



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

50
YEARS
SHAPING LEARNING AND
SKILLS FOR EUROPE

Session 12: ReferNet future

Alternative ways of governance and financing

ReferNet: Status quo

Benefits

29 coordinating institutions and 200+ national experts

Key contribution to EU cooperation in VET

Cooperation platform between countries

Raises visibility of EU priorities on VET at national and regional level and of Cedefop's work

Shared ownership through co-financing

ReferNet inputs validated by national governments

Cedefop ensures quality and flexibility

Challenges

Total direct costs:
approx. EUR 900 000 = 1/5 of Cedefop's operational budget

High administrative burden (1.6 FTEs) to procure and administer grants

ReferNet partners advocate for:

- simplified financial reporting = disproportionate to small size of grants (stable since 2008);
 - shift from annual applications to multiannual grants; lump-sum financing
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Exploration of simplified forms of grants (lump sums)

Benefits

Estimated savings of 1 FTE in Cedefop due to lighter financial administration of grants

Simplified grant agreements reduce overheads = ReferNet partners focus on the content of activities

Cedefop's financial support ensures participation of all countries in the network

Benefits due to partnership

- Shared ownership of deliverables
 - Partners publish under their authorship
 - Visibility and recognition as members of European network
 - Flexibility in addressing ad-hoc requests
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Challenges

No substantial savings in ReferNet grants direct costs

The administrative burden (about 0.4 FTE) to procure and issue grants may remain

Exploration of institutional network (co)funded by Cedefop

Benefits

Stronger institutional representation in the countries

Challenges

ReferNet not foreseen in Cedefop Founding Regulation

ReferNet coordinators play only an institutional/representative role – no data collection or research

No savings to ReferNet direct and indirect costs compared to the status quo

Variation in the quality of deliverables

Exploration of Eurydice-type network – not financed by Cedefop

Benefits

Substantial savings of about EUR 900 000 in Cedefop's operational budget as ReferNet would be funded by Erasmus+

Challenges

ReferNet becomes a European Commission network

No longer a partnership network

- losing the benefits of shared ownership
 - without co-shaping the network activities
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Reliance on Erasmus+ funding presents long-term sustainability risks

Discussion

- Your views on the above options
- Your proposals for strengthening
 - governance of the network
 - funding of the network, including at national level

Thank you

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