Cedefop and DG EAC assess VET policy developments

Results of Cedefop’s monitoring report on progress towards a common European strategy on vocational education and training (VET) as set out in the 2010 Bruges Communiqué will be discussed at a conference organised by the Centre and European Commission’s Directorate General Education and Culture (DG EAC) on 29 and 30 September in Thessaloniki. The Bruges communiqué relaunched reform of VET in the European Union (EU) in 2010. Following the economic crisis, the communiqué marked another significant step in European cooperation in VET. Member States, joined by other European countries, the European Commission and social partners set out strategic objectives for the period 2011-20 supported by ‘short-term deliverables’ to be achieved by 2014.

As part of this vision, the communiqué foresaw flexible, open and innovative learning methods, supported by well-qualified teachers and trainers, state-of-the-art facilities and backed by enterprises and the social partners.

But how far have we come? At the conference ‘Building European VET - Time to move on’, European, Member State and social partner policy-makers will reflect on the progress made together with VET experts, providers and learners.

Cedefop will briefly present the major findings of the VET monitoring report, after which debate will shine a light on specific issues affecting progress towards the Bruges objectives. Through work in groups and panel discussions, participants will share country examples, exchange experience from the 2010-14 period and come up with valuable knowledge that can be used in countries and at EU level to move closer to common goals.

For more information and to register, visit the conference website (registration deadline: 8 September)

News from Cedefop

Quality assurance challenges synergies between European tools

Cedefop Director James Calleja praised Malta’s efforts to draft a national quality assurance framework for further and higher education based on the Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European higher education area (ESG) and a European quality assurance in VET (EQAVET) perspective.

Mr Calleja was one of three ‘international critical friends’ invited by Malta’s National Commission for Further and Higher Education to address a consultation conference on 25 July. Over 165 participants discussed the draft framework, which includes elements of both the ESG and the EQAVET principles.

In his address, the Cedefop Director spoke about the holistic approach of the framework policy, aiming at a quality culture that cuts across vocational training and training (VET) and higher education (HE). He referred to its added value of permeability between VET and HE and its link to other European tools.

Mr Calleja said that with synergies between European tools being challenged by practice in actual education and training situations, quality assurance is an important bridge that links the learning outcomes approach, the credit system, the certificate supplement and the multidimensional role of the national qualifications framework.
The framework is ‘a tangible attempt at building trust in Malta’s qualification system at national, European and global scale; it predetermines sound, robust qualifications based on a learning outcomes approach, which in VET’s case should take occupational standards into account; it establishes a forum for sharing expertise and experience from different educational sectors and quality control of qualifications at national level, as well as a point of reference and a referencing device.’

Mr Calleja called the document a laudable example of how European tools can generate synergy, of how the text itself communicates a culture that stakeholders could find noteworthy in their efforts to attract more learners to VET and HE, of how a quality culture is built more effectively and nationwide and for quality agencies to be at all times in a learning ‘mode’ to implement the framework policy better.

He added: ‘The quality framework is a first step towards building a national culture for quality that grips all forms of learning. This in itself is a challenge; only experience of implementing a quality assurance framework policy will illustrate the extent to which we can claim that synergies between European tools work efficiently and effectively.’

The one-day conference was characterised by strong participation of social partners, private training providers in vocational training and higher education as well as non-governmental organisations providing informal and non-formal learning.

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**Youth employability among Italian EU Presidency priorities**

With the link between acquiring skills and finding a job firmly in its priorities, the Italian EU Presidency of the second semester of 2014 makes a clear statement in its programme.

It reads: ‘Tomorrow’s jobs require higher quality, and more labour-market-relevant, skills as well as more flexibility. The Presidency will strive to advance the Europe 2020 strategy’s educational agenda, with a focus on youth empowerment and employability. The Presidency will also pay special attention to the issue of integrating education and training systems with the labour market by enhancing work-based learning pathways (such as apprenticeships, traineeships, etc.).’

The programme also refers to the ongoing European initiatives to fight youth unemployment: ‘As far as youth employment initiative and its impact on active labour market policies are concerned, youth guarantee programmes are being implemented and will start delivering results in 2014.’

Following concerns that the implementation of youth guarantee schemes is falling behind, the European Commission announced on 11 July that it adopted the Italian operational programme. Italy will receive EUR 1.1 million from the European budget to help young people find a job. It will mobilise in total EUR 1.5 million from various sources.

Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion László Andor commented: ‘Italy’s programme implementing the Youth Employment Initiative is very ambitious: it should reach over half a million young Italians currently out of employment, education or training.’

Italy is the second country to have its operational programme adopted by the European Commission, following France. Other Member States, including Bulgaria, Croatia, Ireland, Poland and Sweden are also in the process of implementing projects to be financed by the youth employment initiative.

The Italian Presidency has also vowed to ‘focus its efforts on mobility, social dialogue, job creation, the structural reform of labour markets and investment in human capital.’

