



MINUTES OF THE 97TH MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

3 AND 4 OCTOBER 2019

CEDEFOP – THESSALONIKI

1. WELCOME AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Ms Tatjana Babrauskiene, Chairperson, opened the meeting at 15.00 and welcomed members and interpreters to the 97th Management Board (MB) meeting in Thessaloniki. Interpretation was available from EN, FR, DE and EL to EN, FR and DE. Proceedings were recorded for the purpose of the minutes. On 2 September 2019 Cedefop's rules on public access to documents were adopted by the MB. From this day on, the minutes of the Management Board and the conclusions of the Executive Board meetings would be published. Ms Babrauskiene welcomed the newly appointed members and all alternates. She informed members that Mr Korte, Director-General of DG EMPL, was excused on 3 October but would participate on 4 October. The list of members excused was presented on screen. To ensure maximum participation in all future Management Board meetings, the Chairperson asked members to coordinate with their alternates and make every effort to participate. According to the new Regulation, the adoption of certain decisions required a two-thirds majority (e.g. item 9 of the current agenda). This equalled 58 votes. For this meeting the quorum was met and voting members (including the alternates) were 62. In addition, six proxies had been received, taking the votes to 68 in total. Ms Babrauskiene thanked members for participating in the family picture, which would be used in some of Cedefop's outputs but could also be used by the individual members to promote Cedefop's work in their countries. A dinner had been organised following this meeting, and transportation back to the hotels would be provided. She welcomed the new Executive Director, Mr Jürgen Siebel and invited him to present Cedefop's team.

Mr Siebel said that this was his first Management Board meeting, as he took up duties on 1 September. He had longstanding managerial experience in the private sector and had cooperated with some EU institutions in the past. He was grateful to the members for giving him the opportunity to lead Cedefop. He had the support of a great management team: Mara Brugia (Deputy Director), Antonio Ranieri (Head of DLE), Pascaline Descy (Head of DRS and ad interim Head of DSL), Loukas Zahilas (Head of DSI) and Gerd Oskar Bausewein (Head of DCM). The timely preparation of the documents for this meeting was the result of the efforts of the management team and Cedefop staff. Cedefop would need the support and guidance of the Management Board for the challenging years ahead. Divisions that had been troubling Cedefop should be overcome. Mr Siebel wished to turn the page. Continuity was important but some disruptions might also be required. Time was

required to rebuild bridges but also the support of the staff, of the management team and of the Management Board. Everyone involved in this endeavour would be given a fair chance, but mutual trust was required. At this point, Mr Siebel referred to the email sent earlier that day by the Cedefop Staff Committee and the Union Syndicale to Management Board members, copied to all staff. This was unfortunate and exactly the opposite of what he had requested, namely to discuss issues before triggering mass mailings. Further, this email was not only inadmissible but against Cedefop's applicable rules and procedures. Finally, the allegations in the email were not substantiated: the IAS report cited in the minutes of the GB meeting in 2018 was directed at Cedefop, not at individual staff or management members. It was management's obligation to report the audit findings to the Management Board members. Although he had requested this, the senders did not withdraw this email. Mr Siebel would continue to extend trust and assume good intentions. He looked forward to a very productive Management Board meeting.

The Chairperson said that the email was indeed inadmissible and created unnecessary confusion. She fully supported management in their effort to leave the past in the past. Members trusted the new Executive Director and Cedefop management but also the auditing bodies of the EU institutions. She thanked Ms Brugia who had been Acting Director for 1.5 years and congratulated her on steering the Agency efficiently in rather turbulent times. She also congratulated Cedefop staff on the timely preparation of the documents.

Draft agenda

The Chairperson said that item 4 – Planning 2020 and onwards would be discussed on 4 October. One additional point would be discussed under item 10 – Any other business, which concerned the amending budget 2019. She asked if members had any additional comments.

No comments were received.

The Chair concluded that the agenda was adopted with the requested changes.

- 1 **Welcome and adoption of the agenda** (*decision*)
- 2 **Minutes of the Governing Board meeting of 13 November 2018** (*already adopted by written procedure on 15 January 2019*)
- 3 **Progress report on the Work Programme 2019** (*information*)
- 4 **Cedefop's draft action plan as a follow-up to the Commission's Staff Working Document on the cross-cutting evaluation** (*discussion*)
- 5 **Reporting from the Executive Board to the Management Board** (*information*)
- 6 **Rules of Procedure of the Management Board and Executive Board** (*decision*)
- 7 **Administrative issues**
 - (a) New web services, conferences and publications (*information*)
 - (b) Audits, evaluations and other sources of assurance (*information*)
 - (c) HR developments (*information*)
 - (d) Staff engagement survey: follow-up on the action plan of the 2017 survey and preparation for the 2019 survey (*information*)



- (e) General implementing provisions (*if any – decision*)
 - (f) Transfers of commitment and payment appropriations in 2019 (*information*)
 - (g) Annual report 2018 of the Chair of Cedefop's Appeals Committee (*information*)
- 8 **Planning 2020 and onwards**
- (a) Revised draft Programming Document 2020-22 / Opinion of the European Commission (*discussion/adoption*)
 - (b) First indications for the Work Programme 2021 (*discussion*)
 - (c) Cedefop's strategy post-2020 (*discussion on the process-no document*)
- 9 **Elections of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairpersons of the MB and composition of the Executive Board / Enlarged Executive Board (*decision*)**
- 10 **Any other business**
- (a) Amendment budget 2019
 - (b) Dates of Executive Board meetings and Management Board meeting in 2020 (*decision*)

2. MINUTES OF THE 96TH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2018

The Chair said that the minutes of the Governing Board meeting in 2018 had already been approved by written procedure on 15 January 2019. The minutes were available in English and posted in the eGB community.

Members took note of the information.

3. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WORK PROGRAMME 2019 (*INFORMATION*)

The Chairperson said that this internal document was produced at the request of the MB and was not intended for publication. The report gave an account of the implementation of Cedefop's work programme and budget from 1 January 2019 to 30 June 2019. She invited the Deputy Director to present the item.

The Deputy Director said that progress in the first semester demonstrated improvement in most areas of work in comparison to previous years. As confirmed by the PMS indicators, Cedefop's work was valued by its stakeholders and had an impact on the EU policy agenda for VET. The figures showed exceptional interest in the content of Cedefop's web portal and the Skills Panorama. The shift from traditional publications to online visualisation tools had proved very successful. Despite the lack of capacity, better budget implementation had been achieved. The most prominent user at EU level was the Commission, and internationally the OECD. Content-wise, three key achievements should be mentioned: (a) adult learning, in particular the policy learning forum and the analytical framework on low-skilled adults in support of *Upskilling pathways*; (b) Cedefop's ongoing research on the future of VET, as well as the event with the MEPs hosted by Mme Sander (rapporteur for the revision of Cedefop's Founding Regulation) which continued informing the ongoing policy debate on VET post-2020; (c) skills intelligence by analysing online job vacancies, in particular the new web interface, which uses big data and allows users to explore data sets across countries, regions, occupations and skills to identify in real time the skills demanded by employers. The first results for seven countries were released in April. Ms Brugia thanked Ms Geleng for giving Cedefop the opportunity to share the results with high-level participants from several

DGs. The shift to online visualisation tools, as well as diversifying publications by complementing research reports with more concise information or thematic videos, aim to improve readability of our research to reach more effectively non-academic users and policy-makers. These good results required additional effort and workload. Ms Brugia thanked the heads of department and all staff for their commitment and support. She also thanked Board members for the constructive atmosphere and their trust in management over the past year. Management and staff were pleased that the new Executive Director, Mr Siebel, had now taken over and looked forward to supporting and working closely with him to make Cedefop even more successful.

The Chairperson congratulated Cedefop. She asked the Director to consider the staff workload a priority and invited members to comment.

Comments from the Governments

Mr van IJsselmuiden thanked the Deputy Director for the presentation and her commitment in difficult times. The group had no comments on the very good report and results achieved.

Comments from the Employers

Mr Riemer thanked Cedefop for the excellent documents and results achieved so far. He welcomed the new Executive Director and thanked him for accepting the challenge to lead Cedefop, an agency very close to the labour market, through difficult times. The consequences of Brexit and the priorities of the new Commission, as well as the changes in the Parliament, would have an impact on the work of the Agency. He was looking forward to the discussion with Mr Korte in the context of the programming document. He welcomed the change of management that Mr Siebel wanted to establish. It was not always easy to work with the groups, especially when the future financial framework was unknown. Difficult decisions might be required. Mr Riemer said that the comments of the Executive Director in relation to the email received were very much to the point. The start of a new era was indeed necessary, and he wished Mr Siebel all the best. He had no comments on the excellent work and the progress report.

Mr Plummer said the report was excellent. The Employers' group supported everything done so far. The indicators were very important but Cedefop participation in various meetings of the social partners should be further highlighted.

Comments from the Employees

Mr Patuzzi welcomed Mr Siebel and wished him the best of luck in his work. Groups might not always be easy to handle but all members were willing to work with Cedefop and looked forward to working with him. The Employees would like to see the spirit of cooperation and mutual trust continue. Cedefop was a tripartite agency and the involvement of social partners in its activities was important. The group appreciated the excellent work and thanked management and staff for their work in particularly difficult times. On page 8, 'senior stakeholders' were mentioned. Mr Patuzzi asked what the definition of 'senior' was. It would be good to identify the stakeholders that had participated in the events so far and indicate which groups would be targeted in the future.

