



# **FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING (CEDEFOP)**

## **AND THE**

## **EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION (ETF)**

**PERIOD: 2021-2023**

### **1. Background**

Cooperation between the two Agencies as defined by formal agreements dates back to 1997. Over the years this cooperation has evolved to a more strategic partnership that enables the 2 Agencies to deepen and broaden their activities and further reinforcing synergy and complementarity. In this regard, a triangular cooperation involving also the European Commission services has become more systematic. In particular, in areas like monitoring and reporting on progress made by member states and candidate countries in the follow up to the Copenhagen Process and the European Skills agenda, this cooperation is envisaged to continue delivering high quality joint findings.

Both Cedefop and ETF, as EU agencies, support the European Commission in the field of vocational education and training (VET), skills and qualifications in a lifelong learning context. The operations of Cedefop and ETF are governed by distinct mandates established by their Founding Regulations. The differences in the operational actions of Cedefop and the ETF are also defined in their Founding Regulations.

Cedefop's mission, according to its recast Founding Regulation <sup>(1)</sup>, is 'to support the promotion, development and implementation of the Union policy in the field of vocational education and training (VET) as well as skills and qualifications policies by working together with the Commission, Member States and social partners. To this end, enhance and disseminate knowledge, provide evidence and services for

---

<sup>(1)</sup> <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/about-cedefop/what-we-do/cedefop-regulation>

policy making, including research-based conclusions, and facilitate knowledge sharing among and between Union and national actors.

According to its mandate, ETF, supports the development of human capital in transition and developing countries in the context of EU external relations policies. In this regard, ETF puts priority in the enlargement region (candidate and potential candidate countries) and EU neighborhood, south and east. The focus of ETF's work is to help partner countries in the lifelong development of individuals' skills and competences through the improvement of vocational education and training systems. Within this context the ETF provides expertise to the European Commission and to partner countries outside the EU to improve their human capital development. The thematic expertise of ETF is continuously developing to cover new emerging areas and challenges in the domain of human capital development, skills and lifelong learning systems and VET with relevance to the partner countries and the EC. As per its unique mandate to focus exclusively in countries outside the EU, the ETF is actively delivering on the internationalisation of VET.

Cedefop's multiannual objectives reflect the core functions of the Agency that focus on: (a) producing innovative and forward-looking research and policy analyses to inspire policy-making and support well-designed policy implementation; (b) developing and maintaining the knowledge base and the unique blend of Cedefop's expertise at the interface of VET and the labour market to continue to be a major resource and authority on VET in Europe; (c) sharing skills, VET and policy intelligence, data, information, perspectives and tailored policy learning as enabler of partnerships on European VET through engagement, tools and interactivity with our stakeholders; and (d) focus corporate communication approach on increasing stakeholder engagement and outreach via social media, a more interactive web portal and online tools, data-visualisations, e-publications, audio-visuals, webinars and other virtual/hybrid events.

ETF carries out activities involving the following key actions: thematic and technical advice in human capital development to EU services (European Commission: DG Employment Social Affairs and Inclusion, DG NEAR, DG Education and Culture, DG Development and Cooperation, DG Enterprise and Industry, DG Home Affairs; and the European External Action Service) and in support of the external relation programmes (IPA, ENPI, DCI) in programming and project cycle; policy advice to partner country governments and stakeholders on policy solutions appropriate to the problems they face and capacity building of key actors, including governments, in the field of education and training and employment. Furthermore, ETF supports EU services in implementing human capital development actions included in the Economic and Investment Plans. The ETF also disseminates information on approaches and trends in vocational education reform being followed in the EU.

Without prejudicing the distinctive mandates and functions of either Cedefop or ETF, the shared focus on vocational education and training, skills and qualifications offers potential synergies through co-operation. Their institutional capacity and respective expertise in EU and non-EU systems of VET, skills, qualifications and human capital development provide a solid basis for cooperation that can be beneficial for both EU member states and ETF partner countries. Thus, cooperation between the two Agencies facilitates further

cooperation between EU member states and ETF partner countries in the area of VET, skills and qualifications in line with intergovernmental processes like the Copenhagen process, the New Skills Agenda, the Council recommendation on VET and the Osnabruck declaration and the common priorities for VET and skills established therein.

Through knowledge sharing and active participation in their respective activities, ETF and Cedefop deepen their expertise and ensure continued complementarity of activities, synergy and efficiency gains. Peer reviewing and peer learning also enhance the quality and added value of common or coordinated products – such as the Inventories assessing developments in National Qualifications Frameworks, the Monitoring Framework of commonly agreed VET priorities or the guides for skills anticipation – while at the same time avoid overlaps.

