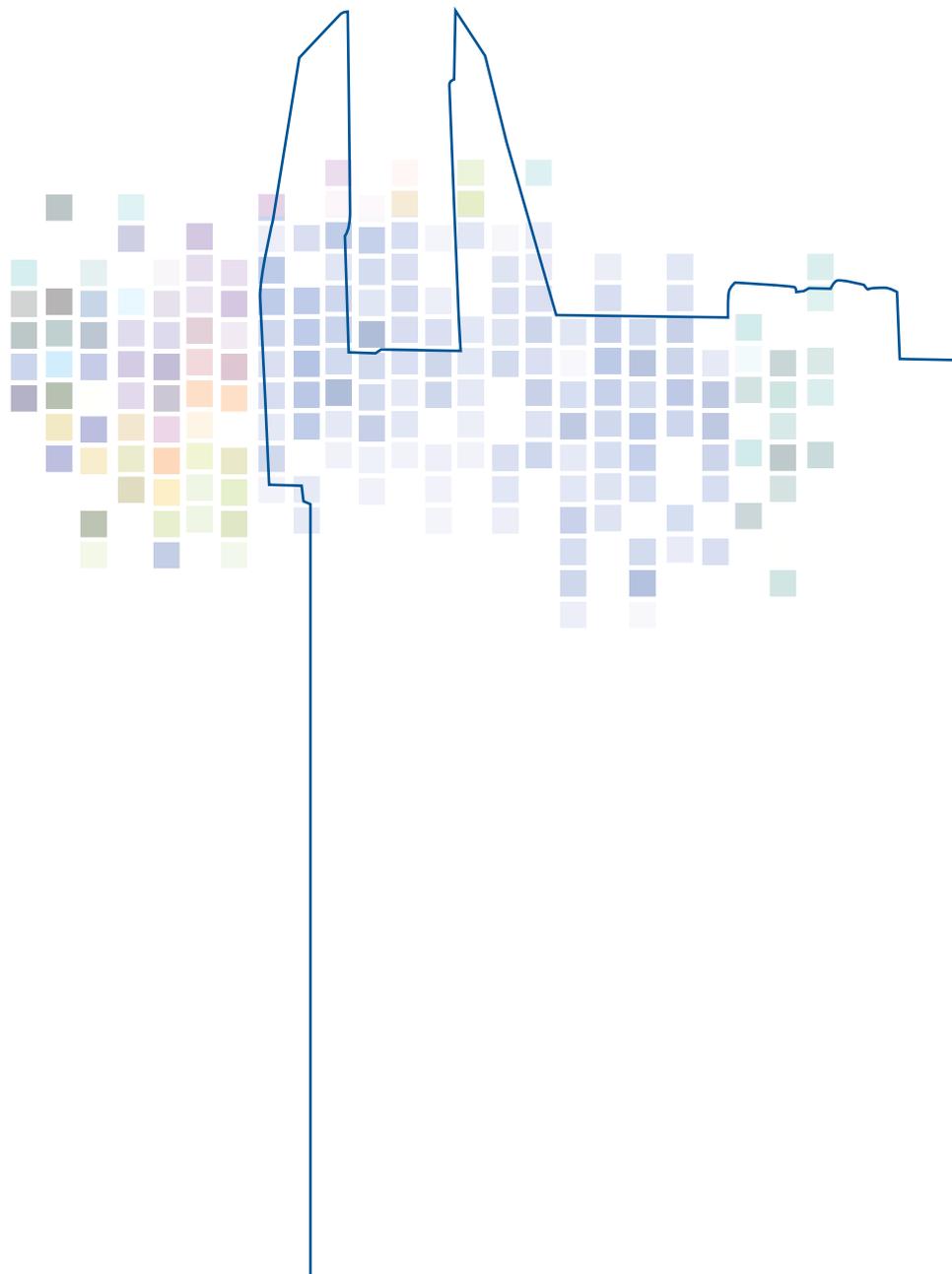




2012-14

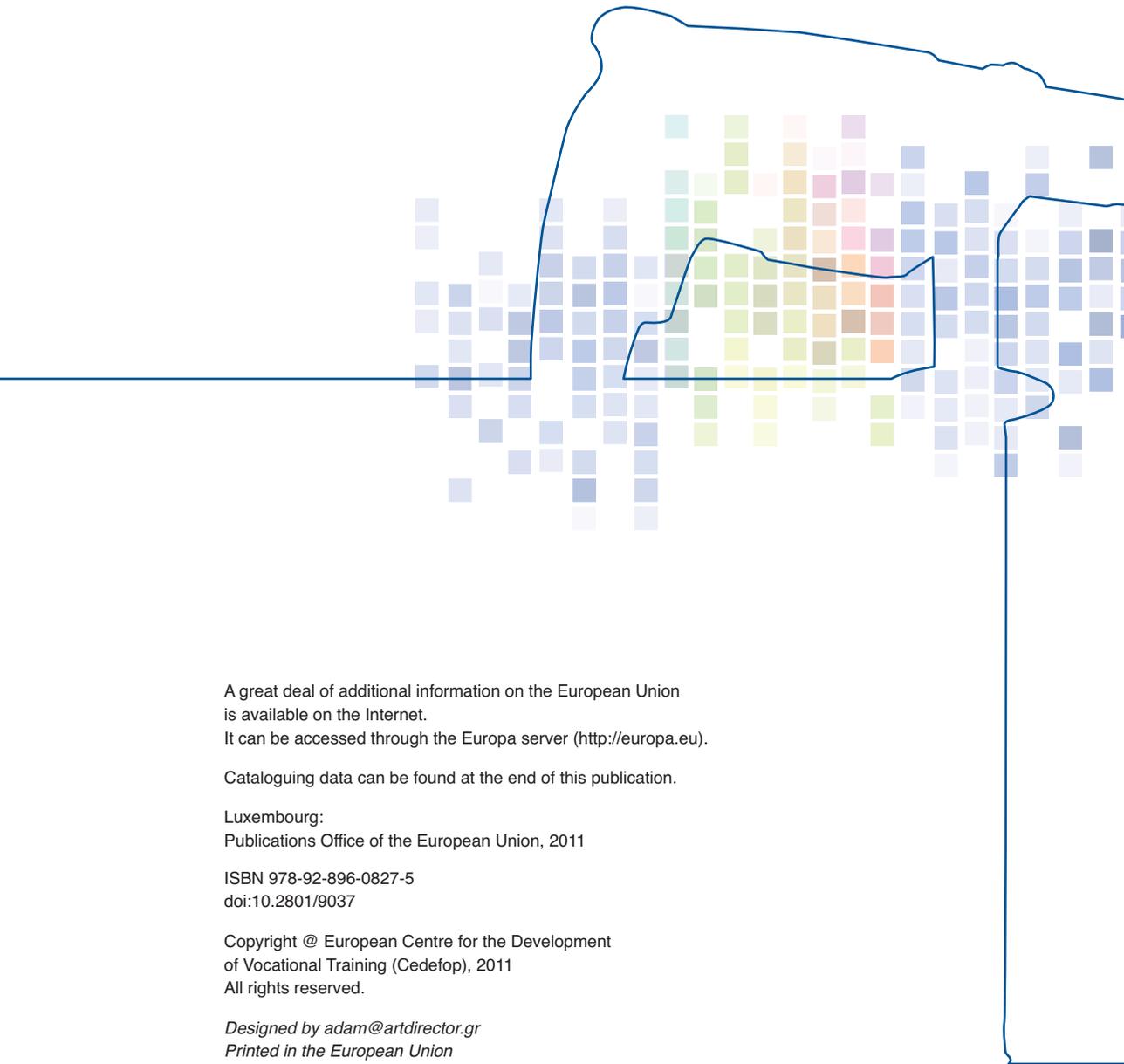


Medium-term
priorities





Medium-term priorities 2012-14



A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (<http://europa.eu>).

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication.

Luxembourg:
Publications Office of the European Union, 2011

ISBN 978-92-896-0827-5

doi:10.2801/9037

Copyright © European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), 2011
All rights reserved.

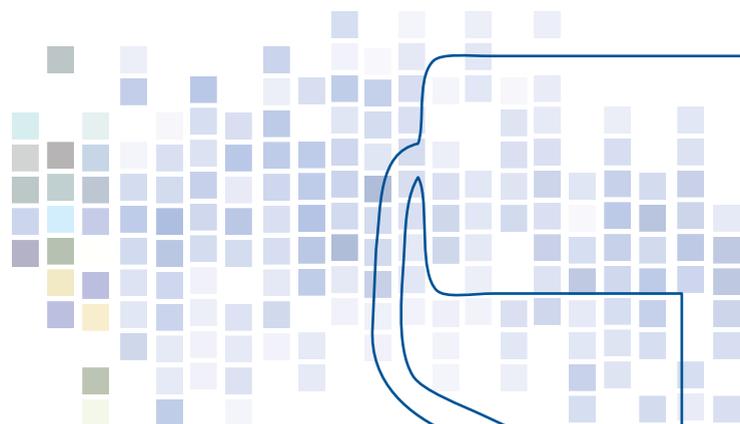
*Designed by adam@artdirector.gr
Printed in the European Union*

The **European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training** (Cedefop) is the European Union's reference centre for vocational education and training. We provide information on and analyses of vocational education and training systems, policies, research and practice. Cedefop was established in 1975 by Council Regulation (EEC) No 337/75.