Ms Roman said that studies were often outsourced at a rather high cost. It was important to ensure the quality of the outcomes. The outsourcing of legal advice amounted to EUR 240 000 in 2019. The group asked for a more cost-effective solution in the future.

Comments from the Commission

Ms Geleng welcomed the Executive Director and wished him success. She also thanked Ms Brugia for steering the Agency successfully in the past 1.5 years. The progress report showed good focus on the Work Programme 2019. This was a particularly difficult year in terms of workload with the new Regulation coming into force, the report of the IAS on HR and ethics and the cross-cutting evaluation. A number of follow up actions had been required. The indicators showed continued interest in Cedefop's work. The presentation of big data was a good example. The good cooperation among the agencies should be mentioned. Alignment of administrative indicators and methodologies across the agencies should be pursued.

Mr Siebel thanked members for the warm welcome. 'Senior stakeholders' did not refer to different classes of stakeholders. The term was used to include the contribution of Cedefop to the institutional players at EU level. If Cedefop's budget remained nominally flat for the period 2021-27, then Title III (operations) would have to be reduced by 41% in real terms. Title I (salaries) could not be reduced and was beyond Cedefop's control. Shared infrastructure in Title II would be the right approach; however, this required investment up front. Cedefop would prepare proposals in order to deal with this difficult situation. The quality of the outcomes was a constant challenge but did not relate to outsourcing alone. Cedefop had a lot of in-house expertise; however, the issue was to find the right persons for each project.

Ms Descy said that one third of the budget was dedicated to the operational expenditure (Title III), which represented Cedefop's core business. This expenditure was dedicated to outsourcing activities across the EU. Cedefop's added value was indeed its in-house expertise. The strategy in recent years had been to focus outsourcing on collecting primary data, which in-house experts would analyse. This strategy would become more important in view of the budgetary situation. Internal expertise should be consolidated in order to continue working effectively and ensure that Cedefop remained a cutting-edge organisation in VET. The Board should identify the most important issues to focus on in the future, so that resources could be used effectively.

The Deputy Director said that several mechanisms were in place internally to ensure quality of research results. Peer reviews and validation meetings were organised to discuss draft research results with external stakeholders. Cedefop intended to reinforce these in the future. Key projects like the future of VET were steered by management. The contribution of the stakeholders in Cedefop's meetings was reflected in the indicators.

Mr Ranieri said that the quality of research was a constant challenge. Cedefop had certain constraints in its establishment plan. The money spent on outsourcing could not be used to recruit experts. In order to address the issue of ratio between outsourcing and internal capacity, more synergies were created. This way, small teams of experts could spend less time on project management and more time on quality control.

The Chairperson concluded that the Management Board was satisfied with the good progress of the Work Programme 2019. Members congratulated the Deputy Director on the achievements in the first semester and welcomed the Executive Director on

board for the next semester. The Chairperson congratulated Cedefop's staff on behalf of the members on its good work.

5. CEDEFOP'S DRAFT ACTION PLAN AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE COMMISSION'S STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT ON THE CROSS-CUTTING EVALUATION (*DISCUSSION*)

The Chairperson invited the Deputy Director to present the item.

Ms Brugia said that the Staff Working Document (SWD) of the Commission was published in April 2019 and sent to MB members. Overall the results of the evaluation of the four (at the time) agencies under the remit of DG EMPL were positive. The SWD contained 18 recommendations addressed to all four agencies. Measures for these had already been taken and Cedefop was cooperating with the other three agencies. The SWD also contained two specific recommendations for Cedefop. The first was to shift more resources from the administration to the operations. The Commission acknowledged the progress done so far but advised to keep up the efforts. The second recommendation was to present Cedefop's performance indicators in a less aggregated manner. Cedefop had already addressed this recommendation in the annual report and in the current progress report. In order to follow the recommendation of the Commission to align the Cedefop's performance measurement system with that of other agencies, Cedefop agreed with Eurofound, the ETF and OSHA to compare administrative indicators and methodologies. One of the proposed actions was to exchange expertise not only with the three agencies but also with the Performance Development Network, a subnetwork of the EU agencies network. A user satisfaction survey would be launched the following week and would take place every two years.

Mr Siebel said that the satisfaction survey would also address the issue of the quality of Cedefop's work.

Comments from the Commission

Ms Geleng welcomed the action plan and commended the cooperation with the other three agencies in this context. She noted that many recommendations had already been addressed. Concerning recommendations 15 to 17, some margin of flexibility in the work programme should be included in the programming document. The evaluation confirmed the importance of the next day's strategic reflection.

Comments from the Employers

Mr Riemer asked when members could have information on the implementation and the specific results concerning cooperation with other agencies.

Comments from the Governments

Mr van IJsselmuiden said that the presentation was very clear. It was important to cooperate with other agencies but overlaps between the different networks should be avoided. Perhaps having fewer networks could reduce the workload.

Ms Linden welcomed the ongoing shift of resources to operations. She asked for the timeline of a preliminary estimate on the possible scope.

Comments from the Employees

Ms Michel asked why this exercise had been performed and said that she had doubts and fears about the rationalisation proposed by the evaluation. She also asked how effectiveness and efficiency were being monitored.

The Deputy Director said that there were no specific milestones concerning the communication of outcomes of the cross-agency cooperation. However, in the first meeting of the Executive Board in 2020 Cedefop would be able to provide some information on the results until then. Cedefop reviewed HR and budget situation every month in order to shift more resources to operations. This was an ongoing process but a more detailed report over a given period could be provided in the next Executive Board meetings. Ms Brugia said that according to the Financial Regulation an external evaluation was foreseen every five years for the agencies under the remit of DG EMPL. Cedefop had to make the most out of this exercise.

Mr Siebel said that even without the external evaluation, the best use of resources would be a constant aim to ensure more added value for the stakeholders. Timelines and milestones would be considered. Reporting should be done but could be streamlined. On the flexibility of the work programme, Mr Siebel said that Cedefop did a lot of analysis and tools were in place. The Agency was prepared to change focus of its work if this was required.

Ms Descy said that it was not easy to monitor effectiveness and efficiency gains of digitalisation. Automation and digital processes had to be verified by facts, as they required investment. The effectiveness of streamlining of processes should also be assessed to ensure that they were heading in the right direction for creating the expected efficiency gains.

The Chair of the Staff Committee said that in addition to this action plan for the external evaluation, and at the same time, Cedefop had several other ongoing action plans (i.e. on the staff survey, on the IAS report, the work programme, etc.). A lot of actions were required by Cedefop staff and management.

The Chairperson concluded that many recommendations had already been addressed; however, there was still room for improvement. All groups would closely follow the implementation and monitoring of these recommendations. The discussion would continue in the next meeting of the Executive Board.

6. REPORTING FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD TO THE MANAGEMENT BOARD (INFORMATION)

The Chairperson said that the reporting covered the period from the Governing Board meeting of 13 November 2018 to September 2019.

This was an updated version of the one forwarded to members on 13 March 2019.

The Chairperson reminded members that this reporting was indicative and advised them to refer to the final minutes of the Executive Board meetings, which were sent to all MB Members once adopted. She invited all members to contact the coordinator of their group in between meetings to get informed of discussions and developments.

Ms Roman said that the alternate members should be included in the distribution list of all documents, including invitations to conferences.

The Chairperson concluded that members took note of the information.

Coffee break from 16h20 to 17h00

7. RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD AND EXECUTIVE BOARD (DECISION)

The Chairperson said that the Rules of Procedure of the Management Board and Executive Board had been extensively discussed in the meetings of the Executive Board in March and June 2019, as well as in the meeting of the previous day. Members had agreed on most issues but one was still outstanding. She urged members to find a compromise in order to avoid voting. She invited the groups to present the outcome of their discussions.

Employees' group

Mr Patuzzi said that after three meetings some progress had been made and members managed to find consensus on most issues. Despite the hard work so far, it appeared that members had to build further trust. There was one outstanding issue which had to be brought to the attention of the Management Board. The group strongly supported option 1, which stated that the Deputy Director and the heads of department should attend all meetings. In the last Governing Board meeting, Ms Brugia's mandate as Deputy Director had been renewed by unanimous decision of the Board. Cedefop had a Deputy Director and also heads of department in place. Their participation in all meetings was not only reasonable but also essential as their contribution to the smooth functioning of the Agency was indispensable. The alternative option ('members of Cedefop's middle management') did not clearly define who these were. If the Director should decide a reorganisation in Cedefop, after consulting the Management Board, then the Rules of Procedure could be amended accordingly. Indeed, the new Regulation referred to 'deputising functions' but in this transitional period, a way should be found to align the new Regulation with the reality in Cedefop. The Employees' group did not intend to compromise but would be willing to discuss in order to avoid a vote. However, if voting was required, then this should be secret.

