not.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STEs
BC:	Experts
Month:	11-12
Benchmarks:	Proposals for amended legislation

A.1.4. Carrying out a review of the current institutional arrangement for the development and support of the NQF

Method:

- Identification of weaknesses and strengths of the arrangement
- Identification of best practices in the EU
- Making recommendations for an appropriate model in RA and compatible with the QF-EHEA
- The relevant charts and responsibilities (job descriptions) developed

Possible models could include (a) located in the MoES, (b) a new agency established by MoES or (c) delegated to ANQA or others.

The MoES and other relevant Armenian stakeholders will express an opinion on the recommendations.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STEs
BC:	Experts
Month:	2-3
Benchmarks:	Models analysed, Recommendations made and opinion given by MoES and other stakeholders

Indicators of success of Component 1

The Bologna Process Stocktaking Report (produced in advance of each meeting of ministers of education) will change the rating of the effect of the legislation on student mobility from being an “obstacle” (which was the 2012 evaluation) to supportive.

The HEIs, which currently say that the legislation hinders flexibility in recruiting students who wish to transfer from one HEI to another, will rate the legislation as supportive.

The four other following components are designed mainly for addressing practical trainings and workshops, to raise awareness of Armenian institutions dealing with Higher Education on Bologna issues, and for a concrete implementation of the transfer of know-how and EU best practises.

In this respect, trainings will be based on a draft training manual and guidelines produced by EU experts. These documents will be debated during the trainings through a joint assessment in order to be adopted as such or after amendments if necessary, once trainings are performed. Final revised manuals and guidelines, when assessed, will constitute the respective output of the activities, containing proper recommendations for an effective implementation.

COMPONENT 2 – RAISING CAPACITY OF REPRESENTATIVES OF MoES FOR IMPLEMENTING AND MAINTAINING THE BOLOGNA REFORMS AND AWARENESS OF IMPLEMENTED REFORMS

Designated staff in MoES will be trained in writing programme learning outcomes for higher education programmes. This is a key change in the approach to curriculum development throughout the 47 countries of the EHEA and it will fall to MoES to ensure that its implications are understood by all HEIs, public and private. It will also be necessary for MoES to involve employer bodies (some of whom are other Ministries) in this process to ensure their support for the significant changes. Finally, the Bologna Process is on-going and undoubtedly new reforms will be agreed by Ministers and it will fall to MoES to implement them. One such reform already mentioned by Ministers is the provision of a greater role for employers in working with HEIs to ensure that educational programmes meet the needs of the labour market. This current project should be very useful for developing appropriate relations between MoES and employer bodies.

A.2.1. Training on Bologna reforms implementation and maintenance

Method:

The project will organise a training course ((2 days in duration), for designated staff in MoES on the writing of learning outcomes. MS experts will prepare guidelines disseminated during the training sessions

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STEs
BC:	Component Leader 2, MoES staff, Training venue
Month:	4
Benchmarks:	Courses held, Guidelines disseminated

A.2.2. Study visit on Bologna reforms implementation and maintenance

Method:

A study visit by 4 members of staff of MoES to an EU authority responsible for a NQF; duration of visit, 1 week.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STEs
BC:	MoES staff
Other resources:	Travel expenses, per-diems
Month:	7
Benchmarks:	Benchmarking Report drafted by participants

Indicators of success of Component 2

1. The regulations and legislation introduced by MoES after January 2014 reflects a Learning Outcomes approach to higher education.
2. The ANFQ has been designated compliant with both European meta-frameworks (the QF-EHEA and EQF).

COMPONENT 3 – RAISING CAPACITY OF REPRESENTATIVES OF ANQA FOR IMPLEMENTING AND MAINTAINING THE BOLOGNA REFORMS AND AWARENESS OF IMPLEMENTED REFORMS

Designated staff of ANQA will have been trained in writing both programme learning outcomes and module learning outcomes for higher education programmes and staff in ANQA will have developed a methodology for the evaluation of higher education programmes and their relationship with the ANQF.