Europe 123, 570 01 Thessaloniki (Pylea), GREECE
PO Box 22427, 551 02 Thessaloniki, GREECE
Tel. +30 2310490111, Fax +30 2310490020
E-mail: info@cedefop.europa.eu
www.cedefop.europa.eu

Christian F. Lettmayr, *Acting Director*
Tarja Riihimäki, *Chair of the Governing Board*

Table of contents



Introduction	1
1. The policy context	2
2. Cedefop's priorities 2012-14	8
2.1. Supporting modernisation of VET systems	9
2.2. Careers and transitions – Continuing VET, adult and work-based learning	14
2.3. Analysing skills and competence needs to inform VET provision	19
3. Cedefop's mission and strategic objective	23
4. Cooperation to ensure added value – Cedefop's partners and target groups	28
ANNEX	
Cedefop's alignment with the policy framework for European cooperation in VET	31

Introduction

Cedefop's medium-term priorities define the multiannual framework which will guide its annual work programmes from 2012 to 2014.

The priorities respond to the European policy framework for education and training (see following chapter) which the European Commission and Member States redefined in 2009 and 2010, as the previous planning period was coming to an end. From 2000 to 2010, the policy framework for vocational education and training (VET) had been largely defined by the Lisbon strategy, the Copenhagen process for enhanced cooperation in VET and the Education and training 2010 work programme.

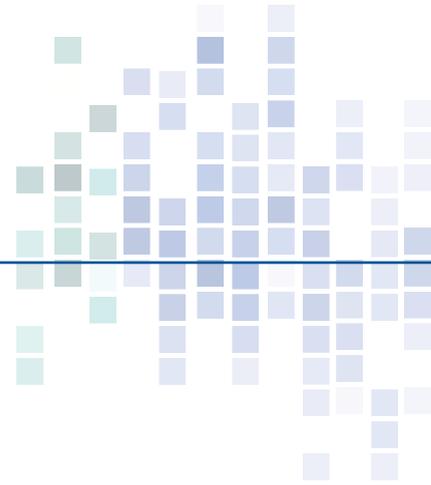
The three medium-term priorities 2012-14 are described in Chapter 2. Set out in a logical framework, they indicate broad areas for Cedefop's future contribution to developing VET and Cedefop's role as Europe's VET and LLL reference centre. Cedefop's medium-term priorities 2012-14 are:

- (a) supporting modernisation of VET systems;
- (b) careers and transitions – Continuing VET, adult and work-based learning;
- (c) analysing skills and competence needs to inform VET provision.

Chapter 3 sets the medium-term priorities in the context of Cedefop's mission as defined by its Founding Regulation. It defines the strategic objectives and explains how Cedefop will pursue these objectives and priorities. It also relates impact, outcome and output objectives to the performance indicators of Cedefop's performance measurement system (PMS).

Cedefop's contributions must be well aligned with activities of other actors in the field to ensure relevance and value added of its work. This requirement is implemented through extensive networking with many partners as described in Chapter 4.

1. The policy context



The economic crisis has accelerated the need for reform, as it set back progress, revealed structural weaknesses and altered the context in which VET operates. In 2010, 9.5% of Europe's working age population were jobless. Unemployment rates vary widely across countries, from 4.2% to 20.6%. Despite a slight decrease, youth unemployment is worryingly high at around 20.8% on average, ranging from 7.4% to 44% ⁽¹⁾. More than 15% of Europe's population are at risk of poverty after social transfer, with peak rates of more than 25%. In total, around 80 million people live below the poverty line ⁽²⁾. Low educational attainment is seen as a main cause. But still too many young people leave school with less than upper secondary education and do not follow any further training.

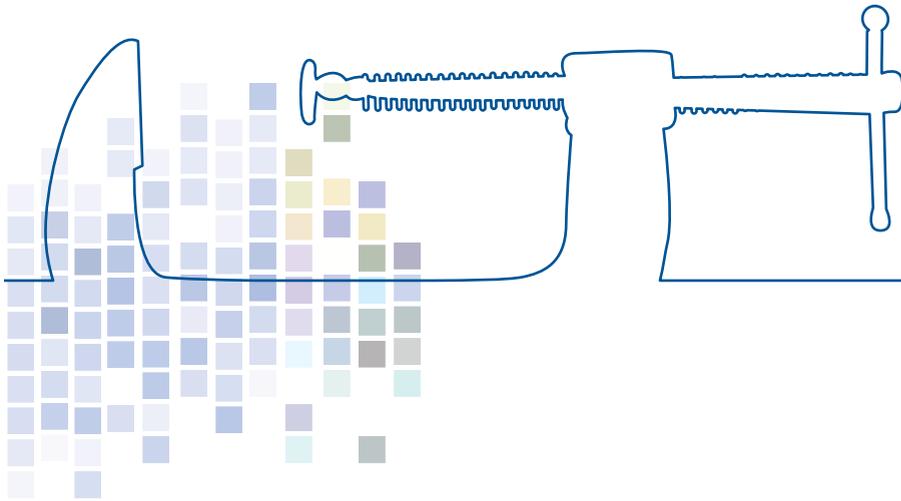
Austerity measures and tight public finances affect investments in education and training. In the short term, employment in Europe might continue to fall, also affecting employment in the public sector. In the medium perspective, growth is expected to be modest. Prospects are better for the longer term, but suitable retraining is needed to ensure that workers will have the skills to move ⁽³⁾.

VET has to play a significant role in addressing these challenges. Developing VET at all qualification levels and throughout life is not only a means to make enterprises more productive and competitive. It fosters employability and can help people shape their careers. It also promotes social inclusion of young people and adults.

⁽¹⁾ Eurostat, labour force survey, quarterly data (seasonally adjusted), Q12011, date of extraction 14.7.2011.

⁽²⁾ Eurostat, *European Union statistics on income and living conditions*, 2009, date of extraction 14.7.2011.

⁽³⁾ Cedefop. *What next for skills on the European labour market?* Briefing note 9043, 2011. Available from Internet: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/17783.aspx> [cited 4.11.2010].

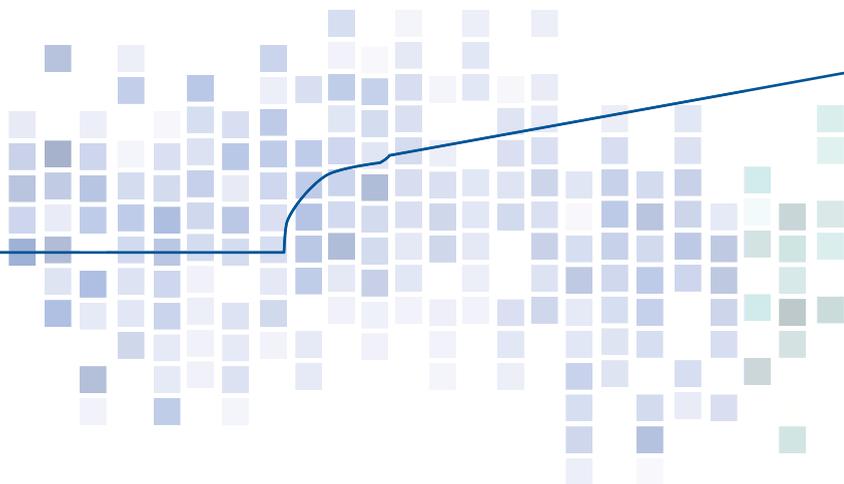


Adopted by the European Council in June 2010 ⁽⁴⁾, **Europe's strategy for 2020** aims at smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Asserting that the route to lasting economic recovery and social cohesion is knowledge and innovation, it argues for giving priority to investment in education and training. Among its seven flagship initiatives, those most closely associated with VET are 'Youth on the move' and 'an agenda for new skills and jobs'. But it will also have a role to play in other flagship initiatives, as strong and high quality VET is one of the prerequisites to meet Europe's priorities.

In response to the challenges young people face, '**Youth on the move**' ⁽⁵⁾ combines existing activities with new ones. One of its main aims is to help improve attainment levels. This would require more workplace learning opportunities and recognition of skills and competences acquired, for example, through volunteer work. Gathering experience abroad, learner's mobility should become an opportunity for all. Europe's higher education should become more open to talents and researchers from abroad and also be more accessible to European learners

⁽⁴⁾ European Commission. Europe 2020: A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Available from Internet: http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/index_en.htm [cited 26.4.2010] and Europe 2020: a new European strategy for jobs and growth: European Council Presidency conclusions 25-26 March 2010. Available from Internet: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st00/st00007.en10.pdf> [cited 4.11.2010].

⁽⁵⁾ European Commission. Communication on youth on the move. COM(2010) 477 final. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0477:FIN:EN:PDF>. See also Council of the European Union political agreements on two recommendations: (a) youth on the move – Promoting the learning mobility of young people; Available from Internet: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/11/st09/st09036.en11.pdf>; and (b) policies to reduce early school leaving. Available from Internet: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/11/st09/st09423.en11.pdf> [cited 23.5.2011].



who have followed less traditional educational paths.

To reach the EU's 2020 employment rate target of 75%, continuing training, and adult learning more generally, must become more widespread and effective. The European Commission's Education and training 2020 framework (ET 2020) ⁽⁶⁾ more explicitly sets a benchmark of at least 15% for adults to participate in learning. This requires reinforcing the lifelong component in flexicurity policies, as the 'Agenda for new skills and jobs' ⁽⁷⁾ underlines. It makes the case for a new

approach to adult learning based on common principles.