Governments' group

Mr van IJsselmuiden said that the Governments' group would also prefer to avoid voting. He proposed to compromise on option 2 by including the following footnote: *'on the basis of the Founding Regulation, the composition of the middle management is up to the Director. It would generally involve the Deputy Director, if in place, and the members of the management team.'*

Employers' group

Mr Riemer said that trust might not always be easy to build. The Employers were always keen on having a Deputy Director in Cedefop. However, this was different from the Rules of Procedure. The Commission had a clear position concerning the reference to the new Regulation and the group considered it binding. The Employers would therefore prefer option 2. After two years, it would be up to the Executive Director to decide how he would proceed with the internal organisation of Cedefop. If the Commission accepted the compromise text proposed by the Governments, then the Employers would agree.

Commission

Ms Geleng said that the term 'middle management' did not exclude the Deputy Director or the heads of department. Option 2 was fully in line with Cedefop's implementing provisions on middle management adopted a few months before and also future-proof. It was also legally sound as the post of the Deputy Director was explicitly excluded from the new Regulation by the legislators after a long discussion. Indeed, the old Founding Regulation did not include the term of Deputy Director either, although Cedefop always had one. This discussion was not about a specific person but about the alignment of the Rules of Procedure with the Founding Regulation and the legislators' intentions.

The Chairperson said that the current and still valid Rules of Procedure included the Deputy Director and were never considered illegal. She asked if the Commission would accept the text as proposed by the Governments.

Ms Geleng said that the term 'Deputy Director' was explicitly excluded from the new Regulation. Therefore, the Commission could not accept that it be referenced in the Rules of Procedure.

Mr Patuzzi said that the Employees' group could agree to the compromise text proposed by the Governments, as it explicitly mentioned the Deputy Director and the heads of department.

Mr van IJsselmuiden expressed his disappointment. The Commission had a very legalistic approach concerning the footnote, which, in his opinion, took into consideration both the new Regulation but also the possibility of a future reorganisation. In addition, the old Rules of Procedure, which made explicit reference to the Deputy Director, had existed for many years without a problem, despite the fact that the old Regulation did not mention a Deputy Director.

Ms Geleng said that the Executive Board's conclusion of the day before was to put these two options to vote. She was surprised that new compromise proposals were now on the table without any prior discussion among all the groups, including the Commission. All groups had agreed with the two options during the Executive Bureau meeting. The Commission's approach was not legalistic but the position of an institution. The text to be adopted should be in line with the Regulation.

Mr Thiele said that it was exclusively up to the Management Board and not the Executive Board to make decisions. The text proposed by the Governments was a good compromise and it was up to the Commission to agree or proceed with voting.

Mr Plummer asked what would happen if there was no majority vote.

The Chairperson said that multiple rounds of voting would follow.

Mr Plummer said that a compromise would be the preferable solution.

Mr Riemer said that if the Commission did not agree then members should opt for voting.

Mr Patuzzi said that although he understood the Commission's institutional point of view, Cedefop was a tripartite agency and the groups should find a compromise. He proposed to reach a consensus on the second option and then proceed with an open vote.

The Chairperson urged members to find a compromise that reflected the reality in Cedefop, where both Deputy Director and heads of department existed. She did not consider that this would go against the legislation.

Ms Geleng proposed to have a break so that the Chairperson and Deputy Chairpersons could discuss in order to find a solution.

The Chairperson said that the coordinators should also participate in the discussion and urged members to find a compromise.

Coffee break and discussion from 17h25 to 18h00

The proposed compromise text read '*members of Cedefop's middle management and was accompanied by an explanatory footnote stating: 'In accordance with the Founding Regulation, the internal structures of the Agency, including deputising functions, are decided by the Executive Director. Middle management functions in Cedefop are defined in the implementing rules on middle management. These may include a Deputy Director, if in place, and other members of the management team.'*

The Chairperson concluded that the Rules of Procedure were unanimously adopted.

Note for the file: the final text was presented on screen in the morning of 4 October. All members agreed, and the Chairperson signed the Rules of Procedure.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

(a) New web services, conferences and publications (*information*)

Mr Bausewein said that three important online tools had been developed on Cedefop's web portal in the first half of the year: (a) the 'skills online vacancy analysis'; (b) the 'VET toolkit for tackling early leaving' and (c) the update of the 'financing adult learning database'. The 'financing apprenticeship database' was already online and would be presented in the Cedefop/OECD event in Paris. At the end of October, the online tool 'VET in Europe' would be also available online. The concept of the new web portal in 2020 would be based on thematic entry points which would integrate several tools, and project managers were encouraged to focus on future synergies between research outcomes. Interviews with stakeholders and consultations with key staff members were still ongoing. Mr Bausewein mentioned Cedefop's support in the European vocational skills week 2019 in Helsinki, as well as the paperless Brussels seminar with the Finnish Presidency before the end of the year. The latter would be a pilot for similar larger events. All planned publications were so far on track and more would follow towards the end of the year.

Mr van IJsselmuiden said that progress was very good. The new web portal was customer-oriented and would hopefully make Cedefop more visible.

Mr Patuzzi said that the tools made Cedefop's research more visible, as the public had easier access. He hoped that the developments would continue. It was very important to reach more people interested in VET, particularly from the field of social partners.

Mr Riemer supported everything said so far.

Ms Geleng said that the Commission welcomed the online web tools and thanked Cedefop for the support in the European vocational skills week. Currently, 900 events in 45 countries were linked. A link for voting on the forthcoming VET excellence awards would be sent to all members by Cedefop.

The Chairperson said that the number of participants in the European vocational skills week was growing every year.

Ms Coenen asked if the career network meeting was over and who the participants were. The Unions were really interested in participating.

Mr Bausewein encouraged all members to register on the web portal.

The Chairperson concluded that members took note of the information.

(b) Audits, evaluations and other sources of assurance (*information*)

Ms Descy said that the results and follow-up of audits were listed in detail in the document. Cedefop had received the preliminary observations on the 2018 Court of Auditors audit. All transactions concerning the 2018 accounts were legal and regular. Two observations had been made concerning two recruitment procedures of 2015 and 2016. One more observation concerned the cost of the externalisation of the legal function. Cedefop had provided its feedback. The report including Cedefop's answers was expected in October. The IAS had reopened two recommendations on the web services. However, all actions from Cedefop's side had been implemented in the meantime. The implementation of the action plan on the audit of HR and ethics had been presented to the Executive Board and was progressing as planned. Concerning the critical recommendation on recruitment procedures, all actions had been implemented according to plan. The follow up IAS audit was planned for November 2019. Ms Descy said that other sources of assurance were also presented in the note. A copy of the Discharge 2017 was also attached.

Ms Geleng said that the Commission welcomed the overall positive report from the Court of Auditors in 2018 and the resolution of the European Parliament on the Discharge 2017, while also noting the critical remarks. She trusted that all recommendations would be followed accordingly. The complete 2017 report of the Court of Auditors on EU agencies stressed that there was a high number of small agencies with their own administrative structures. This was a risk to administrative efficiency. Ms Geleng encouraged management to continue the efforts in efficiency gains. The Commission welcomed Cedefop's decision to move to ABAC and asked for the timeline.

Mr Thiele asked if members would receive the report of the Court of Auditors when published. Minutes of the meetings would be published from now on. The preliminary report was marked as 'confidential'. He asked how members should handle this report.

Ms Descy said that the preliminary findings were part of the adversarial procedure, so only Executive Board members had received them with the marking 'sensitive'. The final report would be distributed to all members of the Management Board when published. The migration to ABAC (Commission's accounting system) was initially foreseen for the current year. Cedefop was in contact with DG BUDG to consider the integration with Fibus (financial IT system in Cedefop). However, the cost had increased. Cedefop's budget was already tight, as was the staff capacity. This was the reason why the migration had been postponed to 2020.

The Chairperson said that members took note of the information.

(c) HR developments (*information*)

Ms Descy said that currently Cedefop had 113 staff and 3 SNEs. The establishment plan of the Agency had 91 posts for officials and temporary agents. In addition, Cedefop employed contract agents (financed by its own resources and not included in the establishment plan). Due to the review of the selection procedures in 2019, no new selections were launched for the first half of the year. The first vacancy was published in June 2019. Hopefully, Cedefop would be able to keep up and reach the target of fulfilling the establishment plan by 95% before the end of the year. If this target was not reached, then the budgetary authority might apply further cuts to the establishment plan. Ms Descy said that Cedefop would use the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) list of contract agents to cover urgent needs in the administration. The high rate of Greek nationals was a concern, as this had implications for the geographical balance. Efforts were being made for wider dissemination of vacancies, but challenges remained (i.e. no European school, employment of spouses, etc.)

Mr Siebel said that he had decided to cancel the selection for the middle management post published in June. The reason for this decision was that in the meantime, he had received a request from the Greek Government for the secondment of one of the managers to the Greek Ministry of Education. He considered this a great opportunity both for the individual and for Cedefop. Mr Siebel would strongly encourage mobility both within Cedefop and outside of the Agency. He invited all members to assist by creating opportunities in and from their organisations/institutions. A new selection procedure with a more generic profile would be launched in the week to come to fill both middle management posts.

Ms Dorn said that enabling people to acquire additional work experience in another organisation was very interesting. It was also similar to what the Confederation of the German Employers' Associations (BDA) was doing with very little bureaucracy and short assignments. She asked Cedefop to consider also social partners for this mobility. A short-term exchange of staff between Cedefop and the BDA could benefit both organisations and could be discussed for the next year.

