



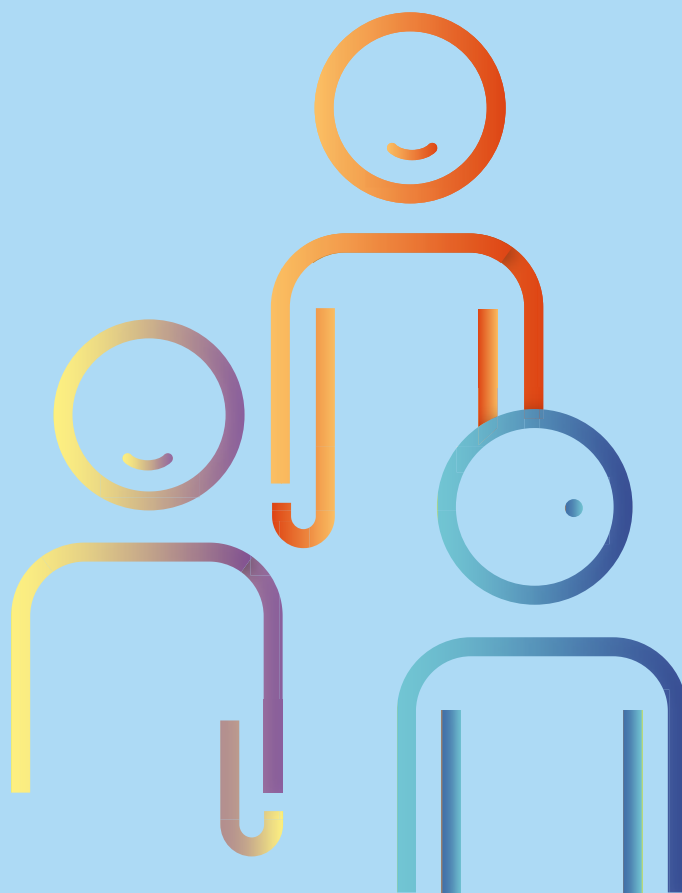
CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

4th policy
learning forum

lessons
from the updated
**EUROPEAN HANDBOOK
ON LEARNING OUTCOMES**

27 and 28 June 2022
Hybrid event



#VETlearningoutcomes

9.15-9.30	Registration (technical check)	
9.30-10.00	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE POLICY LEARNING FORUM (PLF) <i>Plenary 1</i> Chair: Loukas Zahilas, <i>Head of DVQ, Cedefop</i> Cedefop's fourth policy learning forum on learning outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">Participant welcomeContext and objectives of the PLFHousekeeping rules Opening address: Mara Brugia, <i>Deputy Director, Cedefop</i>	
10.00-11.15	KEYNOTE SPEECHES <i>Plenary 2</i> Setting the scene <ul style="list-style-type: none">Revised and extended European handbook on learning outcomes Anastasia Pouliou, <i>Expert, Cedefop</i>The conceptual shaping of learning outcomes: dumbing down or opening up learning processes? Monika Auzinger, <i>3s, Austria</i> Q&A on Cedefop's European handbook	
11.15-11.20	GUIDELINES FOR WORKING GROUP SESSIONS Anastasia Pouliou, <i>Cedefop</i>	
11.20-11.30	Coffee break	
11.30-12.45	WG 1 Europa room NATIONAL CURRICULA: DILEMMAS AND OPPORTUNITIES Chair: Iraklis Pliakis, <i>Cedefop</i> Presentation of focus questions reflecting handbook messages Presentation of two country approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none">Søren Kristensen, <i>Techne, Denmark</i>Anna Kahlson, <i>Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, Sweden</i> Rapporteur: Odd Bjørn Ure, <i>Consultur Studies & Analyses, Norway</i>	WG 2 Montessori Room NATIONAL CURRICULA: DILEMMAS AND OPPORTUNITIES Chair: Anastasia Pouliou, <i>Cedefop</i> Presentation of focus questions reflecting handbook messages Presentation of two country approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none">Lina Vaitkute, <i>Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre, Lithuania</i>Katrin Vaino, <i>University of Tartu, Estonia</i> Rapporteur: John O'Connor PhD, <i>Head of Qualification Standards, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), Ireland</i>
12.45-13.00	PRESENTATION OF MAIN FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS BY RAPPORTEURS (summarised in five to seven key points) <i>Plenary 3</i> Chair: Anastasia Pouliou, <i>Cedefop</i>	
13.00-13.15	BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE DAY Anastasia Pouliou, <i>Cedefop expert</i>	

9.15-9.30 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Anastasia Pouliou, *Cedefop*

9.30-10.15 **KEYNOTE SPEECHES**

Plenary 4

Chair: Loukas Zahilas, *Cedefop*

- Review and renewal of qualifications
Anastasia Pouliou, *Cedefop*
- Learning outcomes and their role in the review and renewal of VET curricula
Simon Broek, *Ockham-IPS*
- The case of transversal skills and competences
John Hart, *Sequel IEC, UK*

10.15-11.00 **ADDED VALUE OF LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Plenary 5

Chair: Zelda Azzara, *Cedefop*

What is required for the actual use and potential benefit of learning outcomes in practice?