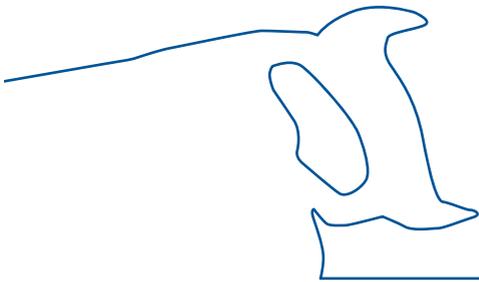
Within education and training, **ET 2020** sets out the framework for cooperation. It aims to make lifelong learning and mobility a reality; improve quality and efficiency of education and training; promote equity and social cohesion; and foster creativity and innovation.

Supporting these objectives, the European Commission's communication, '**A new impetus for European cooperation in VET**' ⁽⁸⁾ calls for flexible learning pathways and a strategic approach to mobility for learning and working. This entails putting common European instruments and principles into

⁽⁶⁾ Council of the European Union. Conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020). *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2-9. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:119:00020010:en:PDF> [cited 26.7.2010].

⁽⁷⁾ European Commission. Communication on an agenda for new skills and jobs: a European contribution towards full employment. COM(2010) 682 final, 23.11.2010. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0682:FIN:EN:PDF>.

⁽⁸⁾ European Commission. Communication on a new impetus for European cooperation in vocational education and training to support the Europe 2020 strategy. (COM(2010) 296, 9.6.2010). Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0296:FIN:EN:PDF> [cited 14.1.2011].

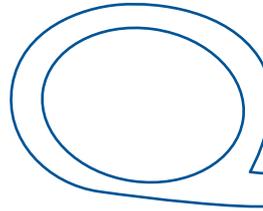


practice and using them to promote more mobility for VET learners. The communication also sees a need to encourage more adults to take up continuing training and to recognise the skills and competences people acquire at work or in their lives. In line with the **‘Youth on the move’** initiative, it argues for integrated approaches to support people more effectively to manage transitions, for example by linking training opportunities to guidance and counselling or by combining education and training, youth, employment and social policies.

Different policy documents reinforce one another. The **2010 Council conclusions on ‘new skills for new jobs: the way forward’** ⁽⁹⁾ also advocate combined

approaches and partnerships to bridge employment and education and training policies. Following up the European Commission’s initiative launched in 2007, the conclusions call for improved methods to anticipate skill needs and entrust Cedefop with biennial updates of its skills forecasts. To help match skills and jobs more effectively, the **‘agenda for new skills and jobs’** aims to strengthen Europe’s capacity to anticipate skill needs and disseminate this information widely through the European Commission skills panorama. A common language should improve understanding and correspondence of knowledge, skills and competence as acquired in learning processes and occupational requirements on the labour market.

⁽⁹⁾ Council of the European Union. Council conclusions on new skills for new jobs: the way forward. Available from Internet: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/114962.pdf [cited 18.2.2011]. See also ‘new skills for new jobs initiative’ launched at the end of 2007.



The **Council conclusions on enhanced cooperation for VET 2011-20** ⁽¹⁰⁾ and the **Bruges communiqué** have been built on Cedefop's policy analysis ⁽¹¹⁾ and the Commission communication on VET. They set out long-term strategic objectives and short-term deliverables for VET (2011-14) within the Copenhagen process ⁽¹²⁾.

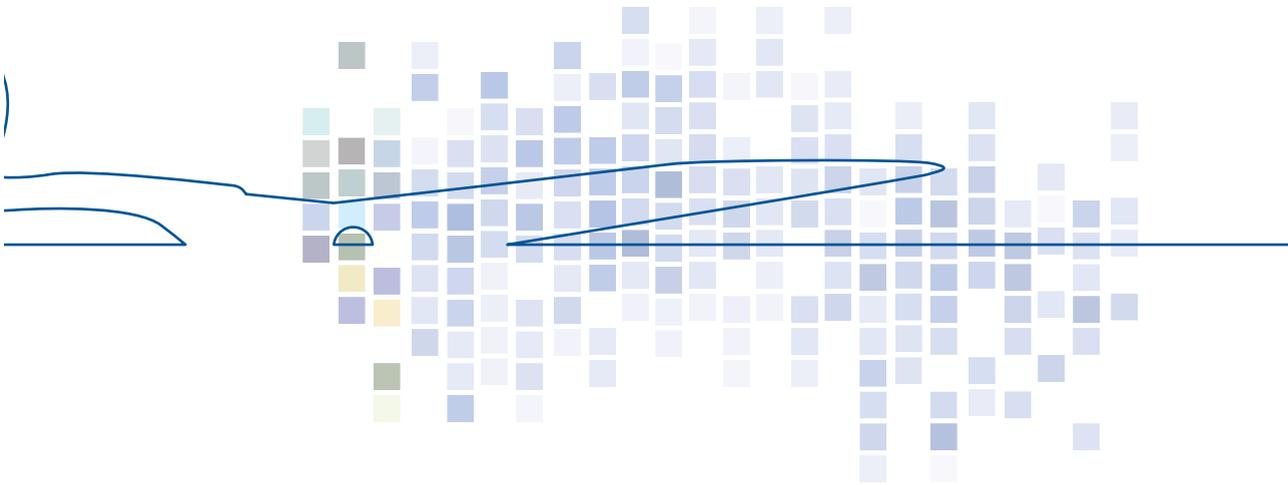
They stress the need to promote excellence and make VET attractive to young people and adults. At the same time, VET should also help the low-qualified to develop their skills.

The **Bruges communiqué** entrusts Cedefop with a range of tasks, among which reporting on progress with strategic objectives and short-term deliverables. Cedefop's tasks and priorities need to be seen in the context of this new policy framework and the new Europe 2020 governance approach. Annual surveys, which integrate different policy areas, including education and training, are to inform ex-ante policy coordination (European semesters) and guide national reform programmes. These surveys need to reflect countries' targets and their national situations.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Council of the European Union. Conclusions on priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period 2011-20. *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 324, 1.12.2010, p.5-15. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:324:0005:0015:EN:PDF> [cited 14.1.2011].

⁽¹¹⁾ Cedefop. *A bridge to the future*. European policy for vocational education and training 2002-10. Available from Internet: www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3058_en.pdf [cited 18.2.2011].

⁽¹²⁾ The term Copenhagen process refers to cooperation in VET officially endorsed in the Copenhagen declaration of November 2002. http://ec.europa.eu/education/pdf/doc125_en.pdf [cited 5.4.2011].



Employment and education committees of the Council will cooperate closely to discuss progress and ensure the key role of education and training ⁽¹³⁾. Member States are also encouraged to link better education and training, employment and related policy areas to implement integrated employment guidelines for lifelong learning ⁽¹⁴⁾.

A reinforced evidence base, through analysis and increased policy learning opportunities will support future cooperation under continued application of the open method of coordination.

⁽¹³⁾ Council of the European Union. Conclusions on the role of education and training in the implementation of the 'Europe 2020' strategy. *Official journal of the European Union*, C 70, 4.3.2011, p. 1-3. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:070:0001:0003:EN:PDF> [cited 20.5.2011].

⁽¹⁴⁾ Integrated employment guidelines:
 No 8: Developing a skilled workforce responding to labour market needs and promoting lifelong learning.
 No 9: Improving performance of education and training systems at all levels and increasing participation in tertiary or equivalent education.

2. Cedefop priorities 2012-14

The policy context sets the parameters for Cedefop's medium-term priorities 2012-14. This period coincides with the timeframe for short-term deliverables of the Bruges communiqué. To help implement them, the communiqué has entrusted Cedefop with a range of tasks. Cedefop's work also relates to other actions in Europe 2020 flagship initiatives and the wider policy framework.

To ensure Cedefop's limited resources will be used most efficiently and effectively, continuous efforts to focus activities will be necessary.

The priorities have been defined by looking at VET from different perspectives:

- Priority 1 focuses on developments in VET systems;
- Priority 2 looks at VET from the standpoint of learners; and
- Priority 3 looks at the impact of external factors on VET, skills and competences.

