



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training



State of the network

2025-2026

Introduction

- Update on the state of play of our network.
- To reflect on our achievements during 2025 and
- Share with you our thoughts for 2026

State of 2025: Overview of the network

Full composition: Partners from 27 EU member states, Norway and Iceland

More than 235 individuals as members (264)

Gender representation: 151 female - 84 male

Average team size: seven members per country

Smallest team: three members – largest: 20 members

Several different types of organizations represented

- (Public bodies, Public-law entity, Federal institutes, Private foundations, Universities)

2025 ReferNet workplan

DELIVERABLE TYPE 1: REPORTING ON VET AND VET-RELATED POLICY

1.a VET policy reporting

1.b National news on VET

DELIVERABLE TYPE 2: REPORTING ON NATIONAL VET & SKILLS SYSTEMS

2.a VET in [Presidency country] – Short description

2.b Spotlight on VET in [Presidency country]

2.c **Spotlight on Jobs and Skills in Europe**

DELIVERABLE TYPE 3: AD HOC THEMATIC AND OTHER SUPPORT

3.a VET excellence and inclusion for the 21st century

3.b Financing adult learning/CVET and recent developments on ILA

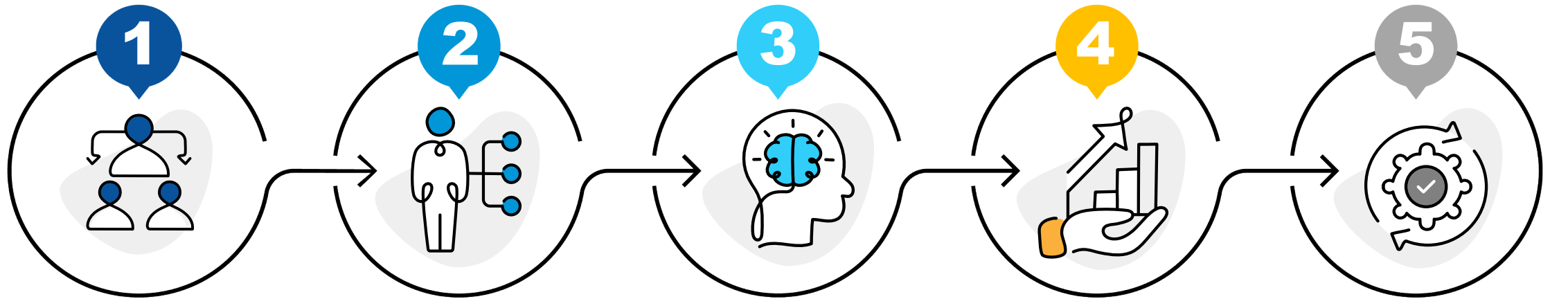
3.c **Deepening on Microcredentials - labour market sector relevance, quality, and inclusion**

DELIVERABLE TYPE 4: COMMUNICATION/VISIBILITY ACTIONS

4.a Maintenance and update of a national ReferNet website

4.b Communication / visibility actions including social media activities and participation in events

2025 ReferNet workplan final products



87 news items

29 skills spotlights
+ 29 translations

2 short descriptions
+ 2 translations
2 spotlights on VET
+ 2 translations

29 reports on Adult
learning
9 on ILA

29 reports on
Microcredentials +
29 translations

Total 190 products + 62 translations

252 total number of final products

2024 ReferNet partnership Fora



ReferNet partnership forum

24-25 April 2025
Prague, Czechia

#ReferNet



ReferNet partnership forum

11-12 June 2025
Warsaw, Poland

#ReferNet





CEDEFOP
REFERNET
THE EUROPEAN NETWORK OF EXPERTS ON VET

ReferNet
Symposium

Glorianne CACHIA
National representative

Anna KARNO
Coordinator

Jerzy BIELECKI
Coordinator



2025 webinars

1. Webinar 2025.12 Second Focus Group Meeting – Mobility Scoreboard Revision
2. Webinar 2025.11 Validation of non-formal and informal learning: moving forward
3. Webinar 2025.10 2026 ReferNet workplan presentation
4. Webinar 2025.09 First Focus Group Meeting – Mobility Scoreboard Revision
5. Webinar 2025.08 Policy reporting 2025 (Deliverable 1a)
6. Webinar 2025.07 Deepening on Microcredentials - labour market sector relevance, quality, and inclusion
7. Webinar 2025.06 Training on Cedefop's referencing guide - APA citation style
8. Webinar 2025.05 National news on VET (Deliverable 1b)
9. Webinar 2025.04 Where are the jobs? Exploring new tools for labour market intelligence EURES webinar
10. Webinar 2025.03 VET excellence and inclusion for the 21st century (Deliverable 3a)
11. Webinar 2025.02 STAS: Europe's new tool for short-term anticipation of skill trends and VET demand
12. Webinar 2025.01 Financing Adult Learning/CVET and Recent Developments on ILAs (Deliverable 3b)