The Chairperson concluded that members took note of the information.

(d) Staff engagement survey: follow-up on the action plan of the 2017 survey and preparation for the 2019 survey (*information*)

Mr Siebel said that despite some staff issues, the last staff survey had remarkably good results compared to other agencies. In November the new staff engagement survey would be launched. This would be the starting point to address issues like institutional culture, management practices and communication between and within all teams in Cedefop. The standard set of general questions would be used, and the provider would arrange a follow-up workshop in early 2020. Cedefop used the survey results as an opportunity to mend divisions.

Ms Descy said that a demanding action plan followed the previous survey. The actions were grouped into five goals (improving internal communication, optimising the capacity of the management team, nurturing a culture of respect and collaboration, fostering work-life balance and improving the visibility of the Agency). The actions were based on staff suggestions. The 2019 survey would include the standard set of questions applicable to all agencies. The survey would be sent to

staff towards the end of the year and the results would be presented in January 2020.

The Chairperson concluded that members took note of the information and looked forward to receiving the results.

(e) General implementing provisions (*if any – decision*)

Ms Descy said that the implementing provisions were a set of rules that, on the basis of Article 110 of the Staff Regulations, assisted in its implementation. Agencies had to adopt by analogy the implementing provisions of the Commission. However, due to their specificities in some cases they could opt out or, use the templates that were developed by the Standing Working Party, in which representatives from all agencies were working with the Commission for the adaptation of the latter's implementing provisions to the agencies. In the past months the Management Board had adopted several implementing provisions (i.e. on outside activities, on the function of advisors, on middle management, etc.).

The Chairperson concluded that members took note of the information.

(f) Transfers of commitment and payment appropriations in 2019 (*information*)

Ms Descy said that Cedefop worked with three budget Titles: Title I (administrative expenditure), Title II (infrastructure) and Title III (operational). To optimise the budget execution, transfers would be made within and between these Titles. This process would accelerate towards the end of each year. According to the Financial Regulation, transfers within the Titles could be approved by the Executive Director. For transfers between Titles that exceeded 10% of the appropriations of this Title for the given year, a decision had to be made by the Management Board. Normally, this would be done by written procedure. At the end of the year members would receive an overview of all transfers made.

The Chairperson concluded that members took note of the information.

(g) Annual report 2018 of the Chair of Cedefop's Appeals Committee (*information*)

Members took note of the information provided in the report.

The Chairperson thanked members and closed the meeting at 19.50.

The meeting resumed on 4 October at 9h35

The Chairperson welcomed members to the meeting. She also welcomed the Director-General of DG EMPL Mr Joost Korte and invited him to address the members.

In light of the mission letters prepared by the President-Elect, Mr Korte said that DG EMPL was and would continue to be the Commission's partner DG for Cedefop, also under the new Commission. Although it was the first time he came to Cedefop, he had worked intensively with the current Chairperson, Ms Tatjana Babrauskienė, whose mandate was coming to an end after this meeting. Mr Korte thanked the Deputy Director, Ms Brugia, who in her capacity as Acting Director had navigated Cedefop safely through very difficult times. Without her this would not have been possible. He also welcomed Mr Jürgen Siebel, the new Executive Director and wished him success. He was looking forward to the brainstorming session (item 4c)

later in the morning. This meeting would turn the page and constitute a new start for Cedefop. At the same time, Brussels was also turning the page under the new Commission. Following the process from the inside, he could safely say that the agenda of the new President-Elect made ample references to skills. Members should not worry about VET. The Commissioner-Designate for Jobs, Nicolas Schmit, who would be in charge of DG EMPL, had been given the task to take it forward.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Korte and said that today's meeting would focus more on VET in general. However, before proceeding with item 4 in the agenda, the Management Board should adopt the Rules of Procedure with the text as agreed in the plenary meeting of 3 October. She asked members if they had further comments.

No comments were received.

The Chairperson concluded that the Rules of Procedure of Cedefop's MB and EB were adopted.

4. PLANNING 2018 AND ONWARDS

(a) Final draft Programming Document 2020-22/Opinion of the European Commission

The Chairperson said that the first draft PD 2020-22 had been endorsed by the MB by written procedure in January 2019 and forwarded to the EU Institutions. The updated version had been endorsed by the Management Board in February 2019. She thanked Cedefop's management and staff for the timely preparation of the document. The Commission's opinion expected by 1 July was still pending. Therefore, the Management Board could not adopt the PD in that meeting. She invited members to provide their comments on the document and the Commission to provide a timeline for its opinion.

Ms Geleng said that the Commission's opinion was expected in the week of 7 October.

Mr Siebel said that he would flag 15 significant changes in the draft revised PD 2020-22: on page 2, in the disclaimer, Brexit and budget effects would have to be accounted for; on page 5, in the foreword, competitiveness had been added; in paragraphs 21, 27 and 36, in the general context, the Council's strategy agenda had been integrated more explicitly; paragraph 62 on skills utilisation and developments within firms had been extensively discussed in the context of the multiannual financial framework; in the HR and financial section, paragraphs 80 and 83 the wording of the disclaimer had been discussed; in paragraphs 96, 103 and 136, the change of focus in country reviews had been discussed; in paragraph 99, issues on efficiency gains and PMS; in paragraphs 105 and 108 of the executive summary, some statements had been added in the work programme (WP) section; in paragraph 116, interactive online tools and spotlight initiative; in paragraph 128, the future of VET; paragraphs 133 to 135, labour market activation measures; in paragraphs 145 and 149 labour market intelligence. The activity fiches would be updated according to the amendments in the body of the text. Mr Siebel invited members to comment.

Mr Riemer said that, in general, the Employers' group considered the PD a very good document. He suggested that groups provide comments on a few major topics rather than go through it in detail. The document would have to be adopted in

December; however, one of the most important aspects, the multiannual financial framework was not yet known. He would be very interested to know the Executive Director's view on this.

Mr van IJsselmuiden agreed with a more general discussion on the document.

The Chairperson invited members to comment.

Comments from the Commission

Ms Geleng said that the revised draft clarified a number of aspects and captured recent developments. She welcomed the reference to the political guidelines of the President-Elect. The Commission's opinion would soon be adopted but overall the evaluation was positive. The activities beyond 2020 were indicative, as the financial framework for 2021-27 had not yet been established. In addition to the comments already made in the Executive Board meeting, the Commission had some minor technical comments that would be sent in writing.

Comments from the Employers

Mr Plummer said that the Employers' group considered the document balanced and at the same time ambitious. The group had no particular comments.

Comments from the Governments

Mr van IJsselmuiden said that the Governments' group considered the PD good, although a bit long due to its structure. In general, it was very readable and the shift of Cedefop's mandate was clearly indicated. However, the consequences of this shift might not always be evident. The hand-over of Europass to the Commission was clearly conveyed. This was due to the lack of capacity in Cedefop, so Europass would now be taken over by the Commission's external contractor. The group's concern was that Cedefop might be out of the loop in terms of digitalisation and artificial intelligence (AI). It was very important that Cedefop would not give up the topic as such. Digital developments in education were the future and the Agency was still on top. Handing over Europass should not result in Cedefop losing its grip of this topic. The list of negative priorities was understandable. However, country reviews were of main importance for the Governments' group. Although the new approach was understandable, it was also important to pay attention to future country-specific developments. As a solution, countries could pay a fee if a specific report was requested. The financial uncertainty and future developments should not further diminish the attention to country reviews. The risk analysis was clear.

Comments from the Employees

Mr Patuzzi said that the group had a long discussion on the PD. Overall the document should be shorter and repetitions should be minimised. The group considered that the core of the PD should focus on the kind of research Cedefop was planning for the future in relation to the political priorities. Regrettably, social dialogue in relation to governance of VET was missing (paragraph 25). In paragraph 21, new forms of partnerships were mentioned. Social partnership should be a tool to support workers' upskilling and not only companies. The phrasing in paragraphs 25 and 26 appeared to hold workers responsible for low skills. The group expected that Cedefop, not the social partners, would provide ideas for trade unions to support upskilling of workers (i.e. by providing data).

Ms Coenen said that as an example, the activity fiche 5.3 operational activity 2 should include more research and data on the role of social partners and especially

trade unions in creating the right conditions for lifelong learning and stimulating workers to self-develop.

Mr Christopoulos said that Cedefop had been created in 1975 to promote VET and the dialogue between all stakeholders involved. As a member, a teacher, a trade unionist and an EU citizen he could see that something was missing in the document. The introduction mentioned the economic challenges and the widening of the social gap. However, this did not suffice to describe the reality of the workers all over Europe in today's grim times. Extreme social and educational inequalities, as well as the rise of political extremism, were very alarming. In Greece, 40% of the teachers in the private sector were undeclared. Cedefop could not ignore the fact that in 19 countries the participation in VET lifelong learning was below 15% and in 14 below 10%. In Greece, where Cedefop was situated, the participation was only 4.6% and undeclared apprenticeships were used as a substitute for workers. The work of Cedefop was not being disseminated adequately and the real situation in apprenticeships should be reflected in its publications. The document should be less sterile and reflect reality.