The three medium-term priorities:

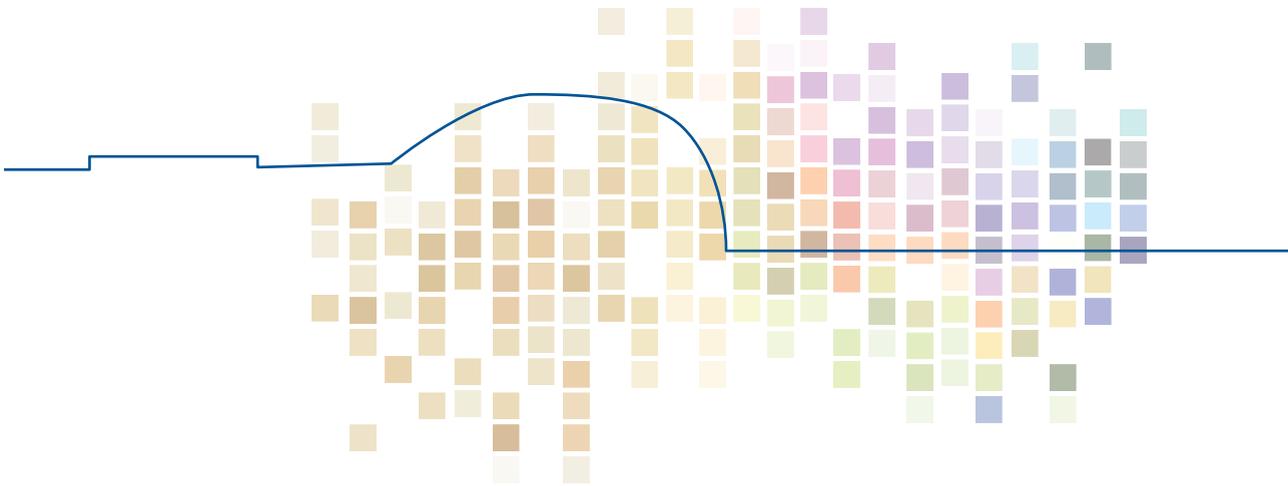
1. Supporting modernisation of VET systems

2. Careers and transitions – Continuing VET, adult and work-based learning

3. Analysing skills and competence needs to inform VET provision

The following presentation of the three medium-term priorities outlines:

- the context and particularly urgent challenges for the period 2012-14 which Cedefop's expertise and capacities can best help to address;
- key areas of Cedefop's work in 2012-14 (more detailed tasks will be presented in annual work programmes).



2.1. Supporting modernisation of VET systems

Continuous renewal and reform of VET is important for Europe to recover from the current economic crisis and ensure long-term growth and prosperity. This is required to reach the vision set for 2020 in the Bruges communiqué to make VET systems '[...] more attractive, relevant, career-oriented, innovative, accessible and flexible [...]'].

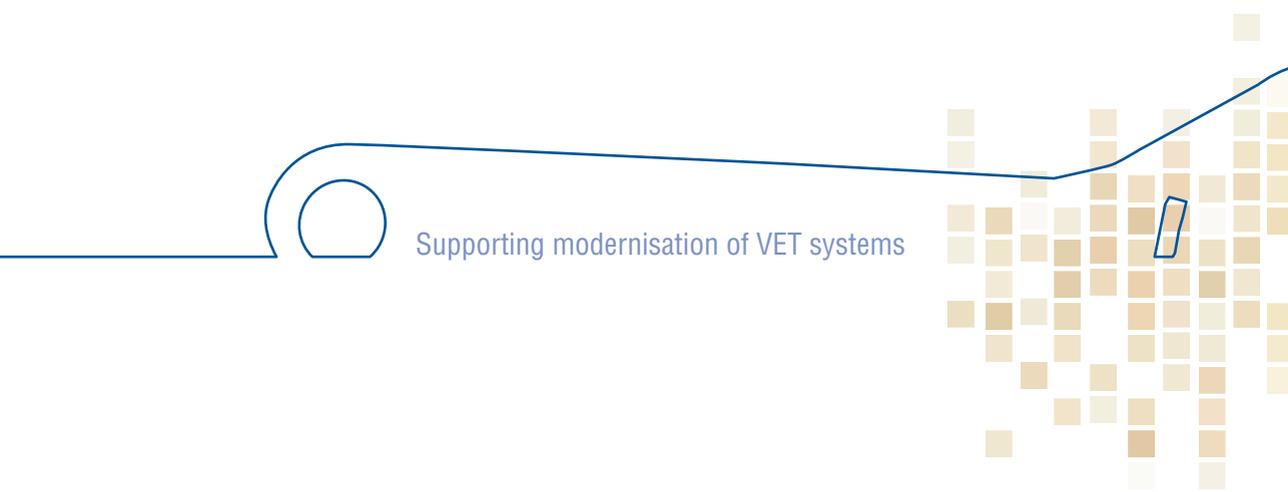
In the period 2012-14, Cedefop will support this renewal process by:

- (a) monitoring and reporting on progress of European VET cooperation (Copenhagen process); and
- (b) further developing and supporting implementation of common European tools and principles, in close cooperation with the European Commission, Member States and social partners.

This support for European processes and initiatives will build on Cedefop's research and systematic comparative analyses of VET and lifelong learning policies and practices at national and sectoral levels.

Context

Support for VET reform and renewal must consider the way the overall European VET landscape is changing. VET is increasingly playing a critical role in our societies. While current trends indicate traditional forms of initial VET will remain stable in the years to come, vocationally-oriented education at tertiary level and in the form of continuing and further education and training is rapidly growing in importance. VET will increasingly have to operate in a lifelong and lifewide context, be realised in partnership with the education and training sector and the labour market and lead to qualifications at all levels.

A decorative graphic at the top of the page features a blue line that starts on the left, forms a circle, and then extends to the right. On the right side, there is a grid of yellow squares of varying shades, with a small blue rectangle highlighting one of the squares.

Supporting modernisation of VET systems

Development of VET requires prioritising between a complex set of objectives: not only must vocational education and training be attractive to young people as well as experienced adults; it must also be relevant to enterprises and sectors. VET reform and renewal, focusing on excellence and inclusion, thus requires systematic cooperation between a wide diversity of stakeholders from different institutions, sectors and levels. Qualifications frameworks in particular (at European, national and sectoral levels) are becoming key instruments to foster more systematic dialogue and cooperation on education and training reform. Frameworks make it possible to bridge traditional divides between general, vocational and higher education and clarify how VET is interlinked with these other parts of the education and training system, in particular general and tertiary education.

Citizens must be able to make full use of their knowledge, skills and competence to find employment and increase their potential through further learning. Use of learning outcomes to define and describe qualifications will promote this transparency and in the long term help to improve mobility between institutions, sectors and countries. To succeed in helping citizens better to demonstrate their formal qualifications and their knowledge, skills and competence acquired outside formal education and training, all European instruments and principles introduced in recent years (EQF, Europass, ECVET, validation of non-formal and informal learning) must be fully implemented. As all these tools are still at an early stage of implementation, it will take continued information and commitment of all actors to apply and develop them further. At a later stage, their relevance to employers and employees will need to be evaluated.

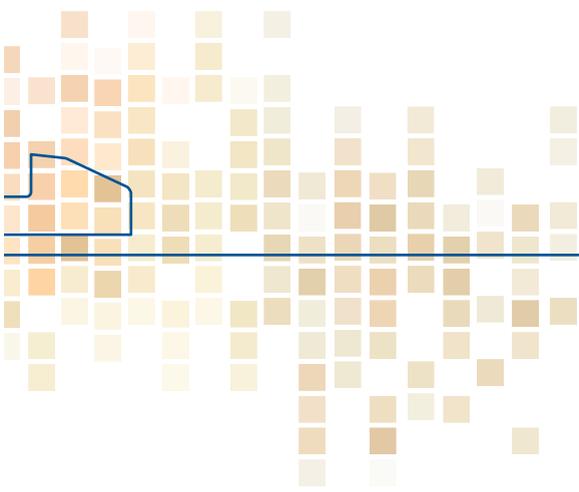


Overall coherence of European VET policies represents a particular challenge in the coming years. Countries differ significantly in terms of overall strength and profile of their VET. In initial VET, for instance, some countries see the majority (60-80%) of youngsters choosing vocational tracks, while in other countries less than 30% choose this route. These differences can directly influence youth unemployment, productivity and innovation capacity, as the current crisis has shown. European instruments such as the EQF may inspire and ease exchange of experience between countries and sectors and promote excellence in VET in Europe overall. Diversity of European VET is a challenge to developing common trust in the quality of countries' VET programmes and their outcomes. The role of the European quality assurance framework for VET (EQAVET) in building this trust must be ensured, in particular in relation to the shift to learning outcomes.

Mobility of learners and workers is one key objective of the EU 2020 process. Not only can mobility make it easier for people to find jobs, it is also a source of new experience and learning. Mobility depends on recognition of qualifications. While the EQF and ECVET may make such recognition easier as they focus on learning outcomes, European VET cooperation must ensure better coordination with existing arrangements and mechanisms for academic (ENIC/NARIC ⁽¹⁵⁾ for higher education) or professional qualifications (Directive 2005/36 ⁽¹⁶⁾). Simplifying recognition practices, access to and progression in education and training is a precondition to make VET more flexible and lifelong and lifewide learning possible.

⁽¹⁵⁾ <http://www.enic-naric.net> [cited 14.3.2011].

⁽¹⁶⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:255:0022:0142:en:PDF> [cited 14.3.2011].



Supporting modernisation of VET systems

in implementing thematic priorities of the lifelong guidance Council resolutions (complementing work of the ELGPN network). Specific attention will be given to:

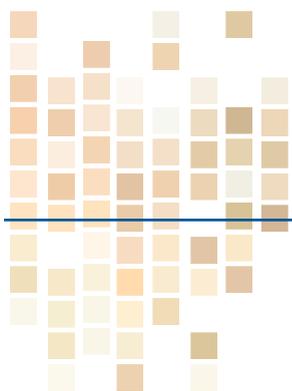
- (a) promoting a consistent and quality assured 'fit for purpose' use of learning outcomes in European VET to help improve dialogue between VET and the labour market, and inform learners' decisions. This includes considering methods suitable to measure and compare learning outcomes systematically between institutions and systems, as well as demonstrating how qualifications frameworks (European, national and sectoral) can be used to coordinate, reform and innovate VET and promote partnership and cooperation agreements for lifelong learning between education and training and business;
- (b) following development of qualifications frameworks, assessing how different European and national policy initiatives – in particular validation of non-formal and informal learning, credit transfer (ECVET and ECTS), standards and curriculum development and quality assurance arrangements – can be connected to create flexible and inclusive systems that allow for genuine lifelong learning, indicating equivalency of skills and competences acquired through different pathways, and including increased permeability between higher education and VET;
- (c) supporting development of ESCO by making sure that it builds on accomplishments of EQF/NQFs and offers a terminological tool directly relevant to individual and institutional users in VET.