ReferNet events

2025 webinars



Operational webinars

1. Policy reporting 2025
2. VET excellence and inclusion for the 21st century
3. Deepening on Microcredentials
4. National news on VET
5. Financing Adult Learning/CVET and Recent Developments on ILAs



Knowledge sharing seminars

6. Validation of non-formal and informal learning: moving forward
7. Exploring new tools for labour market intelligence EURES webinar
8. STAS: Europe's new tool for short-term anticipation of skill trends and VET demand



Organizational webinars

9. 2026 ReferNet workplan preparation
10. Training on Cedefop's referencing guide - APA citation style
11. First Focus Group Meeting – Mobility Scoreboard Revision
12. Second Focus Group Meeting – Mobility Scoreboard Revision



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ReferNet 2026 workplan

The mechanics of its preparation

Proposals from ReferNet

1. Upskilling the Silver Workforce: Strategies for Engaging Older Adults in VET and Higher VET
2. Responsible AI in VET: Ethical Use, Bias and Inclusion in VET
3. Documenting and Strengthening Learner Participation in VET Governance across Europe
4. Analysis of Vocational Education and Training Research in Europe
5. Reflection on the need to update the EQF
6. The value of the improvement of skills by employers
7. The effects of technological change on the labour market position of VET graduates
8. How successful are new forms of practice-based learning?
9. Reflecting on the Union of Skills

ReferNet 2026 Workplan

- Activities of strategic importance
- Selection criteria (ind.)
 - Maturity of the proposals
 - Feasibility / fit to ReferNet
 - Relevance to the work of Cedefop / European agenda
 - Continue to encourage deliverables in form of “final products” [immediate use from the partners]
- Include the partners as co-designers of the workplan
- Informal consultation period
- EU survey for feedback collection to raise transparency
- Additional information on the workload and the resources needed
 - E.g. period of the activity, estimates of the person days (averages)
 - Webinar 10: Preparation of the workplan
 - 2025 Plenary during the submission period

2026 workplan

- 2026 Partnership Forum in Bonn, Germany
 - Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training
- 2026 Partnership Forum in Budapest, Hungary
 - Innovative Training Support Centre (IKK)
- Manual for the ReferNet Teams
- ReferNet “Who is Who”, first draft until the end of the year.
 - Section on organizations
 - Section on individuals
- Circular on communication activities

ReferNet future funding model

Document to the Management Board

- Initiate a discussion
- Present a number of options
- Session 12: (23/10/2025: 15:15 – 16:15) open discussion to debrief, inform and consult

ReferNet partners consultation

- What suggestions to the governance, funding model, or reporting requirements would most help strengthen ReferNet's sustainability and impact, while allowing your organisation to engage more effectively and meaningfully in the network?

IAS audit report

The auditors observed several key strengths to the overall **effectiveness** of the ReferNet programme. The network **delivers** on its expected outputs. This reflects a high level of **commitment** and **reliability** among national partners.

IAS audit recommendations

1 **Governance and Planning**

Regular structured meetings
Integration of ReferNet-related risks into the annual risk assessment process

2 **Grant Management**

Review ReferNet's funding model
Conduct a systematic stakeholder needs and expectations analysis

3 **Monitoring and Reporting**

Strengthen the use of existing monitoring tools

4 **Communication and Dissemination**

Revise Cedefop's communication strategy
Design targeted communication actions



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ReferNet 2025 Plenary

Agenda



23rd ANNUAL PLENARY MEETING OF REFERNET, CEDEFOP'S EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR VET

Wednesday, 22 October 2025 (all times are EET)

9.00-10.00

Registration and welcome coffee

10.00-10.15

Europa

Welcome and opening

Chair: **Ioannis Katsikis**, ReferNet Coordinator,
Department for VET and qualifications, Cedefop

Juergen Siebel, Cedefop Executive Director

Irene Mandl, Head of the Department for VET and
qualifications, Cedefop

10.15-10.45

Europa

Session 1.

**Keynote speech: The Union of Skills &
the European VET Strategy**

Anna Banczyk, Head of Unit - Vocational Education
and Training, Skills Portability, Cedefop, Directorate-
General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion,
European Commission

10.45-11.15

Europa

Session 2.

ReferNet: state of the network 2025-26

Ioannis Katsikis, ReferNet coordinator, Cedefop

11.15-11.30

COFFEE BREAK AND FAMILY PHOTO

11.30 -12.30

Europa

Session 3.

**Workshop on AI @ ReferNet: challenges and
opportunities**

Chair: **Anthie Kyriakopoulou**, Cedefop

Michail Papazoglou, Cedefop

Joanna Napierala, Cedefop

Mantas Sekmokas, Cedefop

12.30-13.00

Europa

Session 4.

