BRIEFING NOTE

THE ETF NETWORK FOR EXCELLENCE (ENE):

AN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICIONERS ON VET EXCELLENCE AND CENTERS OF VOCATIONAL EXCELLENCE (CoVEs)

1. Background: the ETF Network for Excellence (ENE)

International networking for Vocational Education and Training -VET- Excellence is flagship working approach- from 2020-onwards- applied by European Training Foundation (ETF)[1], via setting up Network for Excellence (ENE). This is composed by Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) all around the world. However, first focus is on ETF partner countries- needs- to develop both VET Excellence and CoVES as operational concepts.

The ETF's Network for Excellence (ENE) is an international network of so-called Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) and/or high-quality VET providers in their respective contexts .ENE has been inspired by European policies[2] and practices -and led initiative in the EU countries-, contributing to international dimension of Erasmus(+) programme[3]. Thus, ENE provides CoVEs network members with opportunities to learn and collaborate with one another- nationally, locally and internationally-.

ENE responds to ETF experience working together with its Partner Countries (PCs) for moving towards VET Excellence as a key driver to support VET and Lifelong Learning (LLL), and to provide relevant skills in the-international- labour markets. From years ago, some ETF PCs are ambitioning to set up CoVEs as institutional innovation hubs, for informing on VET reform processes- and modernize systems- looking at the future.

ENE is currently composed by more than 290 CoVEs – High -Quality VET institutions, networks, clusters, platforms (etc.) from more than 40 countries around the world (e.g. ETF partner countries- PCs, EU Member States -MSs- Sub Saharan Africa countries, South-East Asia countries, etc.)[4].

2. ENE core business: key thematic approaches to share practices on VET Excellence and CoVEs operations- and development-

The ETF-ENE- approach on Vocational Excellence builds on 10 core themes. Such themes are captured in ENE Self-Assessment Tool (ENESAT) to support CoVEs self-evaluation and transformed as thematic excellence dimensions .This is to help CoVEs, for example, on developing, improving and/or possibly identify which are areas of expertise to support transmition of excellence to other centres, network members, and international partners, stakeholders, parts of VET system (etc.)[5]. The 10 themes that are currently shaping ENE approach to Vocational Excellence and informed by the ENESAT are the following:

- Lifelong learning in vocational education and training – from initial to continuing training and adult education pathways-from VET to Higher Education (and vice versa).

- Entrepreneurial Centres of Vocational Excellence.

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[1] https://www.etf.europa.eu/en
[2] For instance, EU Skills Strategy: https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=22832&langId=en
[3] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/centres-of-vocational-excellence_en
[4] More info: https://tvet-online.asia/startseite/networking-for-vocational-excellence-an-international-network-of-centres-of-vocational-excellence-coves/
[5] https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/pubications-and-resources/publications/centres-vocational-excellence-engine-vocational-education

- Education-business collaboration and cooperation.
- Pedagogy and Professional Development.
- Smart specialisation – Mobilising Innovation, ecosystems and SMEs.
- Industry 4.0 and Digitalization.
- Autonomy and PPPs in VET skills development.
- Going green – supporting sustainable goals.
- Social inclusion, equity and excellence.
- Career Education and Guidance in Vocational Excellence.

The approach taken by the ENE- in particular focusing on using ENESAT by ENE CoVEs- is intended to reflect the needs and interests of its members, by distinguishing distinct perspectives --or pathways- for the development of vocational excellence[6].

3. How joining and benefiting ENE membership?

The international network is open to members from all countries and includes individual training providers, clusters of providers and centres that coordinate other providers (etc.). Policy makers (ministries, other national and regional stakeholders, etc.) from ETF partner countries, EU Member States and beyond- are - invited to engage in the actions of the network. Main ways-and requirements- for joining ENE are:

- Endorsement by the relevant national, and/or sub-national-local- authority
- Engagement in specific themes to develop Vocational Excellence.
- Commitment to the network.
- Self- expression of interest from CoVEs- autonomous- VET public, private or PPP oriented-provider-, and/or umbrella providers organisation (e.g. international NGOs, VET provider associations etc.).
- As a knowledge binding requirement, applying members are asked-invited- to filling up ENE registry and conduct process of self-assessment by using ENE corporate tool for such purpose (ENESAT). When both requirements have been accomplished CoVEs are formally considered ENE members.

Key benefits joining ENE membership are:

- Opportunity to be part of knowledge sharing - international peer learning/review community, inspired by VET thematic areas of excellence. This helps on improving CoVEs capacities for internationalisation.
- Opportunity for CoVEs to finding/matching right partners for participating on EU/ international projects (e.g. Erasmus+).
- Opportunity for CoVEs to be better recognized as good international reference hubs for participating in national and international programs (e.g. CoVEs increased visibility and improved marketing functions).
- Opportunity for CoVEs to be connected via ENE on current and future developments to EU tools and development and processes of (international) self-assessments, CoVEs awards/labelling processes (etc.).

MORE INFO: ETF.Network.for.Excellence@etf.europa.eu

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[6] ETF/ENE (2021): https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2021-10/ene_working_paper_exploring_vocational_excellence_en.pdf

ETF Working together Learning for life European Training Foundation

ETF Network for Excellence