A.3.1. Training course on learning outcomesMethod:

The project will organise a training course (2 days in duration), for designated staff of ANQA on the writing of learning outcomes. MS experts will prepare guidelines on learning outcomes approach to programme design, to be distributed during the training sessions.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	ANQA staff and experts employed by ANQA
Month:	5
Benchmarks:	Training held, guidelines distributed

A.3.2. Training evaluation of learning outcomes used by universitiesMethod:

With the help of a short-term expert, provide a course, 3 days duration, to develop the expertise of designated staff in ANQA in the writing of learning outcomes and the development of a methodology for the evaluation of learning outcomes used by universities. A new methodology for programme and institutional reviews based on a learning outcomes approach will be prepared by ANQA (This new methodology will be assessed by ENQA when ANQA applies for full membership of ENQA).

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	ANQA staff and experts employed by ANQA, HEIs
Month:	6
Benchmarks:	Training held, guidelines distributed

A.3.3. Study visit on institutional reviewsMethod:

A study visit by 4 members of ANQA staff to an EU authority responsible for a NFQ; duration of visit, 1 week.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STEs
BC:	ANQA staff
Other resources:	Travel expenses, per-diems
Month:	19
Benchmarks:	Benchmarking Report drafted by participants

A.3.4. Application of Republic of Armenia to EQAR

Method:

ANQA will prepare, with support of MS experts, an application for membership of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). Membership is based on an independent review by external experts that evidence compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	ANQA staff
Month:	13-15
Benchmarks:	Application submitted to EQAR

Indicators of success of Component 3

The Bologna Stocktaking Report which follows the completion of the implementation of the project will change the rating for External Quality Assurance from yellow (the 2012 rating) to “green”¹.

COMPONENT 4 – RAISING CAPACITY OF REPRESENTATIVES OF UNIVERSITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE BOLOGNA REFORMS, SPECIFICALLY IN RELATION TO THE WRITING OF LEARNING OUTCOMES, THE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND THE USE OF ECTS

The first activity of this component is foreseen to be carried out from the Month 5 of the project. In the meantime, the RTA, with the RTA-Counterpart and the Armenian Component Leader (supposed to be the President of the Conference of Rectors) will have to ensure the involvement of the HEIs in the Twinning project (thus into the implementation of the Bologna Process) by designing a network of appointed relevant staff likely to be identified reference persons within their institutions for the dissemination of results and duplication of trainings.

A.4.1. Training on learning outcomes for universities

Training on learning outcomes for universities

Method:

The project will prepare guidelines and organise practical 2-day training courses for some staff of each of the 26 public and 5 selected private universities to write learning outcomes for programmes, to assess student achievement of those outcomes, to link ECTS credits to modules and to relate the learning outcomes to the levels in the ANQF. 3 per small universities (less than 2,000 students) and 6 per larger universities (ca.120 to be trained): six training courses of 2 days each for groups of 20. 120 academic staff in HEIs will have been trained in the use of Learning Outcomes in the design of academic programmes

¹ Rating criteria of Bologna Stocktaking reports have hitherto been based on traffic lights: Green for Good; Orange for Fair; Red for Bad.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	Component Leader 4, HEI staff, Venue
Other resources:	Interpretation
Month:	6-9
Benchmarks:	Workshops organised and guidelines disseminated

A.4.2. Workshop on assessment for academic staff of universitiesMethod:

Organise a workshop, 2 days duration, on the development of academic staff in pedagogy and assessment for 50 academic staff from universities. This workshop aims to develop an appreciation among academics of the usefulness of training in pedagogy and assessment of teaching staff in higher education. It is hoped this will start a move to include training in pedagogy in staff development programmes, an approach which is increasingly common in the EU.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	Component Leader 4, HEI academic staff, Venue
Other resources:	Interpretation
Month:	10
Benchmarks:	Workshops organised and guidelines disseminated

A.4.3. Workshop on sharing modules among HEIsMethod:

HEIs will be encouraged to share modules with other HEIs in Armenia to the benefit of students in both HEIs as well as for economic efficiency. A workshop will be held, 2 days duration for senior staff of universities and MoES. Estimated number of participants: 24. The workshop will explore the legal and logistical features of such a sharing in addition to the benefits (creation of an understanding of the benefits of sharing modules between HEIs; benefits related to academic quality as well as economies of scale).