Ms Romele said that discussions on upskilling pathways and social rights, skills governance within and across economic sectors, VET policy developments in the context of the European semester as referenced in the PD, etc., were based on the tripartite structure of the Agency. However, in paragraph 33 the PD underlined that the tripartite character of VET was a partnership between education and training and labour market actors. In paragraph 112 it stated that Cedefop's expertise would continue to create new partnerships. Ms Romele asked what these new forms and partnerships were, what their link to the labour market was and which issues they aimed to resolve.

Mr Patuzzi said that this general discussion reflected the views of the Employees' group. Specific topics should be discussed in detail. Quality apprenticeships were a very important issue for the Employees' group. Cedefop had conducted a lot of research on the issue but this work did not focus on the quality indicators of the Council recommendation. It also did not focus on the work-related conditions of apprenticeships. For example, the role of social dialogue on payment, working or health and safety conditions at company level. At this level the role of social partners was crucial, as in reality they run the apprenticeships. The research should take this role and expertise into consideration and take them on board in expert meetings and conferences.

Comments from the Employers

Mr Riemer said that, in the future, Cedefop should include the results of other studies and combine them with its own research for its publications and activities. This would reduce the workload for the experts. For example, the new study of the EESC on changing skills and qualifications in the digital age.

Comments from the Commission

Mr Korte said that he took note of the important points raised in this discussion. The key message for the future of the Agency was that Cedefop should align as closely as possible with the overall EU agenda. Not only the Commission (or DG EMPL) agenda but, as an EU body, Cedefop should produce results useful for the EU. Overlaps with other agencies and bodies should be avoided and the added value of Cedefop compared to the ILO or OECD should be a constant concern. The research and analytical work should be done, but the EU's specificity requires for this analysis

to be translated into operational outcomes. The new legal framework for Cedefop had been completed and the new Director had taken up duties, but there was no room for complacency. The Court of Auditors was undertaking another audit of all EU agencies focusing on their performance and Mr Korte acknowledged that it might appear somewhat disproportionate to scrutinise a rather small agency in the same way as the Commission. The audit would be about the value added of Cedefop and the other 43 agencies. Mr Korte would defend Cedefop without hesitation; however, this added value had to be constantly worked on.

The Chairperson agreed that auditing was sometimes disproportionate. During the past troubled years, it could be justified but in any normal year it should be brought into proportion and not create disruptions in the work of the Agency. The Management Board should give feedback to the auditors.

Mr Siebel said that every organisation had room for improvement. Cedefop would endeavour to improve its deliverables to meet stakeholder expectations. To the Employees' group he said that social dialogue references would be adjusted. Mr Siebel took note of the comment on the reality workers faced, but the PD was structured to reflect only the scientific aspects of this reality. Cedefop would try to reflect this issue more in its publications. Concerning new partnerships, the paragraphs would be amended to be more explicit. He agreed that topics instead of documents should be discussed but at this stage the specific document had to be finalised. Mr Siebel stressed that Cedefop strived to include social partners' expertise in its conferences, but members should also respond to invitations. Efforts would be made to be more inclusive when organising workshops. He encouraged all actors to register on Cedefop's web page so that they received the respective alerts. Concerning giving away Europass, Cedefop might lose some competences but the handover would have to be organised. Big data and digital qualifications would continue to be part of the activities in the WP. Getting data scientists was difficult even in the private sector, where pay scales could be exceeded. He took note of the members' view of country reviews, which had also been discussed in the Executive Board meeting on 2 October. Cedefop would readdress the issue of country reviews/support. He agreed with the comments on the length and structure of the document but Cedefop was restricted by rules. All issues had to be addressed in three different places: content-wise, budget-wise and in the risk assessment section. The Performance Development Network Working Group of the agencies was working on the adaptation of the document.

The Deputy Director said that thematic country reviews would continue in 2020. However, given Cedefop's resources, a more sustainable way had to be found. For example, it would not be possible for the Agency to carry out thematic country reviews on apprenticeships in 28 countries. A few country reviews in specific areas continued, and the results of these limited country reviews were shared with other countries, e.g. in the framework of policy learning activities. These selected cross-country thematic reviews would benefit more countries. Cedefop would continue comparative analyses on a variety of issues (e.g. financing, apprenticeship, validation and NQFs). Thematic country reviews were also useful for the Agency's knowledge base and would continue, but in a limited extent, to bring more countries together and make the process sustainable and more cost-effective.

Ms Descy said that the new Regulation appeared to allow for the possibility of receiving a fee from countries requesting thematic reviews. However, DG BUDG had clarified that 'other revenues' and 'other sources' than the EU budget were rather exceptional for decentralised agencies. The core tasks and mandate of

Cedefop were meant to be financed by the EU budget. If additional revenues became substantial, then this might result in the reduction of the budget Cedefop received from EU. Some room appeared to exist for specific, ad hoc requests in a particular context. However, such requests should be examined very carefully.

Mr Siebel added that even if funds were secured, human resources should also be available. The current budget and establishment plan constraints made this difficult.

Mr Ranieri said that financial resources alone would not suffice, as thematic country reviews were human-capital-intensive. Cedefop's work on the EU quality framework for apprenticeships had started a year before with the setup of Cedefop's community of experts. A database of apprenticeship schemes across the 30 countries had been created, which would now be linked to the EU quality framework. This monitoring tool would be shared with the Commission. Cedefop was very open to the inclusion of social partners. One important change in the past three years was that the PD now included a section on labour market integration and social inclusion and a series of areas that were part of a wider project (including early leaving from education and training, low-skilled adults, refugees). Cedefop tried to integrate resources through horizontal projects to draw on work done in different areas. Cedefop's added value was its tripartite nature, and efforts were being made to involve stakeholders directly and re-balance initiatives (i.e. upskilling pathways).

Mr Riemer said that digitalisation would change the field of skills and qualification tremendously. He asked what the added value of Cedefop would be in the field of digitalisation and VET.

Ms Descy said that projects in DSL had a strong focus on digitalisation and the future of work. Cedefop was working on the skills and learning opportunities of platform workers (crowd platform economy). The next round of the European skills and job survey had been planned. It would focus on the impact of digitalisation, robotisation and, possibly, artificial intelligence on jobs and skills mismatch.

Mr Siebel added there were two dimensions of Cedefop's contribution to digitalisation: content-wise, as described by Ms Descy, and methodology-wise. In the latter dimension, Cedefop was quite advanced in applying digital technology in generating its own output (i.e. big data analysis or integration and visualisation).

The Chairperson thanked members and asked that groups send their comments in writing to Cedefop.

Mr Siebel said that the Commission's opinion was pending and several comments had already been received. It might thus be difficult to finalise the document in this meeting. He proposed for Cedefop to send the draft PD 2020-22 to the members who could then insert their comments in tracked changes.

The Chairperson proposed that the coordinators consolidate the comments of their group and send Cedefop one version each, in tracked changes. The adoption would take place in December by written procedure.

Ms Lindén said that the negative priorities mentioned in the PD were not enough to match the resources available. In the future she asked the Agency to try and identify a set of negative priorities that would be enforced if needed.

The Chairperson concluded that comments would be integrated in the text. When the opinion from the Commission was received, Cedefop would send it to the MB together with a proposed revised PD for adoption by written procedure in December. The PD 2020-22 would become definitive after the final adoption of the Union

budget setting the amount of the contribution and the establishment plan of Cedefop.

(b) First indications for the Work Programme 2021

The Chairperson invited the Executive Director to present the item.

Mr Siebel said that many unknown factors might impact Cedefop's strategy in 2021 and beyond, such as the future strategic framework and Brexit. Based on the current framework, Cedefop had the tools and expertise that would allow the Agency to shift focus if needed. The three areas of operation in shaping, valuing and informing VET would be maintained. Cedefop's multiannual objectives in providing new knowledge and evidence to inform policy-making, monitoring policy trends and provide policy analysis of developments and acting as knowledge broker were reflected in the document. Mr Siebel highlighted the following activities.

i) On shaping VET: launch of the interactive online tool of VET policy developments in Europe; use of the IVET mobility scoreboard to highlight challenges; publication of the eighth edition of the EU NQF inventory; support to ESCO development; quality assurance mechanisms in VET (along EQAVET and supporting ECVET); comparative research on how VET systems needed to adapt to ageing populations and labour market trends; work on understanding the challenges and opportunities of the future of VET in Europe.

ii) On valuing VET: developing case studies for policy learning; addressing the role and impact of financial and non-financial support to individual and enterprises in learning and career development; introducing policy learning on labour market integration and social inclusion for adults and young people; facilitating policy learning on work-based learning and apprenticeships; publishing the second Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning/CVET.

iii) On informing VET: real-time labour market information by collecting job vacancies; run of the fourth European company survey with Eurofound; dissemination of LMSI via Skills Panorama until the hand-over to the European Commission; setting thematic priorities for stakeholder support and capacity building; identifying the future information needs in VET and translating them into LMSI; strengthening links between different thematic areas to support policy relevance and use of LMSI.