- Helping to make achievements of European cooperation in education and training more visible and improve their impact, as stipulated in the transversal objectives of the Bruges communiqué and the Education and training 2020 framework. Part of the lifelong learning programme (2007-13), study visits for education and vocational training specialists and decision-makers encourage learning on EU and national policies in all fields and levels of education and training. Cedefop will continue to coordinate the study visits programme to ensure that it reflects the European education and training policy agenda and offers an adequate share relating to VET. This will entail targeting visits specifically at high-level policy- and decision-makers, including social partners, to stimulate policy learning and help initiate change at education and training systems' level.

2.2. Careers and transitions – Continuing VET, adult and work-based learning

Individuals must increasingly be prepared to change jobs and careers during their working lives. While initial education and training provides the basis for later careers, continuing learning in formal education and training, at work and during leisure time, is becoming a must. Not only does adult and work-based learning develop relevant skills and competences for enterprises and sectors facing change and intensified competition. This learning also enables individuals to deal better with career transitions - such as entry into the labour market, reentry after periods of absence, unemployment, or episodes of up- or reskilling. It promotes their overall employability and reduces risks of social and economic exclusion.



Careers and transitions – Continuing VET, adult and work-based learning

In the period 2012-14, Cedefop will intensify its work on policies and strategies that help people pursue adult and work-based learning. Priority will be given to:

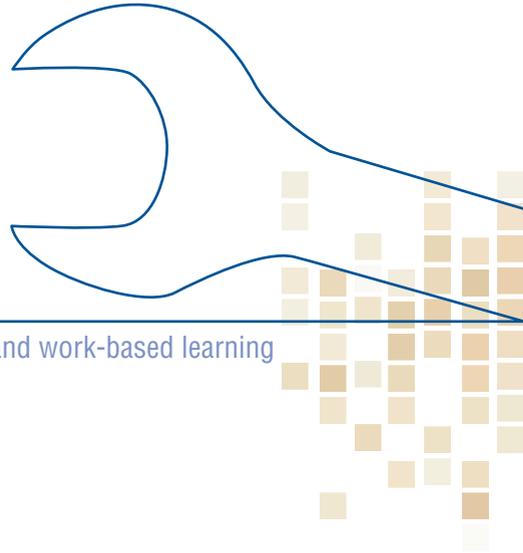
- (a) analysing how adult and work-based learning can help people better to manage careers and multiple working-life transitions, thus improving employability and easing social and labour market integration;
- (b) examining how adult and work-based learning can help enterprises to face technological change and increase competitiveness.

Context

Rapid changes in sectors, occupations and at workplaces challenge the traditional 'job for life model' and trigger more frequent and complex labour market transitions. While such transitions offer opportunities for skill development, they also imply risks of unemployment,

deskilling and social exclusion. People need to be able to manage their careers actively and improve their ability to cope successfully with transitions and reap potential benefits of geographical mobility. Increasingly, individuals will not only need to update their 'job-specific' skills but also systematically develop those required across occupations and functions. Modern labour markets require ability to act in a self-directed way and to apply outcomes of learning in a changing work context. More emphasis on key competences such as communication, creativity, problem-solving, ability to reflect on experience and feedback (reflectiveness) and entrepreneurial attitude is therefore needed.

While extensive in volume and scope, existing adult and work-based learning in Europe is unevenly distributed between sectors and countries and fragmented in its delivery. People have difficulties in identifying and getting access to relevant learning opportunities. As evidence

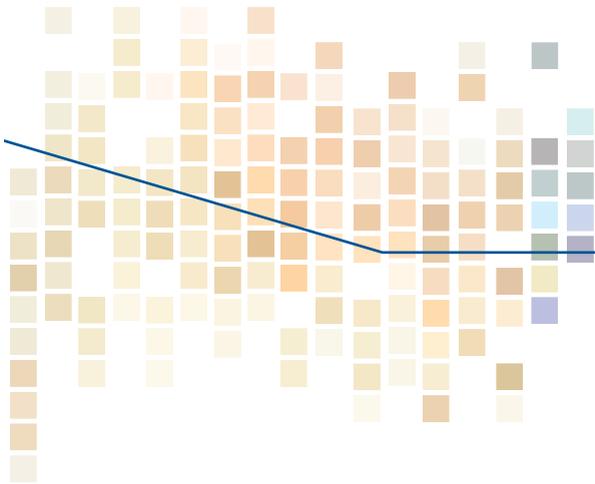


Careers and transitions – Continuing VET, adult and work-based learning

shows, those with high levels of initial qualifications and occupational positions are more likely to pursue continuous learning than those with low levels of qualification and positions. The need to adapt to changing requirements in working life makes it ever more important to identify and assess systematically different forms and delivery modes of adult and work-based learning. Stronger cooperation between education and training and enterprises is needed. Education and training need to open up to adult learners, easing their access and responding to their needs. Firms need to create working conditions conducive to and supportive of learning. People should be encouraged to learn and should always have the opportunity and the means to plan their (working and learning) careers

Previous research carried out by Cedefop and others show that, in addition to structured learning opportunities, carrying out challenging tasks at work, learning from colleagues and working with partners and clients significantly contribute to developing skills and competences. As different sectors and workplaces use this potential very differently, people face very different opportunities to pursue lifelong learning and develop their skills and competences at work. Systematically identifying good practices and exchanging experiences on adult and work-based learning could help to reduce these differences.

Career guidance must be able to identify and respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse group of individual learners and workers, helping them to make informed career and continuing training decisions. It should help them develop enduring capacities to cope with changes in the labour market and at the workplace. This is not only key for individuals' lives but also for enterprises'

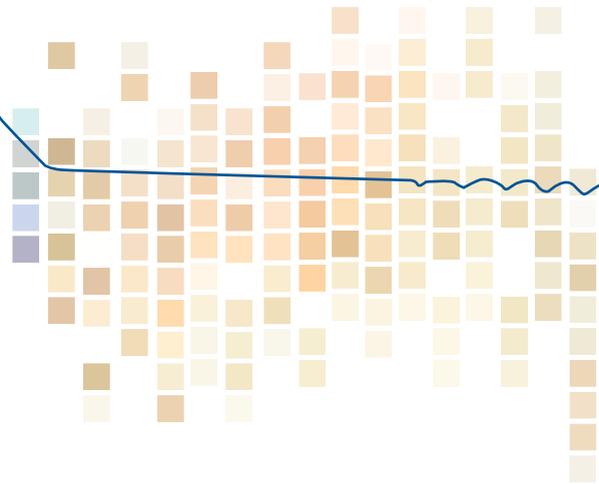


capacity to find the necessary human resources to adapt to change. Development of arrangements for validation is of particular importance for promoting learning adapted to the needs of the individual. Even if they do not lead to certification, validation processes can improve self-assurance and stimulate people to take up learning. Validation also increases visibility of prior learning, supporting its transfer to new settings and situations.

Specific groups require particular attention: **the young** – in view of alarmingly high youth-unemployment rates; **ageing workers** – who will see entry into retirement delayed but must be offered opportunities for continuation of a productive working life; and **the low qualified** – as educational disadvantage is carried over to the workplace - who are less likely to engage in training, and are at a heightened risk of (long periods of) unemployment.

Key areas of Cedefop's work in 2012-14

- Individuals' learning and work trajectories, careers and transitions, to understand the role of VET and various forms of skills development in promoting successful careers and smoothing transitions during working life both for adults and young people. Priority will be given to: unemployed adults and their reintegration into the labour market; young people's transition from education to work and factors influencing their employability; the potential and the benefits of investing in learning for an ageing workforce; and particular needs and learning barriers for the low-skilled.
- Work-based learning, to inform a European strategy and help develop excellence in VET by examining approaches that combine employees' skills development with a larger set of human resource management practices; clarifying the characteristics of skills- and competence-intensive

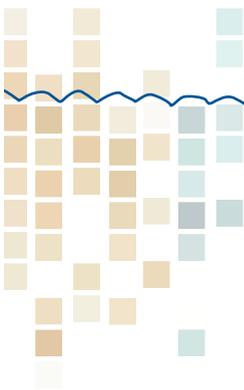


organisations and of those that give lower priority to developing their workers' skills; reviewing workplace practices to measure and validate workers' skills and competences and to help people, especially adults, to acquire key and transversal competences at work; exploring links between skills upgrading and innovation in enterprises.

- Incentives and support for adult learning, comparatively analysing policies and measures to promote access to and develop continuing VET, including: effectiveness and efficiency of financing strategies; potential of valuing and validating non-formal and informal learning to stimulate people to take up learning; lifelong guidance to help adults make informed choices throughout their learning and working careers.
- Exploring the match between adult learners' needs and education and training delivery, which is not always transparent, frequently fragmented and

difficult to access. Good practices for adults' access to various education and training providers, including higher education institutions, or certification practices for private sector education providers can inform policy-makers in other countries. A better insight into delivery mechanisms is also important for guidance services and can help to overcome present stagnation of adult participation in continuing VET.

