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Experiences from a National Representative in a federal state - Belgium

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Overview presentation – focus on process

1. Validation of the policy reporting Bruges Communiqué - Riga MTD's
2. Networking
3. Specific situation in the federal state of Belgium



Validation of the policy reporting

- High responsibility towards policy-makers and Minister(s)
- New context: the European Semester, including National Reform Programs and EU peer review EMCO



Consequences for PROFILE National Representative:

- Position should be high enough in the hierarchy of the Ministry
- Close cooperation with DGVT, SG and/or Cabinet Minister
- Good contact with national policy coordinators per MTD related national priority



Supporting network for the National Representative

1. Broad concept of VET, in many countries interfering with secondary school education, adult learning and HE (AD, professional bachelor)
2. Broad scope of ReferNet themes

→ impossible for NR to be fully informed on latest developments

→ NR should rely on a wide supporting network of coordinators of national policy measures

→ higher workload, ad hoc themes, but no EU co-financing

A parallel network needed to the National ReferNet Team network ?

Using same network is win-win: NR has good knowledge of EU policy



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Specific situation and problems in Belgium

- NR = centralised function in a decentralised country: 3 different language Communities responsible for Education + 3 Regions and Federal State responsible for Employment and Vocational Training
- Formal Belgian ‘consortium’ is no longer in place

The Belgian NR needs a specific network of “sub-validators” at least for the 2 other Communities – the validation by the NR is “pro forma” for these other Communities. **This is politically the only solution!**

- The ReferNet time table is very demanding (see Q2 2016) and sometimes impossible to respect
- Document formats (Spotlight in VET) are not adapted to countries with more than one VET system + translation issues



Conclusions

- Workload and responsibility of the NR have significantly grown, but no EU co-financing to support that work
- Tension between broad scope of ReferNet themes and timeframe
- Tension between centralised function of NR and decentralises policy making in Regions and on local level – should Cedefop not adapt to these specific situations?
- Importance of a good functioning supporting network



unique profile of the NR: where can we find this kind of person (with global vision and broad network of experts) and how can we keep him/her in place?