Preparing the 2026 ReferNet workplan

**Survey on the development and use of digital
credentials and digital tools**

Zelda Azzara, Cedefop

13.00-14.15

LUNCH BREAK

14.15-15.15

Europa

Session 5.

**Review of the 2025 ReferNet workplan – ad hoc
activities**

Chair: **Eirini Monsela**, Cedefop

**Financing adult learning/CVET and recent
developments on ILA**

Mantas Sekmokas and Patrycja Lipinska, Cedefop

15.15-15.30

VET excellence and inclusion for the 21st century
Anastasia Poulidou and Vasilis Symeonidis, Cedefop

15.30-17.00

Europa

COFFEE BREAK

Session 6.

**Review of the 2025 ReferNet workplan -
workshop on policy reporting**

Moderator: **Irina Jemeljanova**, Cedefop

VET Policy and Systems Team, Cedefop

All day

Alexandria

Open desk on financial and reporting issues

Beatrice Herpin, Cedefop

17.00-17.30

Rousseau

Networking opportunities

Bilateral meetings with Cedefop country
managers

17.00-17.30

Rousseau

Networking opportunities

Bilateral meetings with Cedefop experts

19.30-22.30

City center

SOCIAL PROGRAMME – DINNER



23rd ANNUAL PLENARY MEETING OF REFERNET, CEDEFOP'S EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR VET

Thursday, 23 October 2025 (all times are EET)

9.00-9.30

Participant arrival

9.30-10.15

Europa

Session 7.

ReferNet communication activities

Chair: **Alfredo Salmaso** and **Christina Comunian**,
Department for Communication, Cedefop

10.15-11.15

Europa

Session 8.

Preparing the 2026 ReferNet workplan

**Data collection for the revamped IVET Mobility
Scoreboard**

Aristos Theocharous and **Nikolaos Georgiadis**,
Cedefop

11.15-11.30

Europa

COFFEE BREAK

11.30-12.00

Europa

Session 9.

**ReferNet perspectives: the evolving role of
microcredentials for social inclusion**

Chair: **Ioannis Katsikis**, Cedefop

**Live link with the virtual event on Microcredentials and
the future of learning**

Anastasia Poulidou and **Iraklis Pliakis**, Cedefop
ReferNet partners

12.00-13.15

Europa

Session 10.

Preparing the 2026 ReferNet workplan

Chair: **George Kostakis**, Coordinator, Department for
VET and qualifications, Cedefop

**Teachers and trainers in a changing world:
boosting continuing professional development**

Rena Psifidou, Cedefop

**Cedefop financing adult learning/CVET: augmenting
and disseminating reports prepared in 2025**

Mantas Sekmokas and **Patrycja Lipinska**, Cedefop

Updating information in the VET in Europe database

Dmitrijs Kulss, Cedefop

13.00-14.15

LUNCH BREAK

14.15-15.15

Europa

Session 11.

**Responsible AI in VET: ethical use, bias and
inclusion**

Chair: **Ioannis Katsikis**, Cedefop

15.15-16.15

Europa

Session 12.

**The future of ReferNet – alternative ways of
governance and financing - open discussion**

Chair: **Ioannis Katsikis**, Cedefop

Irene Mandl and **George Kostakis**, Cedefop

16.15-16.30

Europa

Concluding remarks

Irene Mandl, **George Kostakis** and
Ioannis Katsikis, Cedefop

16.30-17.00

*Outside
Europa*

NETWORKING COFFEE

*All day
Alexandria*

Open desk on financial and reporting issues

Beatrice Herpin, Cedefop

16.30-17.00

Rousseau

Networking opportunities

Bilateral meetings with Cedefop country
managers

16.30-17.00

Rousseau

Networking opportunities

Bilateral meetings with Cedefop experts

ReferNet Team

Ioannis KATSIKIS	ReferNet Team coordinator
Chryssa ZEKOU	Assistant ReferNet
Béatrice HERPIN	Assistant ReferNet
Alfredo SALMASO	Expert, Communication Advisor for ReferNet
Kleopatra EFSTATHIOU	ReferNet trainee

Country managers, VET policies and systems (VPS) Team

George KOSTAKIS	VPS Team coordinator
Irina JEMELJANOVA	Policy reporting coordination
Silke GADJI	Austria, Belgium, Germany, Sweden
Nikos GEORGIADIS	Bulgaria, Denmark, Malta
Veronica LEINER	Czechia, Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia
Dmitrijs KULSS	Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Romania
Vicky ORAIOPOULOU	Cyprus, France
Ines SANCHA	Spain, Norway, Poland, Portugal
Eirini MONSELA	Slovenia, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Greece
Anthie KYRIAKOPOULOU	Ireland, Iceland, Luxembourg
Aristos THEOCHAROUS	Italy
Anni LUOTO	VPS Trainee

Thank you

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