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www.cedefop.europa.eu/refernet

22nd ReferNet annual plenary meeting

20-21 November 2024, Cedefop, Thessaloniki, Greece

Guide for participants

CEDEFOP REFERNET
THE EUROPEAN NETWORK OF EXPERTISE ON VET

Welcome to 22nd ReferNet annual plenary meeting

Dear Participants,

We would like to thank you for your registration to attend the 22nd Annual plenary meeting of our Network that will take place at the premises of Cedefop in Thessaloniki, Greece. We are delighted to have you with us as we prepare to come together to celebrate our network's collective achievements, strengthen our collaboration, and set the path forward for ReferNet.

As you know this year's focus on "20 Years together" aims to celebrate the anniversary of the 2004 enlargement of the EU with the accession of 10 additional countries. On 1 May 2004, the citizens of Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia became citizens of the EU. Overnight, our Union became a greater political, economic and cultural entity. Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia's accession a few years later has made our Union even stronger.

Over the two meeting days, we will induct our new partners under the 2024-27 framework agreement. Together, we will explore the latest EU developments in VET, skills, and qualifications, review our 2024 accomplishments, and collaboratively plan our joined activities for the 2025 ReferNet workplan. Interactive presentations and engaging discussions will provide an open space for knowledge-sharing and the exploration of national perspectives, ensuring a dynamic exchange of ideas in a safe environment where polyphony is encouraged.

This meeting also offers a dedicated space to share best practices in dissemination—so please exploit this unique opportunity to showcase your national publications, newsletters, videos, and promotional materials. This is also an excellent chance for bilateral exchanges between the partners but also between the members of ReferNet and the staff of Cedefop that would allow us to further strengthen our partnerships.

Therefore, let us embrace this opportunity to connect and work together for our collective mission to enhance VET development across Europe.

Wishing everyone an inspiring and fruitful meeting!

The ReferNet team at Cedefop

Welcome to Thessaloniki!

Transfer to/from the airport

Thessaloniki's International Airport "Makedonia" is located only 15km from the city centre.

- **By bus**

Airport shuttle buses depart from "Makedonia" Airport every 20-25 minutes and reach the city center in approximately 40 minutes during the day and 50 minutes at night. Bus Line 01X connects the airport to the heart of the city during the daytime while the night Bus 01N is available from 11:10 pm to 05:55 am. The bus stops are located just outside the exit of the Arrivals and Departures levels and the cost of a one-way ticket is 1.80€. The closest bus stop to Domotel Olympia Hotel is "Plateia Aristotelous" (a 7 min. walk to the hotel).

You can buy your tickets from the vending machines onboard (cash only) but you should keep in mind that vending machines do not give change.

- **By taxi**

Taxi service is available at the airport. The dark blue & white taxis are waiting outside the terminal building (between exit 3 and 4) 24/7 and offer quick rides to the city center at affordable prices. The journey to the city center, under normal traffic, takes approximately 30 minutes. The cost for this ride is approx. at 24€ during the day and 32€ during the night shift (00:00 am to 05:00 am).

Accommodation

Accommodation for selected participants will be provided at Domotel Olympia, located at 65 Olympou Str., Thessaloniki.

Hotel Domotel Olympia is a contemporary hotel, right in the heart of Thessaloniki, housed in a historic building with a family heritage.

Read More on https://domotel.gr/olympia/

Organised transfers to/from Cedefop premises

WEDNESDAY, 20 NOVEMBER	08.30 Pick up from Domotel Olympia to Cedefop 17.00 Pick up from Cedefop to Domotel Olympia
THURSDAY, 21 NOVEMBER	08.30 Pick up from Domotel Olympia to Cedefop 18.00 Pick up from Cedefop to Domotel Olympia

*If you need to head directly to the airport after the meeting on Day 2 for your return flight, we can arrange a taxi transfer for you (please contact the Secretariat). Kindly note that this cost will need to be borne by you and covered by the per diem.

Meeting Venue

Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) is one of the EU's decentralised agencies.