- Trainers in VET, who play a key role in supporting different stages of people's careers: coaching young people; training mid-career employees; upskilling or reskilling ageing workers, and even supporting transition into retirement. Work will focus on trainers' competence development, compare and analyse their changing roles, profiles and competence requirements. Results will feed into the thematic working group on trainers in VET set up in 2011 jointly with the European Commission.



Analysing skills and competence needs to inform VET provision

2.3. Analysing skills and competence needs to inform VET provision

To be relevant to its different users – learners, employers and society at large – VET must systematically consider external drivers such as technological, occupational, societal and demographic trends which influence knowledge, skills and competence needs. An adequately skilled workforce plays an important role in stimulating innovation, productivity and growth. It is key to achieving environmentally sustainable development.

During 2012-14, Cedefop will continue to build and improve its capability to anticipate comprehensively skill, competence and qualification needs in Europe and analyse the implications for VET.

Context

Knowledge, skills and competence are central to the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Technological change, globalisation, demographic trends and innovations are changing demand for skills in Europe. Providing the appropriate mix of knowledge, skills and competence to its citizens is not only essential for Europe's socio-economic development, it will also improve growth and job quality. Relevant knowledge, skills and competence make it easier for individuals and enterprises to adapt to technological change, as well as to innovate products and services or adopt new ways of working. Developing their skills can help people turn ideas into practice, shape their jobs and create new ones.

Skills supply also needs to be considered in the broader context of demographic and socioeconomic change. The majority of the 2020 workforce is already in the labour market and will need to broaden or



Analysing skills and competence needs to inform VET provision

upgrade its knowledge, skills and competence continuously.

Understanding and anticipating which skills are needed is crucial to ensuring that training provision and learning are meeting changing requirements. The ageing population not only requires promoting active ageing and replacing adequately retiring workers; it also increases demand for jobs in health and social care and in the silver economy. Moving to low carbon and sustainable economies calls for 'greening' all jobs as well as 'green' skills in specific occupations. Quickly adapting to technological change requires addressing possible shortages in knowledge, skills and competence in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

Mismatches and imbalances on the labour market are detrimental to Europe's growth and competitiveness. Unemployment coexists with skills shortages and hard-to-fill job vacancies. The dynamics of change in the workplace require timely

and reliable information on how skills develop over time. Existing skills too often remain underutilised and risk becoming obsolete without sufficient investment in learning and training. As supply and demand interact, trends in skills and competences and different types of mismatches are complex to investigate. This requires more and better data and information at European level. Knowledge of the skills people have and those needed on the labour market is paramount to ensure better matching supply and demand.

To ensure responsiveness to changing labour market requirements and to deliver the right mix of knowledge, skills and competence, initial and continuing VET need clear signals about trends as well as detailed information on immediate needs. Developing relevant and responsive education and training requires dialogue and feedback loops, based on a common language, between the labour market and education and training systems. Translating adequately emerging skills



and competence needs into curricula, qualifications, adult learning provision or measures for particular groups is key.

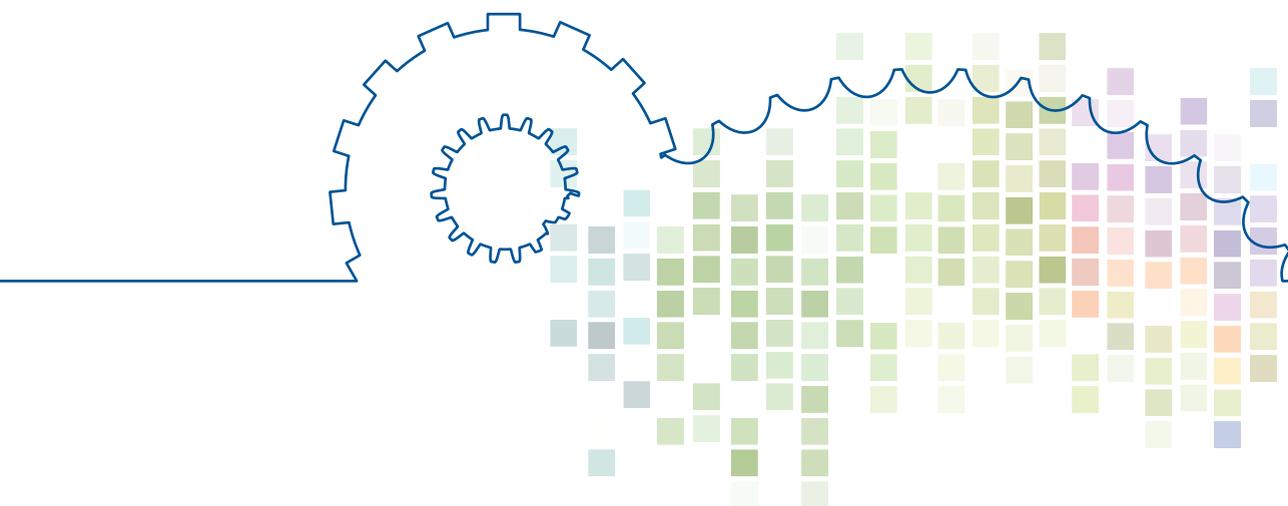
Key areas of Cedefop's work in 2012-14

- Skills forecasts, to improve understanding of the main drivers of change and their impact on future trends in skill supply and demand, and assess potential imbalances in Europe, Member States, sectors and occupations, feeding directly into the EU skills panorama and sector skills councils. Forecasts will be produced every two years; European forecast methods will be continuously refined ⁽¹⁷⁾, for instance by developing labour market and policy scenarios to support strategic decision-making.
- Researching skills mismatch and

obsolescence, to build a better data infrastructure on mismatch in Europe, to understand better causes and consequences – including economic and social costs – and to anticipate and respond to such phenomena adequately. Mismatch will be considered both at individual and enterprise levels. Effective public and human resource policies to promote skills utilisation and development will be identified, aiming to provide better evidence for policy-makers.

- Observing sector and occupational developments: to investigate demand for occupation-specific and generic skills as well as key competences; to identify emerging skill needs not (yet) covered by related policies and statistics; to examine the impact of mega trends and structural changes, for instance shifts in demand for greening jobs, the silver economy or occupations in health and social care. Occupational polarisation, its reasons and consequences for elementary and

⁽¹⁷⁾ In line with the Council conclusions on new skills for new jobs: the way forward of 17 June 2010, see footnote ⁽⁸⁾.



intermediate-level occupations will be further investigated.

- Monitoring skills and competence needs at the workplace, by developing and testing a common (innovative) European approach and state-of-the-art methods to employer skill needs and skill gaps surveys. This work complements various skills anticipation efforts, including skills forecasts, as well as other European and international exercises focusing on the skills possessed and used by individuals in their jobs.
- Supporting interaction between education and training and the labour market and analysing how anticipated skill and competence needs influence definition of occupational and educational profiles as well as provision of education and training for youth and adults.

3. Cedefop's mission and strategic objective

Cedefop's mission is to support development of European VET policies and contribute to their implementation. Cedefop fulfils its mission through the role and tasks set out in its Founding Regulation ⁽¹⁸⁾.

Cedefop's strategic objective is to: strengthen European cooperation and support the European Commission, Member States and social partners in designing and implementing policies for an attractive VET that promotes excellence and social inclusion.

It is Cedefop's role to support the European Commission, Member States

and social partners and respond to their needs as they develop and implement different aspects of European VET policy.

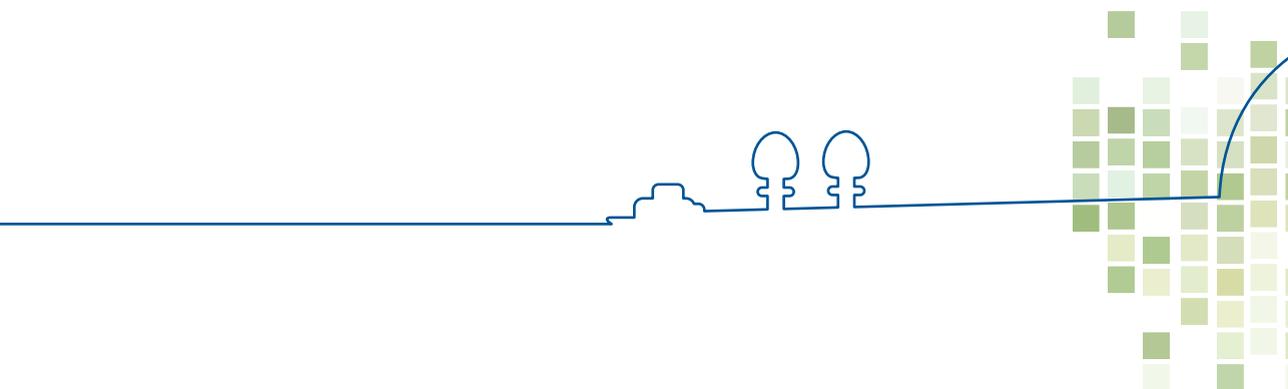
Building on achievements of the Copenhagen process and responding to future challenges, the Bruges communiqué has outlined the goals for VET for the coming years.

By 2020, European VET systems should be more attractive, relevant, career-oriented, innovative, accessible and flexible than in 2010, and should contribute to excellence and equity in lifelong learning.