Particular attention will be given to public employment services, ‘whose functioning is key to ensuring effective matching between labour demand and supply’.

The Italians want a political discussion on the future role of education and training in the national and EU growth agendas. Within this framework, their focus is on vocational education and training, the inter-relationship between education and employment and entrepreneurship education.

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**Skills needs anticipation and matching course announced**

Cedefop co-organises a training and knowledge-sharing course on skills needs anticipation and matching with the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation (ITC-ILO), the Skills Development and Employability Unit of the ILO and the European Training Foundation (ETF).
The course will take place in Turin (Italy) between 20 and 24 October and the deadline for applications is 15 September.

Its main objective is to help participants understand the central importance of identifying current and future skills needs and labour market imbalances in a broader policy framework, and to acquire basic knowledge.

A wide range of individuals and groups can ultimately benefit from timely and accurate labour market information and pertinent training programmes and curricula, including job seekers from all ages and backgrounds, in particular youth and recent graduates; current and future students; planners in the skills development and technical VET sectors; curriculum developers; staff of vocational training institutions; public employment services; career guidance services and businesses.

The total cost of the course is EUR 2 100 per participant. ETF and Cedefop, as decentralised European Union agencies, are non-profit entities. The fees are charged solely by ITC-ILO to cover tuition fees and subsistence costs.

ITC-ILO will have a limited number of partial fellowships available for participants from developing and middle-income countries.

For more information download the flyer.

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**Skillset and match – issue 2**

The second issue of Cedefop’s magazine promoting learning for work ‘Skillset and match’, which will focus on work-based learning, is out in September. With more pages, it will contain exclusive interviews, a pullout on apprenticeships, a feature on the Italian EU Presidency and much more!

Here you have a sneak preview of the front and back cover. In a special photoshoot, photographer Angelos Zymaras took pictures of Cedefop trainees and experts/instructors. One of these was used for the cover. You will be able to see the rest inside the magazine and across Cedefop media.

Check out our photoshoot picture gallery here.


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**Poland presentation**

Cedefop organises lunchtime country presentations for its staff to promote multicultural understanding of nations beyond stereotypes.

The latest country to be presented was Poland, on 3 July.

Our two Polish colleagues Patrycja Lipinska and Agata Poczmanska gave the information and offered small souvenirs as well as traditional snacks and drinks to more than 40 Cedefop staff.

Check out the event picture gallery.

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**EU Policy**

**Commission communication on green employment initiative**

The European Commission has adopted a Communication outlining the employment challenges and opportunities of the current transition towards a green, low carbon, energy and resource-efficient economy.

The Green Employment Initiative Communication presents an integrated framework to allow labour market and skill policies to play an active role to support this transition.
Europe 2020: Employment performance monitor and benchmarks

The Employment Performance Monitor can be used to identify at a glance the main employment challenges for the European Union and for each Member State.

This 2014 June version of the EPM includes the updated benchmarking of the Europe 2020 headline targets relating to the labour market and the main indicators for the development at the labour market.

The benchmarking tool is used as an integrated tool in the analysis of the key challenges.

Building growth: Country-specific recommendations 2014

The European Commission has adopted a series of economic policy recommendations to individual Member States to strengthen the recovery that began a year ago.

The recommendations are based on detailed analyses of each country's situation and provide guidance on how to boost growth, increase competitiveness and create jobs in 2014-2015.

This year, the emphasis has shifted from addressing the urgent problems caused by the crisis to strengthening the conditions for sustainable growth and employment in a post-crisis economy.

[extract]

Working with us

Real-time labour market information on skill requirements: feasibility study and working prototype

AO/RPA/VKVET-NSOFRO/Real-time LMI/010/14
The purpose of this open invitation to tender is to conclude a single study contract to the selected service provider/consortium to implement a feasibility study and working prototype of a system for collecting real time labour market information using online sources. The aim is to collect information to enable Cedefop to explore emerging skill needs in 5 EU Member States and a sufficient number of sectors to cover at least two thirds of employment of each country's whole economy. Next to the working prototype, relevant reports should be provided.

This call has been published in the Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union 2014/S 141-252026 of 15/07/2014.

Deadline of submitting tenders: 30/09/2014 (17h00 for hand-delivered tenders).

Requests for additional information/clarification should be received by 22/09/2014.

The answers to such requests, if any, will be published under this banner, therefore please visit Cedefop's website.
Relaunch - ReferNet call for proposals Greece - Romania

With the objective of completing the current European network for VET – ReferNet –, this call aims at:

- selecting one applicant from Greece – following termination of the previous agreement on 19 April 2014 – and one applicant from Romania – following termination of the previous agreement on 31 December 2013 – with which Cedefop will conclude a twelve-month framework partnership agreement; and

- concluding, with the successful applicants, specific grant agreements for a work plan to be carried out in 2015 (1st July – 31 December 2015).

The announcement of this call for proposals has been published in all official languages in the Official Journal, series 2014/C 234/10 of 19/07/2014.

Deadline for submission of proposals: **26/09/2014**.