Cedefop was highly valued as a source of information on VET, skills and qualifications. Communication was shifting from static to online user engagement with the aim of building an open access repository for free and accessible dissemination of VET research. Concerning resources and support, Cedefop was planning to develop a new ICT and digitalisation strategy moving away from home-grown corporate IT systems towards cost-effective IT solutions. Some of these activities needed investing. Under the Financial Regulation, it would be difficult to create a business plan that would allow funding of these investments and thus reaching the desired efficiency gains in the future. In order to move to ABAC, every support that could be provided externally would help Cedefop in the implementation under current constraints.

The Chairperson said that the first indications seemed very ambitious. It was clear that implementation depended on the restrictions in financial and human resources. She invited the groups to comment.

Comments from the Governments' group

Ms Lindén thanked the Executive Director for the focused presentation. She highlighted that the shift in communication to online user engagement and linking of different databases was the right way to attract new stakeholders and get information on the thematic areas. The Governments' group supported the development and looked forward to the online interactive tool on policy development.

Mr Staudecker said that full-time VET schools should not be neglected. Concerning the work on the European tools (page 3 and 4), more clarity was expected. Page 4 stated that *'Digitalisation and automation may on the one hand reduce the traditionally important role played by skilled workers in the economy and 'hollow out' medium level skills'*. Mr Staudecker proposed to use a different formulation as this could create misunderstandings.

Comments from the Employers' group

Mr Plummer said that the analysis of the job vacancies to develop real-time labour market information had good potential. The group hoped that it would continue. The Employers had recently worked with a number of sectoral organisations at EU level regarding skills mismatch and labour shortages. The results had been shared with Cedefop. The Agency's work on skills imbalances had identified the ongoing concern of companies. The work on complementary pathways for refugees was very interesting and would have significant impact.

Comments from the Employees' group

Mr Patuzzi said that the issues raised by the group in relation to the PD 2020-22 applied to this document as well. Especially concerning the absence of any reference to the social dialogue. School-based VET was indeed very important. In Germany, one third of the apprenticeships were in school-based vocational education and training. For the Employees' group, the quality of the apprenticeships in schools and work-based learning was very important.

Comments from the Commission

Ms Geleng acknowledged that preparing the PD under the given circumstances was not easy. The document had the right approach, which adhered to the current strategic priorities, and at the same time included the flexibility to adapt to future changes. The political guidelines of the President-Elect and the mission letters already provided some points on future priorities to be set.

Ms Crabb said that the work on the EQF Cedefop had been doing in support of transparency and recognition was crucial. The evaluation phase of the EQF would start in 2021 and Cedefop's expertise would be much needed. Linking validation and guidance was very important in the context of upskilling. The Commission was currently evaluating the 2012 validation Council recommendation. Cedefop was part of the steering group. The report would be expected in early 2020 and would be useful for future reflection. Cedefop's work on skills intelligence was a big part of the discussions concerning the future of work and the impact of digitalisation. DG EMPL and several stakeholders were very interested in the real-time LMI project, which would hopefully cover all Member States. The new Europass would be launched in spring 2020 and would link up Eures and learning opportunities. It would also provide a solution for issuing digital credentials. Currently, 15 Member States and Norway were piloting this project. The skills intelligence issue would be tackled in the second version of Europass. The crucial question would be how to feed the

elements of the Skills Panorama into the new Europass. In cooperation with Cedefop's experts, proposals on what would be technically feasible were expected early in the following year.

Ms Bachmann said that the VET monitoring that Cedefop provided yearly was a very valuable input for the European Semester and highly appreciated by all users. In light of the guidelines of the new President-Elect, the future new format of the Semester was yet to be seen, but the Commission would continue to count on Cedefop in this context. More could be done to integrate Commission and Cedefop support activities linked to apprenticeships and upskilling pathways to maximise impact and ensure best use of resources. The Commission would also start work on preparing the reports to the Council for the implementation of Council recommendations on the European framework for quality and effective apprenticeships and on upskilling pathways, working closely with the ACVT. It was important to rely on the available data, including through Cedefop, rather than increase the country workload by collecting more information. The Commission's study on apprentices' representation would be discussed in the ACVT meeting. This discussion could identify follow-up actions to which Cedefop could contribute. The Commission welcomed and supported the proposal to develop an online source of information on labour market integration and inclusion in 2021. Ms Bachmann also proposed to dedicate a section to upskilling pathways.

Mr Siebel said that the effects of digitalisation and automation on 'hollowing out' medium-level skills were indeed probable. However, Cedefop would look deeper and try to elaborate more. He took note of the comment concerning the absence of social dialogue in the document. This would be amended. The document had been prepared in mid-September so some background information (i.e. mission letters) was missing at the time.

Mr Zahilas said that indeed the phrasing concerning European tools was still not very clear due to a number of missing elements. Cedefop had always strongly supported the NQF-EQF developments and the way forward was clearly defined. What was still unclear was the future landscape in relation to EQAVET and ECVET. Cedefop would of course continue to cooperate with the Commission and the MS and keep up with all developments. In relation to the work on learning outcomes, Cedefop was working on a global version of the handbook on learning outcomes. In this task, Cedefop was closely cooperating with the Commission, the ETF and UNESCO. Regarding the interactive tool on VET developments, it was important to note that this activity complemented the ongoing work on the interactive tool on VET systems. The purpose was to create a reliable and user-friendly source of information that would be very useful to countries. The first ideas had already been discussed in the current year's ReferNet meetings. When these ideas reached an advanced version, additional feedback would be requested. Finally, according to plan, in June 2020 Cedefop would stop working on the Europass platform, as the Commission would launch the new Europass portal.

Ms Descy said that Cedefop would maintain the Europass platform until June 2020. However, support to the new Europass would continue. The Agency would also contribute to the second version of the new Europass and work closely with the Commission to identify which skills intelligence data and in which form would be useful to citizens. Together with the Commission, Cedefop would also look into the future of Skills Panorama and the use of skills intelligence on Cedefop's web portal.

Mr Patuzzi said that it would be good to involve more social partners in the discussion of the EQF and NQF. The international sectoral qualifications were reflected in collective agreements and had different relevance and meaning in the different countries.

The Chairperson concluded that the comments would be integrated by Cedefop in a revised draft. A complete first draft PD 2021-2023 would be produced, including the multiannual section and all annexes and would be discussed in the Executive Board meeting of 6 December. Based on EB comments, the first draft PD 2021-23 would be sent to MB members for endorsement by written procedure with a deadline of mid-January 2020. After endorsement by the Management Board, the draft PD 2021-23 would be submitted to the European Commission, European Parliament and Council by 31 January 2020 at the latest, in accordance with Article 6(2) of Cedefop Regulation (EU) 2019/128 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 January 2019, and Article 32 of Cedefop Financial Regulation adopted by the Management Board on 16 July 2019.

(c) Cedefop's strategy post-2020 (discussion on the process – no document)

The Chairperson said that this item had been requested by the Commission in the Enlarged Executive Board meeting in June. As the multiannual financial framework post-2020 was unknown, the discussion could not be conclusive but would provide useful input for Cedefop's programming document.

Mr Siebel said that there was no document for this item. The financial framework was unknown, there was a new Commission and the strategy for VET 2030 had not yet been finalised. Members were invited to participate actively in a workshop and a brainstorming session to provide ideas and proposals for the strategy of Cedefop post-2020. Before proceeding, Mr Siebel invited Mr Joost Korte, to give the impulse for the discussions. The groups would have the opportunity to address their questions or comments to the Director-General of DG EMPL. Mr Siebel said that after the Management Board meeting Cedefop would ask volunteers from the groups that would reflect on the results of the workshop and try to identify the possible work packages for Cedefop in the future. This reflection group, with a maximum of eight members would ideally finalise its work in time for a discussion in the next Executive Board meeting in Brussels on 6 December.

Mr Korte welcomed the workshop and the brainstorming session. He presented three main points that reflected the European Union perspective. First, there was the question of the future direction of VET. The second was the unknown financial framework, which would play a major role in the future developments. Third was Cedefop's role in the future. Changes in the new Commission were made at political level but there were no changes in the internal organisation of the Commission, including in the division of responsibilities between DG EMPL and DG EAC. The two DGs had a very good work division with Skills, VET and adult learning led by DG EMPL. The political messages and guidelines from Ms von der Leyen referred to the main drivers of the transition of EU societies: the move to a carbon-neutral economy in 2050 and the digital developments. The latter had a major impact on education, training and work. For both topics, executive Vice Presidents had been appointed (Mr Timmermans and Ms Vestager). The transitions should be fair and nobody should be left behind. This was the European way, which was also reflected in the appointment of Mr Schinas as Vice President for the European way of life. Nicolas Schmit was the Commissioner-Designate for the portfolio relevant to Cedefop. Mr Korte would like to highlight three major points in Mr Schmit's mission letter and

hearing: (a) VET as a pathway to rewarding careers; (b) update of the Skills agenda and (c) explore the establishment of individual learning accounts. Mr Dombrovskis, Executive Vice President-Designate, was in charge of this portfolio under the broader political guideline of an economy that works for people. Strong emphasis on skills, training and education was also included in the portfolios of two other Vice-Presidents, Ms Šuica and Mr Schinas. The new Commission had a very ambitious agenda in the social area with the following initiatives: creation of a legal instrument for European minimum wage, reinforcing the youth guarantee, child guarantee, unemployment benefit reinsurance system, initiative on platform workers, occupational health and safety and action plan on the European pillar of social rights. The latter included two principles relevant to Cedefop: education, training and lifelong learning and active support to employment. The German Presidency was very keen on taking this process forward. As a priority, the focus should be on reskilling and upskilling workers. The Member States should modernise their education systems but social partners should also assist in mobilising individuals to upskill in order to meet the demands of the labour market. The Skills Panorama, skills anticipation and use of big data and the new Europass were very important tools in this modernisation process. The European Social Fund Plus would remain the main vehicle for financing. The Commission's proposal for EUR 100 billion over the next seven years was ambitious considering that the overall budget would shrink further due to Brexit. The President-Elect intended to triple the budget of the Erasmus programme. Other means of finance would be Invest EU (previously known as 'Juncker plan') of which EUR 4 billion would leverage 50 billion in loans for the social window with the EU budget guarantee. Cedefop's input was absolutely essential to this agenda and the future of the Agency looked very promising in terms of relevance. The input on the VET strategy post-2020 together with the opinion of the ACVT in December 2018 was equally important. The policy framework would have to be updated and the balance between research and practical support should be considered. Cedefop's priorities in the future should adapt to the changing EU policy agenda concerning apprenticeships, upskilling, etc. The communication of Cedefop's knowledge and data should be capitalised in order for the Agency to strengthen its position further as a key player in its domain of expertise.