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	Component Leader 4, University senior staff, Venue
Other resources:	Interpretation
Month:	11
Benchmarks:	Workshops organised

A.4.4. Specialized trainings

Method:

- Offer specialist lectures by EU experts on new approaches to teaching Creative Arts programmes that comply with a NQF (these lectures to be available to all HEIs that offer Creative Arts programmes): Months 17-21
- Offer specialist lectures by EU experts on new approaches to teaching Engineering programmes that comply with a NQF (these lectures to be available to all HEIs that offer Engineering programmes): Months 18-22
- Offer specialist lectures by EU experts on new approaches to teaching Business/Economics on programmes that are compliant with a NQF (these lectures to be available to all HEIs that offer Business/Economics programmes): Months 19-23
- Offer specialists lectures by EU experts on new approaches to teaching educational management programmes that comply with Armenian NQF (these lectures to be available to all HEIs that offer Educational management programmes): Months 9-10
- Provide workshop (3 days) by one EU expert on the structure and organisation of higher medical education in the EU. The workshop is open to staff of universities providing medical education: Month 13

These specialist lectures will provide an insight into the latest developments in each mentioned teaching fields with a focus on methods that strengthen student commitment and the involvement of the wider community

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	HEI academic staff, Venue
Other resources:	Interpretation
Month:	See above respectively
Benchmarks:	Lectures and workshops delivered

A.4.5. Training on student grading

Method:

Provide training in student grading systems for all academic staff. A train-the-trainer approach could be adopted with a small number of staff from each HEI undergoing the training initially and then assuming responsibility for training their colleagues. 3 per small universities (less than 2,000 students) and 6 per larger universities (ca.120 to be trained): 6 x 2 day workshops (at least six months after the completion of A.3.1 in order to facilitate the absorption). These courses will provide training in modern approaches to student grading systems to 120 academic staff of universities. In turn, those trained on these courses will train others in their HEI.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	HEI academic staff, Venue
Other resources:	Interpretation
Month:	14-17
Benchmarks:	6 workshops delivered

A.4.6. Workshops on ECTS best practice

Method:

Provide a workshop, 2 days duration, for staff of universities on best practice in the use of ECTS (50 participants).

Each public university will have developed a methodology to apply ECTS credits to modules and programmes and to evaluate the extent to which each programme meets the requirements for the appropriate level in the ANQF. Better use of ECTS will facilitate greater flexibility of curricula and improved student mobility. This workshop will create an awareness of best practice among academic staff. They in turn will introduce colleagues in their HEIs to the practices. Guidelines will be prepared and disseminated during the workshop.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	University staff, Venue
Other resources:	Interpretation
Month:	13
Benchmarks:	Workshops delivered and guidelines disseminated

A.4.7. Pilot cases and workshops on progress in implementing Bologna reforms

Method:

Provide a workshop, 2 days duration, for staff of HEIs on progress in implementing Bologna reforms: 4 x 2 day workshops (50 participants). A workshop will be held at the end of each semester, two per annum, for representatives of HEIs to assess progress on the extent to which (a) HEIs are being helped to implement the new approach to writing educational programmes in terms of learning outcomes, (b) to implement reforms in use of ECTS and (c) to share best practice.

