

# Cedefop TTnet

CEDEFOP Training of Trainers network P.O. Box 22427, GR - 55 102 Thessaloniki, tel. 3031 490 111, fax 3031 490 117  
Project coordinator: Mara Brugia, tel. 490 125, email: mb@mail.cedefop.gr

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## Annual TTnet Conference

*16 and 17 December 1999*

### Summary of the results and decisions

#### 1. Objectives and organisation of the conference

The conference was held in three stages, corresponding to the network's three levels of activity:

- **national level:** assessment of the national networks and the Community TTnet network;
- **transnational level:** development of the network as a professional forum for communication;
- **Community level:** the guidelines for the period 2000-2002.

#### 2. The main findings of the assessment

##### a) Validation of Cedefop's initiative

The national coordinators considered that the TTnet project corresponded very directly to Cedefop's mission of encouraging and safeguarding (guarantor) the Community dimension. Thus, the TTnet initiative meets a need and makes it possible to make a contribution to raising the intrinsic quality of training by influencing the skills of the key players: teachers and trainers.

##### b) The current state of the networks

Most of the existing networks (currently 10) are active, but focus their activities on the national level; they interface with or take advantage of the Community dimension only to a limited extent.

For some networks (e.g. Germany), the problem they face is to redefine their role in relation to that of the TTnet network, because the level of goal setting (national and Community) appears inadequate.

Networks tend to fall into one of two groups: those that focus on responding to Cedefop's needs, and those that focus on responding to market needs.

The identity of each national network is determined by three main factors:

- how representative it is nationally and its role in unifying the existing networks;
- the role of the coordinator as a vertical and/or horizontal channel of communication;
- the definition of the network's target groups.

Most of the networks' activities fall into one of four categories:

- the dissemination of the information sent by Cedefop,
- the identification of the sector's problems and priorities;
- the generation of tools for the sector (glossary of key words, catalogue of distance learning);
- the coordination of resources.

- c) In conclusion, the development of the networks is a shared effort 'to turn a disparate group into a community of interest and practices against a European backdrop', and to transcend the compartmentalisation of the target groups and involve all those involved in the national debate.

### **3. The future of the network**

The second part of the conference, which was introduced by an account of the TTnet network as a forum for communication, tackled the issue of the TTnet network's evolution from a set of national networks organised around Cedefop into a professional forum, a Community place of exchange, the source of a common point of reference.

The year 2000 represents a crucial stage in this evolution: the stage in which the TTnet network places its networks in a position to produce results. The TTnet network thus becomes instrumental in really drawing the national networks together by creating joint production, analysis and result interfaces.

During this first stage, the TTnet team will have two special priorities:

- a) the coherence of the three levels of network action (national, transnational, Community);
- b) adapting the existing IT tool to make it a real communication tool for the network.

#### **a) The coherence of the three levels of the network's activities**

- **National level:** maintained by the national networks. This level becomes the 'hub' of the TTnet network. The national networks function as places for monitoring and observing innovative national experiences that could be responses to themes of common interest. The national network acts as an interface and a filter between the national and Community levels; its function is to make proposals.
- **Transnational level:** maintained by transnational working groups. Transnational working groups will be set up (for example when organising workshops) with the aim of using the innovative national experiences

identified at the national level to produce a common expertise, to disseminate it and validate it among all the members of the network.

- **Community level:** maintained by Cedefop to foster coherence among the three levels and to take charge of or create additional work and tools to confirm, disseminate, propagate and validate the results of the transnational working groups: thematic seminars, specific research, electronic forums, development of the most appropriate IT aids.

**b) Adaptation of the existing IT tool to make it a real communication tool for the network.**

One session of the conference was devoted to the added value of the electronic network as an interactive tool for the dissemination of information from the data base and motor of communication and cooperation between the members of the network. Perfecting the electronic network is one of the priorities for the year 2000. The conclusions of the discussions on the proposals for the improvement of the existing electronic tool are in the process of being drawn up: they will be discussed with the Electronic Training Village team and the Centre's IT Department.

**4. Key themes for the training of trainers at the national and European levels**

Various themes were identified as themes of common interest within the various national networks where there is a strong demand for discussion, experience sharing, cooperation, both at the national and Community level. The TTnet network should work on these themes in the coming years.

- The development of the role and competences of trainers.
- The validation of the prior learning of trainers.
- The qualification standards of trainers.

**5. The activities planned for the year 2000**

a) Creation of new national networks:

- Portugal
- Scandinavian countries (FIN, DK, NO)

b) Thematic workshops

- '*Validation of competences of trainers of vocational training*', Lisbon, 25 and 26 May 2000.
- '*The qualification standards of trainers*', London, 12 and 13 October 2000.

c) Studies

- Follow-up to the study recently launched on '*The evolution of the competences of the trainers in open and distance training schemes*' (France, Luxembourg, Portugal).
- A call for tender will be held to conduct a complementary study on the issues tackled by the first workshop.

d) Publications and products

- the CD-ROM on training of trainers systems in the European Union;
- the 'TTnet Reports': review of the main contributions made by the TTnet network;
- the TTnet brochure: presentation of and publicity for the network;
- the 'Catalogue of networks on the training of trainers in the Community';
- preparatory work on a 'memorandum' on the training of trainers with the aim of drawing up recommendations for policy-makers in order to reinforce the place of the training of trainers in the framework of EU action on vocational training.

e) The network's annual conference will be held in Brussels on 7 and 8 December 2000.