Requests for additional information/clarification should be received by 18/09/2014. The answers to such requests, if any, will be published under this banner, therefore please visit Cedefop’s website frequently for updates.

If you are downloading these documents from our website, kindly send us an e-mail (c4t-services@cedefop.europa.eu) notifying us

**Deadline: 26/09/2014**

**Attachments**

- **EN** Tender dossier Real Time LMI (789.24 Kb)
- **EN** Call for proposals documents (2530.54 Kb)
- **RO** Notice call for proposals RO (77.54 Kb)
- **EL** Notice call for proposals EL (82.70 Kb)
- **EN** Notice call for proposals EN (72.20 Kb)
Forecasting skill supply and demand in Europe: setting the scene for 2016 forecasts

Cedefop organises regular technical workshops to discuss and validate its forecasting methodology as well as the plausibility of the results for Europe and individual countries. The main purpose of this particular workshop is to set up a good basis for the development of the new forecasting results. We would like to invite members of the expert network to help us to find answers to key methodological challenges.

The workshop will provide an opportunity to bring together the research team, national experts and Cedefop experts. It will provide a platform to discuss:

- progress in adopting new ISCO and NACE classifications,
- economic developments in the Member States and use of DG ECFIN forecasts,
- impact of new demographic forecasts (Europop 2013),
- improvements in the estimation of replacement demand and indicators of imbalances,
- developing a framework for new policy scenarios,
- implications for the development of the Occupational skills profiles.

The aim is to involve national experts closely in the process, drawing on their general knowledge and expertise, as well as obtaining substantial country specific insights.

This event is restricted to the invited national experts and requires an invitation letter.

Attachments

EN Workshop agenda (PDF 489.36 Kb 28/05/2014)

Building European VET - Time to move on

Based on the results of Cedefop’s VET monitoring report on progress toward the aims of the common EU strategy on vocational education and training (VET) as set out in the Bruges Communiqué (2010), this event will focus on how to maximise the potential of VET in addressing long-term strategic goals.

Cedefop will briefly present the major findings of the VET monitoring report, after which discussions will shine a light on specific issues affecting progress towards the Bruges objectives. Moderating the final session, the Commission will suggest how the conclusions of the VET monitoring report and of the conference itself can be used in countries and at EU level to move closer to our common goals.

Participants will include Directors-General for Vocational Training in Member States and members of the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training, the Governing board of Cedefop, and the ReferNet network; the Commission’s Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs, Directorate-General for Entrepreneurship; ETUC, BusinessEurope, UEAPME and other social partner representatives; representatives of Eurochambers; researchers, and representatives of VET providers and learners.

Links

- conference website

Designing, implementing and supporting effective work-based learning

This workshop is addressed to European and national policy-makers, including social partners, and other key stakeholders working in the field of continuing vocational education and training (CVET) such as human resources...
managers, training providers and researchers.

Through presentations and interactive sessions, the workshop aims to share new knowledge and practical experience in work-based learning and to discuss their implications for policy and practice. The focus is on:

1. Effective use of work-based learning in CVET in firms;

2. How public policy and new forms of governance can support good practice.

The call for papers is open until 23.05.2014.

Attachments

EN Call for papers (PDF 223.92 Kb 27/03/2014)

Workshop on quality requirements for new forms and contexts of teaching and learning


The workshop on ‘Quality requirements for new forms and context of teaching and learning’ will bring experts from VET and Higher Education institutions together with experts from accreditation agencies/associations to reflect jointly on how students/learners get educated in e-learning contexts and on how to assure their learning needs are fully met.

The two education sub-sectors could share experience and promote cooperation in this field in which they are facing similar challenges.

The agenda and the background note will follow soon.

Cedefop conference 'Stepping up the pace'


As indicated in the responses to the recent consultation on a European area of skills and qualifications (European Commission, 2014), it is time to review our commitment to implement at national systems the European tools for transparency, recognition and quality in education and training.

Cedefop has for more than a decade actively supported the Commission, the Member States and the Social Partners in developing and adopting these tools. The conference will build on these experiences and allow stakeholders to reflect on the conditions for their further development. The following five key questions – reflecting targeted research carried out by Cedefop in 2014 - will be addressed:

- What is required for promoting a consistent application of learning outcomes across countries and sectors to facilitate transparency?
- What should be done to increase the relevance of European tools for individual learners and citizens?
- How can credit and validation arrangements be developed to enable transfer and accumulation of learning across national and institutional borders?
- Do we need a common vision of quality assurance framework across countries and sub-sectors of education and training?
- What must be done to increase the labour market relevance of European tools?

Providing answers to these questions will require a discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of
existing initiatives as well as a discussion on how to take forward future work in this area.

The agenda and information for registration will be sent and posted on Cedefop’s website and social media shortly.

For more information, please contact Loukas Zahilas at loukas.zahilas@cedefop.europa.eu

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News from the Member States

Items submitted by ReferNet, Cedefop’s European network for VET