These workshops may be preceded with MS short-term experts' missions to support small groups of Armenian experts in implementing pilot cases for the Bologna process. *This requires the identification a set of pilot cases during the preparation of the Twinning contract. This identification will be performed with the support of the Armenian component leaders.*

These pilot cases will serve to ensure that training programmes and other activities are focussed on the implementation of the Bologna Process by HEIs. They could also serve to highlight any unforeseen difficulties there are for HEIs.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	MoES staff, ANQA, HEI staff, Venue
Other resources:	Interpretation
Month:	5-12-16-23
Benchmarks:	Pilot cases carried out, 4 Workshops held

Indicators of success of Component 4

The evaluation procedures used by ANQA are based on a learning outcomes approach as verified by the review of ANQA undertaken by independent experts (see Indicators of success for Component 3 above).

The Bologna Stocktaking Report which follows the completion of the project gives a rating of “green” for the Use of ECTS (the rating was previously yellow).

COMPONENT 5 – ANQF TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF EMPLOYERS AND GRADUATES FOR THE LABOUR MARKET

A.5.1. Workshop for employers and HEIs

Method:

This two days workshop will consider the optimum involvement of employers in the planning of curricula in HEIs. Such involvement could include:

- ☐ Membership of governing authorities of HEIs
- ☐ Membership of evaluation committees for degree programmes
- ☐ Membership of selection boards for the appointment of academic staff
- ☐ Service as external examiners for degree programmes
- ☐ Membership of curriculum development committees

As far as the Bologna Process is encouraging a wider involvement of employers in HEIs, this workshop will encourage that process among employers and HEIs in Armenia. Guidelines involvement of employers in the planning of curricula in HEIs will be drafted and disseminated during the workshop.

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	MoES, ANQA experts, HEI staff, Employers representatives, Venue
Other resources:	Interpretation
Month:	4
Benchmarks:	Workshop held, Progress report issued

A.5.2. Follow-up workshop and progress report

Method:

A 2-day follow-up workshop will be organised with employers and HEIs. This workshop will consider the progress made in enhancing the role of employers in assisting HEIs to ensure that teaching programmes are meeting the needs of the labour market.

A progress report on the involvement of employers in the planning of curricula in HEIs will be produced and then discussed during the workshop (it is assumed that the procedures adopted by ANQA for the evaluation of programmes in HEIs will include provision for membership of review panels by representatives of employers).

Resources and benchmarks:

MS:	STE
BC:	MoES, ANQA experts, HEI staff, Employers representatives, Venue
Other resources:	Interpretation
Month:	18
Benchmarks:	Workshop held, Progress report issued

Indicators of success of Component 5

The procedures adopted by ANQA for the evaluation of programmes in HEIs will include provision for membership of review panels by representatives of industry.

The Bologna Stocktaking Report which follows the completion of the project will give a rating of “green” for External Quality Assurance (it is currently yellow).

● THE WORKING LANGUAGE OF THE TWINNING PROJECT IS ENGLISH ●

3.5. Means/ Input from the MS Partner Administration**3.5.1. Profile and tasks of the Project Leader**

The Project Leader coordinates the activities, disseminates project information among stakeholders; takes part in discussions with the high level officials; presents and defends project input and expected outputs; manages the project team; contributes to the preparation of the Quarterly reports, jointly with the BC Project Leader, on the basis of the input from the RTA and the RTA counterpart;; helps overcome project related problems and assists the RTA for continuous development of project initiatives. The PL is expected to devote a minimum of 3 days per month to the project in his home administration. In addition, he will chair, from the MS side, the Steering Committee (SC), which will meet in Armenia every three months.

Profile:

- The Project Leader must be a high-ranking public servant with a significant professional experience and general management experience, regarding Bologna Process issues.
- Have demonstrated skills in problem solving.
- Have very good command of written and spoken English.
- Have strong leadership skills.

The proposed Project Leader must be a public servant of a Member State administration or of a mandated body who should have worked for such organization in a top management position for at least 1 year before the date of launching of the call for proposal for this twinning project.

Tasks:

- Overall coordination, guidance and monitoring of the project;
- Preparation of project progress reports with support of RTA;
- Timely achievement of the project results;
- Co-chairing of project steering committees;
- Provision of legal and technical advice and analysis whenever needed.

