

Thessaloniki, 25/10/2012
RS/PRO/YSIRAK/2012/0860**OPEN INVITATION TO TENDER****AO/ECVL/TB/Quality Approaches/019/2012*****“Quality approaches in Learning and Training patterns in European small firms”*****CLARIFICATION (1) – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Dear Madam/Sir,

In regards to the above mentioned Open Tender Procedure please find below the answers of Cedefop to the requested Clarifications, raised by a potential tenderer:

Questions

If we understand correctly, the literature review should cover all sectors whereas a choice for a specific sector should be made for the case studies (one sector out of six sectors, specified on p. 16 of the call). The first question is if we interpreted this correctly?

If it is possible, we would like to focus the case studies on the food sector. The food industry is the largest manufacturing sector of the EU in terms of turnover (about 270.000 companies) and the largest employer (over 1.4. million people) and as such an important pillar of the EU economy. Moreover it is a relative robust sector from 2008 – 2011 and the typical food company is a ‘small’ company. Together with the challenges this sector meets nowadays (fast changing and critical consumers, relative low R&D expenditures and a need for qualified staff and the need for sustainable solutions) we believe this sector fits very well within your call. Moreover, since we at the WUR are specialised in conducting research within this specific sector, we have a broad international network in this sector and clear overview of relevant actors and documents. The second question we have is to what degree Cedefop is interested in knowledge about learning and training patterns in the food industry.

Answers of Cedefop

As specified in 2.5 “Methodological approach” of the Open Call for tenders in question and in particular in paragraph c), we wish to have a few sectors and not only one, even if it is the very interesting indeed, Food sector. We are referring to *sectors*, not to a sector. The 20 case studies asked for (paragraph h), should derive from the sectors proposed by the tenderer, following CEDEFOP’s agreement as stated in 2.6 “Deliverables, reports and timetable (outcome)”, first and second bullets.

Therefore, the interested tenderer should not focus exclusively on the Food or on any other single sector but include it in the sectors to propose for a deeper analysis to be illustrated by the 20 case studies mentioned above.

In addition, paragraph a) of 2.5 “Methodological approach” asks for a review of the (main/most significant) available literature on the training/Human resources development practices within SMEs in the EU + Norway and Iceland, not within a single sector. As presented in 2.5 “Methodological approach”, tenderers should go from the general (paragraphs a) and b)) to the more specific (paragraphs c) and d)).