## **2. Cooperation between Cedefop and the ETF 2021 -2023**

In the context of their own institutional mandate and geo-political scope, Cedefop and ETF will continue their cooperation in the period 2021–2023. With full respect to their mandates, the two Agencies will continue exploiting possibilities for further enhanced synergies. The two Agencies are committed to seek ways to expand and deepen cooperation, where appropriate, and in a cost-effective and efficient way.

Thus, Cedefop and ETF will focus cooperation in the following areas:

1. Expertise sharing
2. Production of common deliverables
3. Design, planning and execution of common projects
4. Sharing of networks, platforms and tools

### Expertise sharing

The strength of both Agencies is their expertise in VET and human capital development. The expertise accumulation in both Agencies can be complementary to each other. Experts from both Agencies already cooperate closely in areas like qualifications and work-based learning.

Youth Guarantee schemes, being a priority for the Western Balkans and EU Neighborhood East and South, is an area where sharing experiences between the 2 agencies can contribute to the design and implementation of schemes in these countries.

Qualification and credential systems, including a focus on learning outcomes and validation of non-formal learning. Cooperation will continue on EQF and NQF implementation and both Agencies will prepare and publish (together with UNESCO) the biannual Global NQF Inventory and the International handbook on learning outcomes. Work based learning and work-placed learning. ETF and Cedefop will maintain continuous dialogue and discussion on apprenticeships and other forms of work-based learning and are both members of the ET2020 Working Group on VET and the Inter-Agency Working Group on WBL. Skills matching and anticipation and identification of skills needs. Cedefop and ETF will continue to engage experts to promote learning and knowledge sharing.

## Production of common deliverables

Over the past years, the 2 Agencies have jointly prepared and disseminated findings and analyses in areas of joint interest. Cooperation was done on a geographical basis offering the opportunity to bring together findings from EU member states and beyond. Such an area is VET policy reporting as part of the implementation and monitoring of common VET priorities agreed at European level. Cedefop and ETF will continue cooperation as of 2021 to complete their shared mandate under the Riga Conclusions of 2015 to assist EU and partner countries in implementing reforms and to monitor and analyse progress in the area

of VET. In addition, they will adapt their monitoring approach in line with the priorities defined in the Council Recommendation on VET, the updated European Skills Agenda and the Osnabrück Declaration. Cooperation includes the development of methodological approaches, preparation of joint background papers, reports and presentations in platforms like the ACVT and DGVT meetings.

## Design, planning and execution of common projects

This is a new area of cooperation to be explored in 2021. The idea is to look for opportunities to kick off a new project under the full ownership by the two agencies. The project can have a horizon of 2-3 years coordinated by a team of experts from the 2 agencies addressing one area of common interest where countries from EU and the neighbourhood will be involved.

## Sharing of networks, platforms and tools where appropriate

Already the 2 agencies are involved in international platforms and networks offering a complementary evidence-based point of view on VET and human capital development. This cooperation will continue. Furthermore, the two agencies will engage each other in their own platforms and networks whenever relevant.

Involvement of Cedefop and ETF experts in events and projects of mutual interest organised by both Agencies will continue. The two Agencies will continue exchanges and knowledge-sharing, including via two joint thematic meetings per year at Thessaloniki and Turin or virtually, to facilitate knowledge sharing and complementarity in their activities. The nature and format of these meetings will be agreed on an ad-hoc basis to better capture current developments in their domain of interest.

ETF and Cedefop will continue sharing good practice and support each other in transversal matters such as IT, finance, procurement, online services and general administration. ETF and Cedefop will strive to share services and capabilities within the framework set by the EUAN network and as deemed relevant

and appropriate by both agencies.

The two Agencies will also strengthen cooperation in communication activities in EU initiatives where both Agencies are active, like the European Vocational Skills Week.

Cedefop and ETF will continue to cooperate, exchange methodologies and learn from each other on the implementation of their performance measurement systems.

### **3. Implementing the framework for cooperation**

Communication between the two Agencies will be open and continuous.

The two Agencies commit to deepen exchange of information on areas of common interest.

Cedefop and ETF will implement this framework for cooperation through a joint annual work programme annexed to the Programming Documents of each Agency. ETF and Cedefop will provide an annual report to the European Parliament on progress in the implementation of the framework for cooperation. This report will be included in the Consolidated Annual Activity Report of both Agencies.

Strategic planning and coordination between the two Agencies will be maintained at Directorate's level.

The two Agencies will be invited and represented at each other's Management Board meetings as observers.

The framework for co-operation will be reviewed at the latest by Q3, 2023.

Cesare Onestini  
Director ETF

Juergen Siebel  
Director Cedefop