3.5.2. Profile and tasks of the RTA

The Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA) will be based in Armenia to provide full-time input to the project for the entire duration of the project. His/her main tasks are:

- To manage the day-to-day coordination and progress of activities of the project in Armenia;
- To liaise with the BC Project Leader and RTA counterpart;
- To report to the MS Project Leader.

The RTA shall have:

- University degree in relevant discipline;
- Significant experience of BP issues;
- Excellent communication skills, with fluency in written and spoken English language;
- Knowledge of Russian/Armenian language would be an asset;
- Knowledge of EU legal acts and International Conventions relating to BP.

The proposed RTA must be a public servant of a Member State administration (or employee of a mandated body) who has worked for this organization for at least 1 year before the date of launching of the call for proposal of this Twinning project.

In his/her daily work in Armenia, the RTA will be supported by 2 RTA Assistants, to be recruited and funded by the project.

3.5.3. Profile and tasks of the RTA's Assistants

The RTA will be assisted by two full-time assistants who will be recruited locally, in accordance with the standard rules in force, after the award of the project and remunerated on the budget of the Twinning Contract. RTA-assistants remunerated by the project cannot have (in the past six months) had any contractual relation with the beneficiary administration. These assistants may be hired during the preparation of the Twinning Contract but their assignment starts with the project implementation (when the RTA arrives in Armenia).

The first assistant will be in charge of supporting the RTA in his/her daily work while the second will be specifically in charge of the interpretation for EU Experts and of translation of documents (AM/EN & EN/AM).

At this juncture, RTA-As' CVs should not be part of the proposal of the Member State(s).

3.5.4. Profile and tasks of the short-term experts

The STEs are staff in active and are supposed to carry out in Armenia missions of 5 days at the most, in order to not hinder the MS Administration workflow. They must be public servants of a Member State administration or employee of a mandated body who should have worked usually on Bologna/EHEA issues as such:

- A university degree in a relevant subject;
- Significant experience in their respective field;
- An excellent command of written and spoken English;

- An active and passive command of Armenian and / or Russian would be an asset
 - Experience in ENP countries or in other similar projects would be an advantage.
- Under the coordination of the Resident Twinning Adviser, the Short-Term Experts will be responsible for the activities not directly covered by the Resident Twinning Adviser.

4. Institutional Framework

The direct beneficiary of the project is the MoES. The Minister set up a working group which involved MoES, ANQA and some Universities of Yerevan. For the implementation of the project the WG should be expanded to include representatives of Employers, Ministries other than MoES and a student representative. This expanded group should have the responsibility for advising the DM on ways the project could meet the requirements of the wider society.

The Armenian Project Leader (PL) will be the Deputy Minister of Education and Science, **Ms Karine HARUTYUNYAN**.

Secondary beneficiaries of the project would include ANQA and HEIs.

A Project Steering Committee (PSC), consisting of the MoES, members of the WG, the PAO representatives and representatives of the Delegation of the EU to the RA will be established upon project start.

5. Budget

The beneficiary will provide in kind contribution in the form foreseen in the twinning manual. The maximum total budget available of the action is € 1.0 million.

6. Implementation Arrangements

6.1. Implementing Agency responsible for tendering, contracting and accounting

The Contracting Authority responsible for tendering, contracting and accounting is the Delegation of the European Union to Armenia. The person in charge of this project is:

Ms Irina MOVSESYAN, Project Manager

Delegation of the European Union to Armenia

21 Frik Street, Yerevan 0002 Armenia

Telephone: + 374 (10) 54 64 94

Fax: + 374 (10) 54 64 95

Email: irina.movsesyan@ec.europa.eu

PAU will support the twinning project implementation process with the EU Delegation.

The person in charge of this project in the PAO is:

Ms Amalia HOVSEPYAN, Head of PAO

Office Address:

EU Programme Division (PAO)

Ministry of Economy,

5 M. Mkrtchian, Yerevan 0010,

Republic of Armenia

Tel: (+374 10) 597 179

Fax: (+374 10) 52 65 77

E-mail: ahovsepyan@mineconomy.am

6.2. Main counterpart in the BC

The counterpart in Armenia will be the MoES.