(Bruges communiqué) ⁽¹⁹⁾

⁽¹⁸⁾ Council of the European Union. Council Regulation of 10 February 1975 establishing the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) EEC No 337/75, *Official Journal of the European Communities*, L 39, 13.2.1975 as last amended by Council Regulation EC No 2051/2004. http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/Consolidated_version_Founding_Regulation_EN_01975R0337-20041221-en.pdf [cited 23.5.2011].

⁽¹⁹⁾ Communiqué of the European Ministers for Vocational Education and Training, the European social partners and the European Commission, meeting in Bruges on 7 December 2010 to review the strategic approach and priorities of the Copenhagen process for 2011-20. http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/vocational/bruges_en.pdf [cited 14.1.2011].



Supporting the strategic objective, Cedefop's medium-term priorities 2012-14 will guide Cedefop's activities and their operational objectives in the annual work programmes. They ensure continuity and consistency of Cedefop's work and also allow the required flexibility to respond to partners' changing needs.

Cedefop's impact, efficiency and relevance will continue to be measured against a framework of performance indicators set up in a performance measurement system (PMS) integrated into Cedefop's programming and reporting. This also safeguards alignment of activities in the annual work programmes with the strategic objective and medium-term priorities.

Working to generate new insights and fill knowledge gaps, providing policy advice to and raising awareness among stakeholders and the wider public, Cedefop's work will impact on:

- (promoting) European VET and lifelong learning policy by providing evidence and analysis; and

- (strengthening) European cooperation, by supporting Member States to implement European tools and principles, share policy priorities, and exchange experience.

In a functional sense, Cedefop provides the expertise and evidence-base that supports the European Commission, Member States and social partners in developing and implementing European VET policy by:

- monitoring developments at European, national, sectoral or regional levels and reporting on VET policies, reforms and systems;
- carrying out applied research comparative and statistical analyses, as well as producing scenarios and forecasting future trends;
- offering a unique platform to policy-makers, social partners, researchers and practitioners for exchanging experiences and promoting common learning;
- disseminating objective, reliable, timely and relevant information to policy-makers and raising awareness of VET and LLL issues.



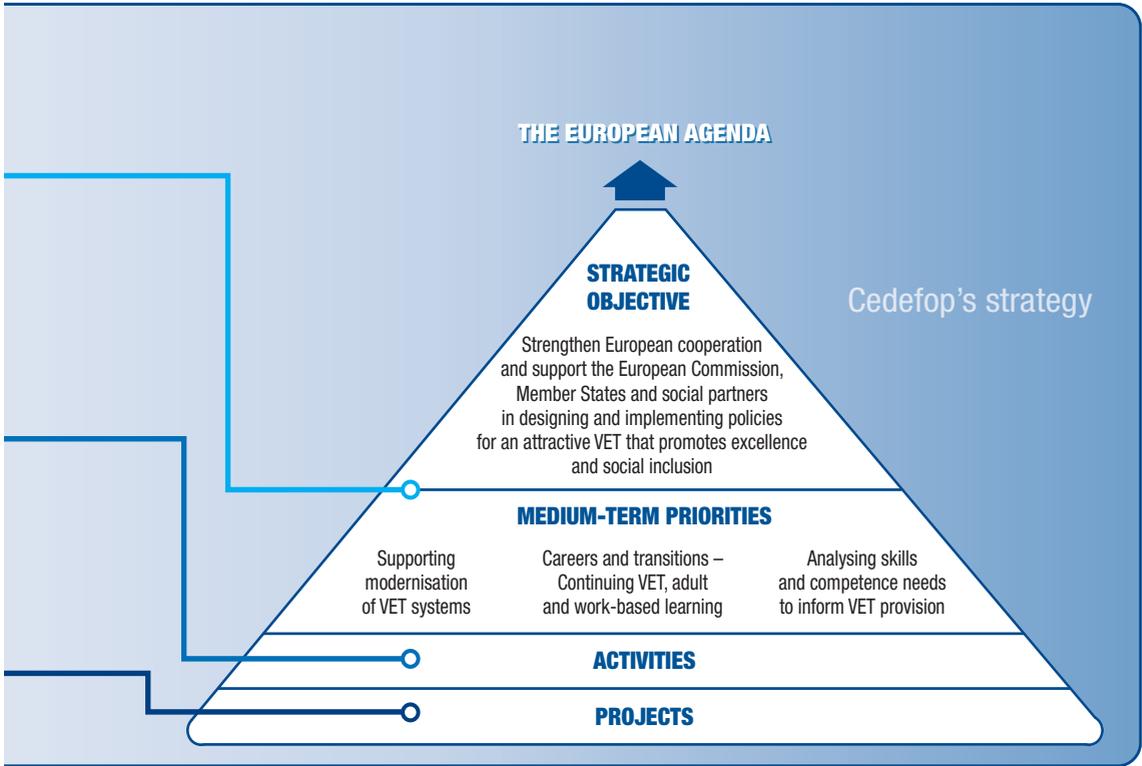
Mapping Cedefop activities to the medium-term priorities

Medium- term priorities	Supporting modernisation of VET systems	Careers and transitions – CVET, adult and work-based learning	Analysing skills and competence needs to inform VET provision
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support implementation of European tools and reforms of VET • Monitor, assess and report on Copenhagen process and other policy developments in VET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult learning and CVET • Investigate careers and transitions during working life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse demand, supply and mismatch of skills and competences • Strengthen interaction between education and training and the labour market
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication, information, dissemination (informing policy-makers, raising awareness) 		
Transversal support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference and publication services • Administration • Management 		



The link between Cedefop's strategy and performance measurement framework

What is measured	How	Level of measurement
Performance: Organisational impact		
<p>Help strengthen European cooperation in developing and implementing European VET policy to promote excellence and social inclusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An evidence-based European VET and skills policy agenda which includes the outcomes of Cedefop's work. • Stronger European cooperation as Member States implement European tools and principles and share policy priorities. • Cedefop is acknowledged as an authoritative source of information on VET, skills and competences and as a well-run organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluative approach, including external evaluation. • Qualitative assessment relying also on analysis of a set of outcome indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational level. • Medium-term priority level. • On occasion on a set of outcome indicators.
Performance: Activity outcomes		
<p>Observable results among stakeholders that Cedefop's work is having an effect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy advice provided to stakeholders. • Knowledge gaps filled and new knowledge or insights generated. • Raised awareness among stakeholders. • Cedefop provides good support services and follows good administrative practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis based on 16 outcome indicators, each corresponding to an outcome type, such as policy advice provided to stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational level. • Medium-term priority level. • Activity level.
Performance: Project and service outputs		
<p>Project and service outputs applying to a particular annual work programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis based on five output indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project or service level.



4. Cooperation to ensure added value – Cedefop’s partners and target groups

Founding Regulation ⁽²⁰⁾, **Article 8.2:**
‘The Centre shall take into account the activities of other bodies working in the field of vocational training’

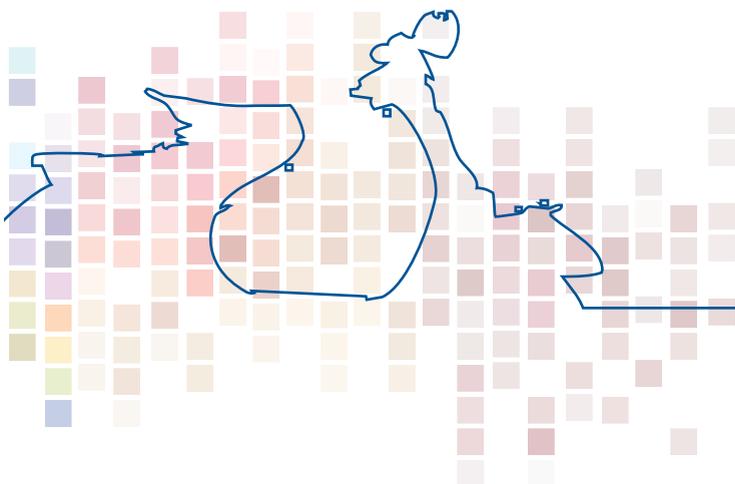
Collaboration is necessary to ensure Cedefop’s work is well aligned with the EU policy agenda and activities of other organisations that deal with VET or related areas. It also ensures that Cedefop findings can inform VET policies and their implementation. Typical examples are Cedefop’s participation in European Commission working groups, steering committees or Cedefop’s own networks.

Cedefop’s cooperation with a wide range of actors is partly based on legal provisions defined in its Founding Regulation or financial rules, and partly on (more or less formal) agreements.

Of key importance are, of course, cooperations with the European Commission, in particular DG Education and Culture, which is Cedefop’s supervisory DG, Member States’ governments and the social partners represented on Cedefop’s Governing Board, and the other European institutions.

⁽²⁰⁾ See footnote ⁽¹⁸⁾.