- Kristel Jakobson, *European Students' Union (ESU)*
- Elías Amor, *President of AFEMCUAL, Spain*
- Giuseppina Tucci, *President of Lifelong Learning Platform (LLL) – Discussion*

11.00-11.15 Coffee break

11.15-12.45 **PANEL DISCUSSION**

Plenary 6

Moderator: Loukas Zahilas, *Cedefop*

European national VET curricula: dilemmas and possibilities (lessons from the Future of VET project) – Experts' observations

- Kinga Szebeni, *DG EMPL, European Commission*
- Sabine Tritscher-Archan, *SMEunited*
- Xavier Matheu, *ETF Acting Director*
- Dr Volker Rein, *Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), Senior Research Associate*
- Tatjana Babrauskiene, *Workers' Group of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)*

12.45-13.00 **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Jürgen Siebel, Loukas Zahilas and Anastasia Pouliou, *Cedefop*

END OF FORUM

Background note

The learning outcomes principle, emphasising and clarifying what a learner is expected to know, be able to do and understand at the end of a learning process, currently underpins most European education and training systems (Cedefop, 2016; 2021) ⁽¹⁾. Used in different settings and for different purposes – ranging from qualifications frameworks to qualification standards, curricula and assessment criteria – learning outcomes influence the way teaching and learning is organised and carried out.

Cedefop published its first **European handbook on defining, writing and applying learning outcomes** in 2017. The handbook outlines the different uses of learning outcomes, identifies the dilemmas involved in defining and using them, and proposes several practical ‘rules of thumb’. As a follow-up to the 2017 handbook, and building on discussions from the **2015**, **2016** and **2018** policy learning forums, the **revised and extended European handbook on learning outcomes** aims to build on, and add to, the extensive existing guidance and research material. A key purpose of the revised handbook is to identify essential guiding principles, challenges and alternative solutions, while reflecting on the conditions for implementing the learning outcomes approach for different purposes.

FOCUS OF THE POLICY LEARNING FORUM – LEARNING-OUTCOMES-BASED NATIONAL CURRICULA

Taking the updated European handbook as reference, the 2022 policy learning forum will focus on the design and development of learning-outcomes-based **national VET curricula**. Our research shows that national VET curricula have changed significantly over the past two decades, raising two questions.

- How are learning outcomes defined and described, and what does this say about the current orientation of a national system?
- How are learning outcomes reviewed and renewed and what does this say about the evolution and possible re-orientation of a national system?

The transformation of national VET curricula over time demonstrates how countries struggle to keep up with, and abreast of, increasing demands. By involving experts from most European countries, this PLF provides an opportunity to compare approaches and exchange experiences. While building on the updated Cedefop handbook, the PLF forms part of a continuing joint European effort to connect practitioners and improve practices in this field.

The learning outcomes orientation of national curricula

National VET curricula open a window into a changing VET landscape. As demonstrated by the ongoing *Future of VET* study (Cedefop, forthcoming 2022), learning outcomes are increasingly influencing the definition and design of national VET curricula. While the balance between occupationally specific and general subjects is one area where change can be observed, the shift to learning outcomes seems – in some cases – to allow for greater local and regional autonomy, moving away from detailed prescriptions of teaching and instruction methods. This can be seen as a response to the use of overly precise and detailed learning outcomes, which may restrict local and individual adaptation and innovation initiatives. A key challenge for national curricula, therefore, is striking the right balance between predictability/prescription and flexibility/openness when designing or using curricula at national level.

Guiding questions

1. How is the scope and extent of expected learning outcomes (the horizontal dimension of the curriculum) described?
 - How are technical and occupationally specific skills described?
 - How are transversal skills and competences described?
2. How is the complexity and depth of expected learning outcomes (the vertical dimension of the curriculum) described?
3. What are the features of the latest generation of national curricula: increased detail/prescription or more openness/autonomy?

⁽¹⁾ Cedefop (2016). *Application of learning outcomes approaches across Europe*.

Cedefop (2021). *Review and renewal of qualifications: towards methodologies for analysing and comparing learning outcomes*.

Review and renewal of qualifications

National curricula need to be continuously reviewed and renewed. Learning outcomes can potentially operate as a common language helping to identify labour market demands, and to respond to them through the education and training system. Cedefop's recently published study (2021) on the review and renewal of VET qualifications provides important insights into the crucial feedback loop between the labour market and VET institutions. This PLF offers participants an opportunity to elaborate on this connection further.

Guiding questions

1. When and how do different stakeholders intervene in the review of national curricula?
2. To what extent are learning outcomes used as a common language in the dialogue between VET providers and labour market stakeholders?
3. In the review and renewal of national curricula, what are the priorities of VET providers and labour market stakeholders respectively?





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