Mr Siebel invited members to comment.

Comments from the Governments

Mr van IJsselmuiden thanked Mr Korte for the interesting presentation. He said that the new spread of portfolios of the new Commissioners might lead to some loss of connection so the stable composition of the DGs was indeed very welcome. The future was uncertain, so perhaps more negative priorities should be identified for Cedefop. In view of the budget cuts, the Agency should take proactive steps. Learning accounts and upskilling had been discussed but the required funds were not available. The process should be facilitated.

Comments from the Employers

Mr Riemer thanked Mr Korte. It was important for Cedefop to align with the new EU agenda and avoid overlaps. Access to the labour market was an advantage in VET and Cedefop was in a good position. The priorities were dictated by the constraints of the financial framework. The balance between practical work, communication and research was an issue. Perhaps it could be achieved in collaboration with other institutions and more funds.

Comments from the Employees

Mr Voet thanked Mr Korte for the presentation. On the basis of the EU agenda, it was important to consider the proposal from the Greek colleague to reflect in Cedefop's research and policy work the reality without taking sides. He was happy to see that the mission letter of Mr Schmit included the training entitlement; however, this was different from the individual learning account. The minimum wage and the collective agreements were at the heart of the discussions concerning education and training, the youth guarantee and the pillar of social rights. Access to training for all was a priority for ETUC and should be ensured through legislative initiatives. Low-skilled workers should be enabled to acquire basic skills and key competences that could be certified. The quality of apprenticeships, both nationally as well as in enterprises, should meet the standards set in the European framework. Cedefop should find a way to reflect the EU agenda as well as those of the governments, the employers and the employees in its research and activities. The current data on training rights related to participation in training were too general. They did not provide detailed information on the groups that had access to training (e.g. age groups, workers, job seekers, immigrants, people with disabilities, etc.). More detailed indicators would be needed to understand the measures taken in the different countries to monitor the developments. There was the view that people should take the responsibility of developing their own skills and competences but in reality this was a collective responsibility. To achieve the EU 2050 climate and environmental targets, skilled workers were required, but also policies that would allow them to develop their skills should be put in place. The criteria for the quality of apprenticeships included salaries, occupational health and safety but these were hardly evaluated or considered in the research on apprenticeship. By assisting governments, enterprises and unions Cedefop could contribute to the establishment of the required policies in order to meet future challenges and ensure the European way of solidarity.

Mr Siebel said that the brainstorming session would continue during the coffee break. Its results would not pre-empt any decisions or conclusions, as these would of course be for the Management Board to take or draw. On that basis, he invited volunteers to join the reflection group.

The coffee break and open discussion took place from 12.10 to 12.30.

The results of the workshop can be seen in the following pictures.

1. RESEARCH / EU COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

RESEARCH AND POLICY LEARNING ON INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS & LEARNING VOUCHERS

Validation of Formal, non-formal and informal learning

MODELS TO IMPLEMENT RIGHT TO TRAINING

Skills Climate look at the coming report on NIE (Georgia Conca)

Research pay/schemes + working conditions + apprenticeships

Sustainable education/training - digitalisation - to competence

PRIVATE CO-FUNDING OF VET

RESEARCH/COMPARATIVE PUNCH POLICY AREA - How DIGITAL TECH CAN ACCELERATE IVET/CVET (CAJ/ARR)

Include individual Decisions on Educational Aspirations/ Goals of profess. Career into Research Future of VET

Include Work of the Future and Subemployment into Research Future of VET

Best Practices GUIDANCE in all persp.

UPSKILLING for employees in new jobs of now

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

LINK INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS TO SME BUSINESS STRATEGIES

ADVANCED VET PROGRAMMES

FULL PICTURE OF ALL QUALIFICATION ACTIVITIES - INCLUDING "INFORMAL"

FOCUS ON CLIMATE SKILLS + MILLENNIUM GLOBAL GOALS

DIGITAL SKILLS IN VET

RESEARCH COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The skills that will make the difference with I.A. ARE ...

The characteristics of companies that better support S-VET are ...

Individual learning accounts

Research / EU comparative analysis

health and working conditions in apprenticeship

Digital skills Transversal skills

ANTICIPATION OF SKILLS NEEDS

2. MONITORING EU POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

European tools

EU-tool (EQF, ...)

Regulatory Implications of EQF/NRFs

OUTCOMES

Right to training/ training entitlement in line with implementing the Social Pillar

VET - drop-outs

Climate skills

VET CURRICULUM AND DIGITAL SKILLS

MONITORING POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Tom Chat GPT study

2/ Regn The post 2020 ET Strategy

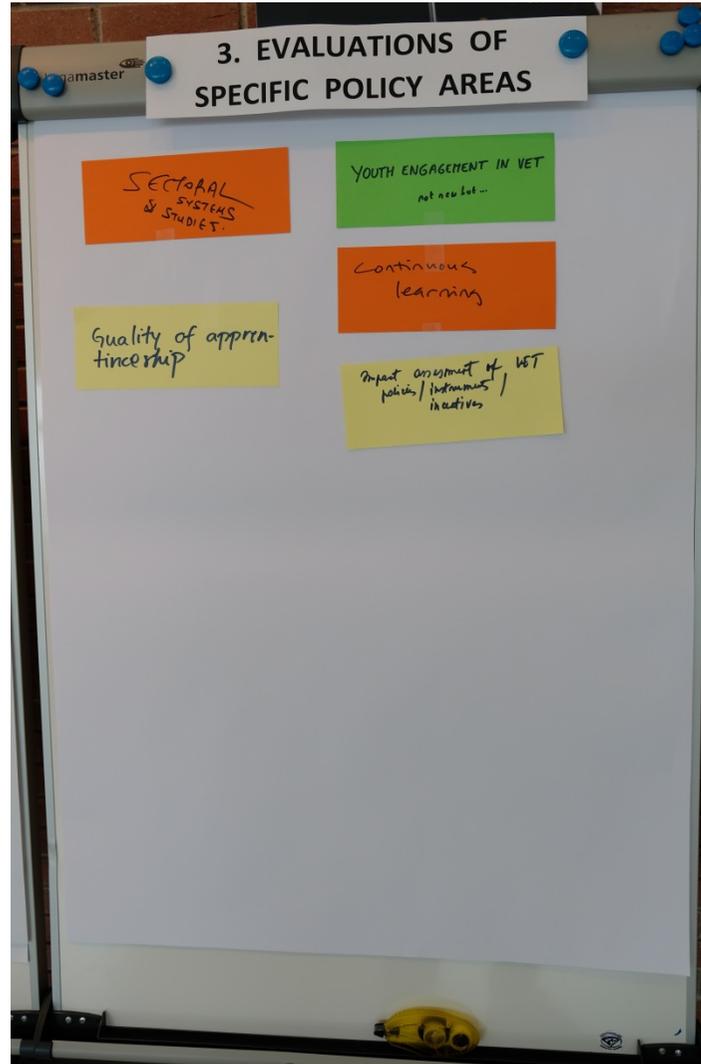
VET graduates and/or learning systems

Updating a strategy to training to transition to training like digital skills

EU TOOLS

TRAINING INSTRUMENTS & QUALITY ASSURANCE

TRAINING IN DIGITALISATION



5. THEMATIC COUNTRY REVIEWS

WORKPLACE/LEARNING:
- ACTIVE POLICY/FUNDING INITIATIVES FOR RESTRUCTURING BEREF OR DIGITALISATION ETC.

Practical guidance and description of particular initiatives, how social partners could be involved, how it could be applied to another country.

Introducing and promoting an increasingly "friendly/green" work culture in all sectors of the economy (through conversion / addition of training content and training facilities)

Country Rev.

APPRENTICESHIP REVIEW

Assessment and recognition of modern skills (acquired through working life), after having obtained a "school/general professional qualification, attested by a diploma

6. EU DATA COLLECTION

Upskilling + reskilling: more precise data

Use of big data

Skills intelligence

More focus on concrete outputs / support

Skills governance: focusing on how LMI is used. + Synergies with other OECD work on this.