The Armenian project leader will be:

Ms Karine HARUTYUNYAN, Deputy Minister of Education and Science,

MoES address: Government Building 3, Republic Square, 0010 Yerevan, Republic of Armenia

The counterpart to the Resident Twinning Adviser will be:

Mr Robert SUKIASYAN, Head of Higher and Post-graduate Vocational Education Department

Component leaders will be:

Component 1:

Component 2:

Component 3:

Component 4:

Component 5:

6.3. Twinning Quarterly Steering Committee

A Steering Committee (SC), consisting of the MoES, the PAO representatives and representatives of the Delegation of the EU to the RA will be established upon project start.

This SC will be established for the control and supervision of the project activities and the mandatory results.

The Steering Committee will meet at quarterly intervals and will assess the progress of the project, verify the achievements of the outputs and mandatory results and discuss any other issues which might affect a smooth implementation of the project. The SC will submit by the end of the meeting (as recorded in the minutes of meeting) an approval/not approval of the project reports. Official minutes of the PSC meetings will be kept in English and distributed to all parties within 15 days after the PSC meeting.

The exact composition of the Steering Committee is to be defined in the Twinning Contract. However, the following persons should at least be a member: BC Project Leader, MS Project Leader, BC counterpart to the RTA, RTA, representative of the EU Programmes Division (PAO) of the Ministry of Economy of the RA, MoES and project manager of the EU delegation. Representatives of relevant projects, including universities, employers and students, may be invited to participate as observers in the Steering Committee meetings, as appropriate.

Monitoring meetings will be organized with the PAO each month (except when the Steering Committee is convened).

6.4. Contracts

Only one twinning contract is foreseen for this project.

A new Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Union entered into force on 1st January 2013². This implies several changes to the Twinning contract templates. An updated version of the Twinning Manual and of its Annexes, incorporating these changes, is in preparation and shall be published soon on EuropeAid website³. The Twinning contract that shall be signed as a result of the present procedure shall follow the templates of the updated Twinning Manual and Annexes if it is officially published at the time of notification of selection.

7. Implementation Schedule (indicative)

7.1. Launching of the call for proposals

May 2013

7.2. Start of project activities

December 2013

7.3. Workplan duration

24 months

² Financial Regulation: Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:298:0001:0096:EN:PDF>

Rules of Application: Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union.

³ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/overview/twinning_en.htm

8. Sustainability

The achievements of a Twinning project (mandatory results) should be maintained as a permanent asset to the Beneficiary administration even after the end of the Twinning project implementation. This presupposes inter alia that effective mechanisms are put in place by the Beneficiary administration and the Twinning key actors to disseminate and consolidate the results of the project. This will be a crucial issue to be tackled by the Quarterly Steering Committee and by the Working Group already set up by the Deputy Minister of Education and Science.

Long term benefits from this Twinning will be the strengthening of the institutional capacity of all major bodies and structures involved in the BP as well as the establishment of constructive communication and sound cooperation practices between all stakeholders who are interested and pro-active in the process of raising awareness at all level on the necessity to enhance BP practices in Armenia.

Increase student mobility to other BP countries will enhance international understanding and cooperation.

The role of employers in the development of curricula will assist universities to design programmes that meet the labour market requirement.

9. Crosscutting issues

Each Twinning partner is required to comply with the equal opportunities requirements of the European Union. The principle of equal opportunity will be integrated into all stages of the project implementation.

10. Conditionality and sequencing

The NQF was found not to be compatible with the QF-EHEA and accordingly is currently being revised by the government. It is hoped to have a revised framework by January, 2013.

This revised NQF will be a crucial document to be scrutinized under the component 1 of the Twinning.

11. List of annexes

Annex 1: Logical Framework Matrix

Annex 2: Detailed Implementation Chart