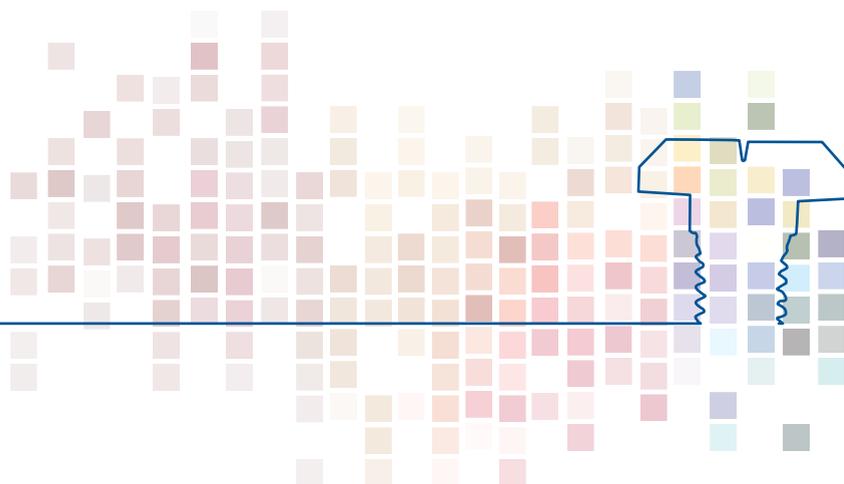
Cooperation agreements with other EU agencies working in related areas provide a framework to exchange systematically information or carry out joint activities. They aim at synergy and make sure that activities are complementary, to the benefit of target groups and ensure best use of resources.

To allow Cedefop to communicate VET issues and results of its work effectively, 'key accounts' such as partners at the European Commission, members of the European Parliament in the Employment and Budget Committee, or Cedefop Governing Board members have been identified.

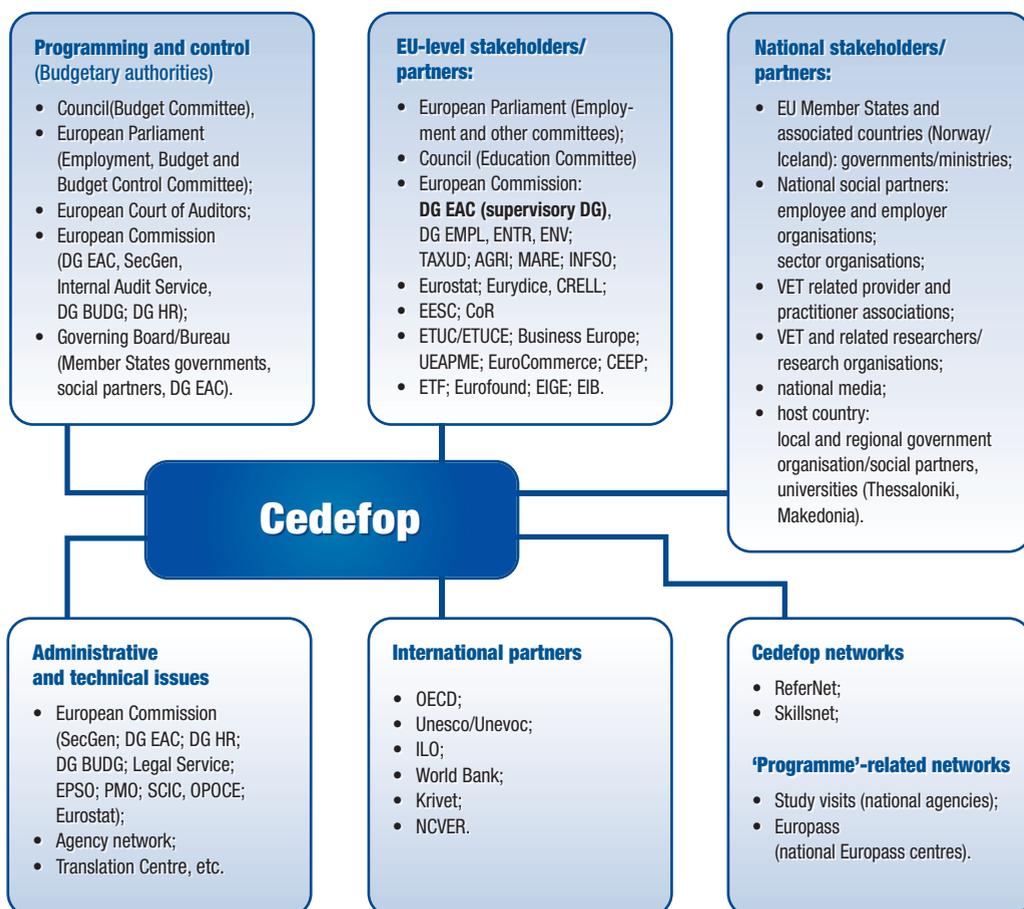
More generally, Cedefop communicates with the following target groups:

- the European Commission, in particular DG Education and Culture as supervisory DG,
- policy-makers from the public sector and social partners;
- VET providers, practitioners, and researchers; and
- the 'wider' public.

Cooperation partners and intermediaries, such as the media, support Cedefop in reaching its target groups in EU Member States as well as Norway and Iceland.



Cedefop partners

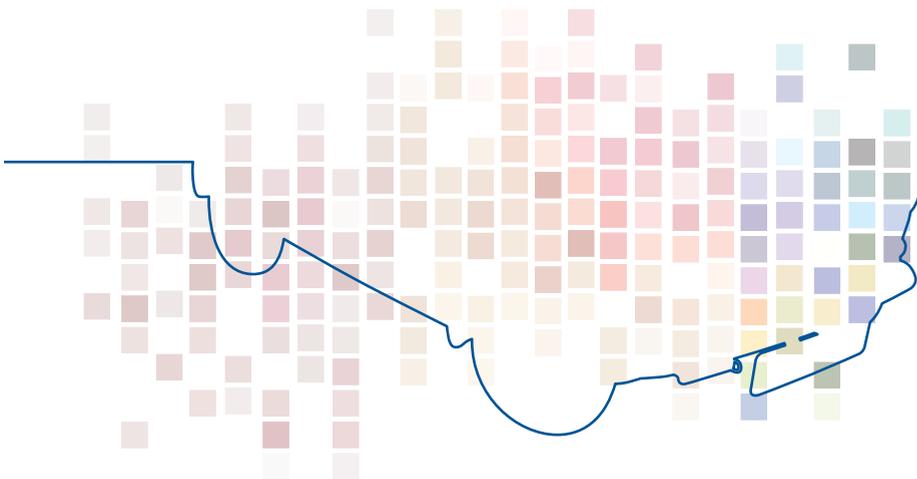


ANNEX

Cedefop's alignment with the policy framework for European cooperation in VET

Cedefop's medium-term priorities are fully aligned with the process of European cooperation in VET. They support the European Commission, Member States and social partners to implement European VET policy and achieve Europe's objectives and vision set for VET in 2020.

The Bruges communiqué defines a series of outputs and outcomes for cooperation in VET in the form of short-term deliverables to be achieved by 2014, within the same time frame as Cedefop's medium-term priorities.



How Cedefop's medium-term priorities support short-term deliverables set out in the Bruges communiqué

Bruges communiqué – Short-term deliverables 2011-14	Included in Cedefop MTPs
Report on VET developments in Member States	MTP I; MTP II
Develop a common language aimed at bridging the world of education and training and the world of work (ESCO), consistent with other EU instruments, such as the EQF	MTP I; MTP III
Guidance and technical support for EQF implementation, notably to apply a learning-outcomes approach	MTP I
Mapping NQFs (by Cedefop and ETF)	MTP I
Guidance and technical support for EQAVET implementation	MTP I
Review implementation of EQAVET at national level in 2013	MTP I
Council recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning	MTP I; MTP II
Guidance and technical support for ECVET implementation	MTP I
Periodic review of ECVET implementation (with Cedefop)	MTP I
Develop a European skills passport as part of Europass by 2012	MTP I
Policy handbook on access to and participation in CVET	MTP I; MTP II
Consider European support for VET promotion campaign, including Eurobarometer on VET attractiveness	MTP I
Improve EU-level data on IVET students	MTP I; MTP II
Set up an improved coordination procedure for implementation of common European tools in education and training	MTP I
European communication strategy on European transparency tools	MTP I
Vademecum/study on successful work-based learning models (with input from Cedefop)	MTP II
Policy document on the role of vocational excellence for smart and sustainable growth	MTP II; MTP III
Work on best practices and guiding principles regarding changing profiles of VET teachers and trainers (with Cedefop)	MTP II
Progress report on development of lifelong guidance policies, systems and practices – 2011 (Cedefop, ETF, ELGPN)	MTP II
Transitions from VET to business	MTP II
Vademecum of best practices on inclusion of 'at risk' groups through combination of work-based learning and key competences	MTP II
Strengthen anticipation of skills and competence development, notably through skills forecasts (Cedefop)	MTP III
Strengthen structured cooperation between education and training and employment policy fields	MTP I, MTP II; MTP III



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

Medium-term priorities 2012-14

Luxembourg:
Publications Office of the European Union

2011 – VI, 32 pp. – 17 x 24 cm
ISBN 978-92-896-0827-5
doi:10.2801/9037
Cat. No: TI-32-11-765-EN-C
Free of charge – 4104 EN



Medium-term priorities

2012-14

4104 EN – TI-32-11-765-EN-C

**CEDEFOP**European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

Europe 123, 570 01 Thessaloniki (Pylea), GREECE
PO Box 22427, 551 02 Thessaloniki, GREECE
Tel. +30 2310490111, Fax +30 2310490020, E-mail: info@cedefop.europa.eu

visit our portal www.cedefop.europa.eu



Publications Office

ISBN 978-92-896-0827-5



9 789289 608275 >