Distilling big data into skills intelligence for specific users.

Possibility to learn for workers with temporary contracts

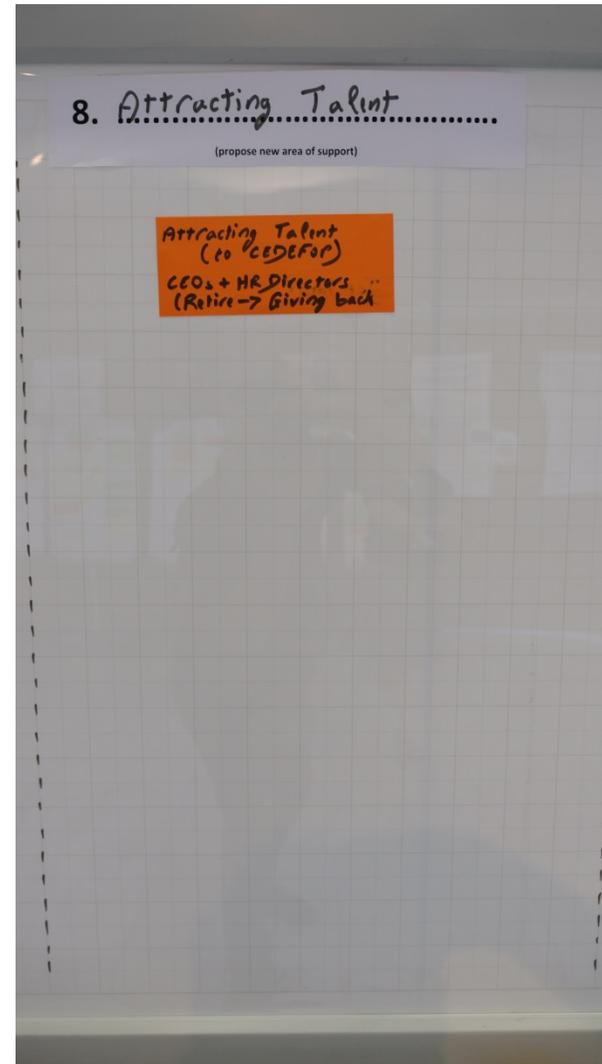
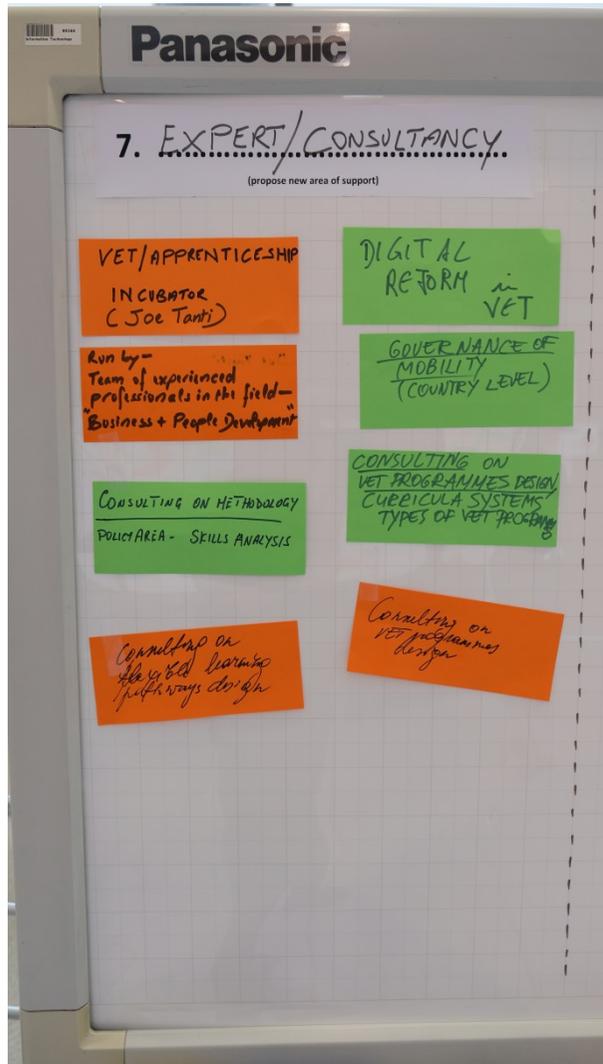
OBSTACLES TO VET PARTICIPATION

Comparable data on job vacancies - consistent methodology for collection in all MS.

Humans learn all the time - where did 10% come from?

proper statistics on financing employee training

key competences in relation to VET



9. ELECTIONS OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND DEPUTY CHAIRPERSONS OF THE MB AND COMPOSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD/ENLARGED EXECUTIVE BOARD (*DECISION*)

The Chairperson said that according to the new Regulation the Management Board should elect the Chairperson and three Deputy Chairpersons as follows:

- (a) one from among the members representing the governments of the Member States;
- (b) one from among the members representing the employers' organisations;
- (c) one from among the members representing the employees' organisations; and
- (d) one from among the members representing the Commission.

The Chairperson and the Deputy Chairpersons should be elected by a majority of two thirds of members of the Management Board with the right to vote.

The term of office of the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairpersons should be one year. Their term of office could be renewed. If their Management Board membership ended at any time during their term of office, their term of office should automatically expire on that date.

Traditionally, the Commission did not take a turn holding the Chairpersonship.

The Chairperson informed members that the Executive Board proposed that the Chairpersonship of the Management Board should continue to rotate among the groups on an annual basis and that consequently, the candidate of the Employers' group should be elected for a period of one year as Chairperson of the Management Board. She invited the groups to present their nominations.

On behalf of the Employers' group Mr Riemer proposed Ms Barbara Dorn as Chairperson of the Management Board.

On behalf of the Governments' group Mr Staudecker proposed Mr Peter van Ijsselmuiden as Deputy Chairperson.

On behalf of the Employees' group Ms Roman proposed Mr Mario Patuzzi as Deputy Chairperson.

On behalf of the Commission Ms Geleng said that she would be the Deputy Chairperson.

All members agreed to the nominations.

The Chairperson congratulated the new Chairperson and the Deputy Chairpersons.

Ms Babrauskiene invited groups to present their nominations for the Executive and Extended Executive Board.

On behalf of the Employers' group Mr Plummer said that Mr Riemer would be the spokesperson and he would continue as the group's coordinator. For the Extended Executive Board, the composition would include Ms Siham Saïdi and Ms Anneli Entson.

On behalf of the Governments' group Mr Staudecker said that Mr Peter van Ijsselmuiden would be the Deputy Chairperson and he would continue as the group's coordinator. For the Extended Executive Board, the composition would include Ms Nadine Nerguisian, Ms Carina Lindén and Ms Maria Todorova.

On behalf of the Employees' group Ms Roman said that the Deputy Chairperson would be Mr Mario Patuzzi and she would continue as the group's coordinator. For the Extended Executive Board, the composition would include Ms Tatjana Babrauskiene, Ms Isabel Coenen and Mr Juan Carlos Morales.

On behalf of the Commission Ms Geleng said she would be the Deputy Chairperson and Ms Dana-Carmen Bachmann would be the second representative from the Commission.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Amending budget 2019

The Chairperson asked Ms Descy to present the item.

Ms Descy said that the decision for amending the 2019 budget was not a request to increase the budget but to increase payment appropriations for Cedefop to be able to honour its payments. In 2019, a number of studies from previous years had been finalised. As a result, Cedefop needed an additional EUR 1.5 million for payments to the external contractors. However, before receiving the amount from the Commission the Management Board should adopt this decision. On the side of revenues there was a slightly higher contribution to Cedefop's budget from Norway and Island (approximately EUR 9 000).

Mr Staudecker asked the for the Commission's view on the issue.

Mr Ceuppens said that in principle the Commission did not have an objection. The file was currently with DG BUDG for a technical check.

No further comments were received.

The Chairperson concluded that the decision amending the 2019 budget was adopted.

(b) Dates of Executive Board meetings and Management Board meeting in 2020 (decision)

The Chairperson said that the following dates had been proposed for the meetings in 2020.

Dates	Meeting location
Executive Board meetings in 2020	
3-6 March 2020	Brussels
25-26 June or 29-30 June 2020	Thessaloniki
1-4 December 2020	Brussels
Management Board meeting 2020	
Thursday and Friday 8 and 9 October with an Executive Board meeting on the eve, Wednesday 7 October 2020	Thessaloniki

The Chairperson concluded that the exact dates of the Executive Board meetings would be confirmed in the Executive Board meeting of 6 December 2020 while the dates for the Management Board were confirmed for 8 and 9 October 2020.

On behalf of the Employees' group Mr Patuzzi and Ms Roman thanked Ms Babrauskiene for the extraordinary work she had done as Chairperson during rather difficult times.

Mr Siebel thanked Ms Babrauskiene on behalf of Cedefop.

Ms Babrauskiene congratulated the new Chairperson. She thanked all members and Cedefop staff as well as the interpreters and closed the meeting at 13.00.

Signed on 7 January 2020

Barbara Dorn

Chairperson of the Management Board

Jürgen Siebel

Executive Director