

23rd ReferNet annual plenary meeting

22-23 October 2025
Thessaloniki, Greece

#ReferNet



The 23rd ReferNet annual plenary meeting will take place in Thessaloniki, Greece and will welcome the representatives of our partner organizations under the 2024-27 framework partnership agreement, as well as national representatives of the network and the representatives from the European Commission (EU). The aim of the meeting will be to:

- inform partners of the latest EU policy developments on VET, skills and qualifications;
- take stock of the work carried out in 2025 and the outcomes published and disseminated;
- prepare the 2026 work plan: VET policy reporting, spotlight, news, visibility actions, etc.;
- foster partnership and knowledge-sharing through interactive (joint) presentations of national developments, debates, etc.;
- hold individual meetings for deeper cooperation among members and between members and Cedefop experts.
- convey in a physical open space, which will encourage creative reflection on how partners would like ReferNet to develop in the 2024-27 period.

Participants will also have the opportunity to exchange good dissemination practices in a dedicated space where they can display their national publications, newsletters, videos, promotional items, etc and benefit from bilateral meetings.

In addition, just prior to the Plenary, on 20–21 October 2025, we will host a conference dedicated to “Financing adult learning: The role of public funding”, where the first results of this year’s Activity 3.b will be presented. Furthermore, during the second day of the Plenary (23 October), a thematic event focusing on “Microcredentials and the future of learning” will take place, offering our partners the opportunity to present preliminary findings from Activity 3.c. Through these events, we aim to showcase the work of ReferNet to the broader public and further enhance its visibility and impact at European level.

Programme

Day 1 – 22 October 2025 (all times are EET)

09.00 – 10.00	Registration and welcome coffee
10:00 – 10.15 <i>Europa</i>	Welcome and opening Chair: Ioannis Katsikis, ReferNet Coordinator, Department for VET and qualifications, Cedefop <ul style="list-style-type: none">Juergen Siebel, Cedefop Executive DirectorIrene Mandl, Head of the Department for VET and qualifications (DVQ), Cedefop
10.15 – 10.45 <i>Europa</i>	Session 1 - Keynote speech: The Union of Skills & the European VET Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none">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 <i>Europa</i>	Session 2 - ReferNet: state of the network 2025-26 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ioannis Katsikis, ReferNet Coordinator, Cedefop
11.15 – 11.30	Coffee Break and Family Photo
11.30 – 12.30 <i>Europa</i>	Session 3 - Workshop on AI @ ReferNet: challenges and opportunities Chair: Anthie Kyriakopoulou, Cedefop <ul style="list-style-type: none">Michail Papazoglou, CedefopJoanna Napierala, CedefopMantas Sekmokas, Cedefop
12.30 – 13.00 <i>Europa</i>	Session 4 - Preparing the 2026 ReferNet workplan Survey on the development and use of digital credentials and digital tools <ul style="list-style-type: none">Zelda Azzara, Cedefop
13.00 – 14.15	Lunch Break
14.15 – 15.15 <i>Europa</i>	Session 5 - Review of the 2025 ReferNet workplan – ad hoc activities Chair: Eirini Monsela, Cedefop Financing adult learning/CVET and recent developments on ILA <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mantas Sekmokas, Cedefop



22 & 23 October 2025



9.00-17.00 (EET)



Thessaloniki, Greece

	VET excellence and inclusion for the 21st century <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anastasia Pouliou and Vasilis Symeonidis, Cedefop
15.15-15.30	Coffee Break
15.30-17.00 <i>Europa</i>	Session 6 - Review of the 2025 ReferNet workplan - workshop on policy reporting Chair: George Kostakis Moderators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irina Jemeljanova, Cedefop Eirini Monsela, Cedefop Silke Gadji, Cedefop Vicky Oraiopoulou, Cedefop Anthie Kyriakopoulou, Cedefop Veronika Leiner, Cedefop Ines Sancha, Cedefop
All day <i>Alexandria</i>	Open desk on Financial and reporting issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beatrice Herpin, Cedefop
17.00-17.30 <i>Rousseau</i>	Networking opportunities Bilateral meetings with Cedefop country managers
17.00-17.30 <i>Rousseau</i>	Networking opportunities Bilateral meetings with Cedefop experts
19.30-22.30 City center	Social programme – Dinner



Programme

Day 2 – 23 October 2025 (all times are EET)

09.00 – 09.30	Participant arrival
09.30 – 10.15 <i>Europa</i>	Session 7 - ReferNet communication activities Chair: Alfredo Salmaso and Christina Comunian, Department for Communication, Cedefop
10.15 – 11.15 <i>Europa</i>	Session 8 - Preparing the 2026 ReferNet workplan Data collection for the revamped IVET Mobility Scoreboard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aristos Theocharous and Nikolaos Georgiadis, Cedefop
11.15 – 11.30	Coffee Break
11:30 – 12:00 <i>Europa</i>	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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ute Hippach-Schneider, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training, Germany (BIBB) Inga Kukk, Ministry of Education and Research (HTM), Estonia Juraj Vantuch, Institute of the Republic for Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training (CPI), Slovenia Antonios Glaros, National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP), Greece
12.00 – 13.15 <i>Europa</i>	Session 10 - Responsible AI in VET: ethical use, bias and inclusion Chair: Ioannis Katsikis, Cedefop Open discussion with ReferNet partners
13.15 – 14.15	Lunch Break
14.15 – 15.15 <i>Europa</i>	Session 11 - 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



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rena Psifidou, Cedefop <p>Cedefop Financing adult learning/CVET: augmenting and disseminating reports prepared in 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mantas Sekmokas, Cedefop <p>Updating information in the VET in Europe database</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dmitrijs Kulss, Cedefop
15:15 – 16:15 <i>Europa</i>	<p>Session 12 - The future of ReferNet – alternative ways of governance and financing - open discussion</p> <p>Chair: Irene Mandl, Head of DVQ, Cedefop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ioannis Katsikis and George Kostakis, Cedefop
16.15 – 16.30 <i>Europa</i>	<p>Concluding remarks</p> <p>Irene Mandl, George Kostakis and Ioannis Katsikis, Cedefop</p>
16.30 – 17.00 <i>Outside Europa</i>	<p>Networking coffee</p>
16.30-17.00 <i>Montessori</i>	<p>Parallel session 13 - Meeting with newcomers – open discussion</p> <p>Chair: Ioannis Katsikis, Cedefop</p> <p>Moderators: Chryssa Zekou and Kleopatra Efstathiou, Cedefop</p>
All day <i>Alexandria</i>	<p>Open desk on Financial and reporting issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beatrice Herpin, Cedefop
16.30-17.00 <i>Rousseau</i>	<p>Networking opportunities</p> <p>Bilateral meetings with Cedefop country managers</p>
16.30-17.00 <i>Rousseau</i>	<p>Networking opportunities</p> <p>Bilateral meetings with Cedefop experts</p>

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