Founded in 1975 and based in Greece since 1995, Cedefop supports 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, it enhances and disseminates knowledge, provides evidence and services for policy making, including research based conclusions, and facilitates knowledge sharing among and between EU and national actors.

Cedefop is situated outside the city center, in a suburban area near the border of Pylea and Thermi. However, it is easily accessible by taxi from the airport or any area within the city and surrounding suburbs, typically within 30 minutes (*Address*: Europe 123, 570 01 Thessaloniki (Thermi), Greece | *Telephone*: +302310490111).

Cedefop - Conference rooms:
Europa, Rousseau, Montessori

Access to the building requires an identification document such as a passport or ID card.

Wi-Fi connection will be available in all rooms.

Social activities

Dinner

We cordially invite you to our social dinner at Restaurant Kazaviti on 20 November at 19:30. Located at 9 Katouni Str. 9, 546 25, this dinner will provide an excellent opportunity to connect with fellow attendees in a relaxed setting.

Please inform us of any allergies or dietary restrictions to ensure a comfortable experience for all.

- **Directions**

Directions from Hotel Domotel Olympia to Restaurant Kazaviti

1. Exit Hotel Domotel Olympia and head northwest on Olympou Street, toward El. Venizelou.
2. After approximately 180 meters, turn left onto Ionos Dragoumi Street.
3. Follow Ionos Dragoumi for about 700 meters.
4. Turn right onto Mitropoleos Street and continue for 63 meters.
5. Finally, turn left onto Katouni Street, and Restaurant Kazaviti will be on your right after just 6 meters.

Please refer to Map of locations

Social activities

- **Menu**

Appetizers (dishes for 4 persons)**:**
Welcome glass of ouzo and a plate with appetizers
(fish salad, Fava, Beetroot with yoghurt cream, anchovy marinated, smoked squash)
Greek salad
Sarmadakia yalanji
(vegetable leaves rolled around a filling of minced meat, grains such as rice, or both)
Fried cheese with nut croutons and sweet figs

Main course (Individual)**:**
Slow roasted shank in the pot for 6 h
Pastitsiada with Zyguris or braised with fried potatoes
(1 year old lamb cooked with fresh tomato)
Grilled fish steak or with cream sauce with mushrooms or wine sauce
Grilled pork steak 600 g
Chicken schnitzel with cream sauce with mushrooms
Traditional moussaka
Risotto with mushrooms and vegetables (vegan)

Dessert:
Chocolate pie with ice cream
Sweet and fruit

Drinks:
Bottle of wine per 4 persons and soft drinks
(White: Malagouzia - Red: Xinomavro)
Beer as alternative to wine

City of Thessaloniki

Set on the northern shores of the Thermaikos Gulf that opens into the Aegean Sea, Thessaloniki is approximately 550 kilometers north of Athens and in close proximity to Halkidiki's beautiful beaches. It is the metropolis of the Region of Macedonia, one of Europe's oldest cities and the second largest city in Greece.

Founded in 316 BC by Cassander, King of Macedonia, the city was named after his wife, Thessaloniki, sister of Alexander the Great and has been a crossroad of cultures and civilizations for over 2300 years. Few other places have such a density of outstanding historic monuments as Thessaloniki. The atmosphere is a fusion of Greek, Balkan and South-eastern European influences that co-exist harmoniously, creating a multicultural and cosmopolitan environment, where visitors from all over the world feel welcome.

Thessaloniki has the largest university in Greece, Aristotle University, which is one of the most established universities in the academic community in Europe. The city possesses the second largest and most important port in Greece, the International Fair which attracts commercial interest from all over the world, offers cultural events, theatres, Modern Art galleries, libraries, an immense variety of high standard recreational facilities and examples of modern architecture, art nouveau and eclecticism.

A few of the city's many attractions include the emblematic White Tower (15th century), the Arch of Galerius (4th century BC) with its magnificent frescoes, Thessaloniki's many churches, in particular the Rotonda (4th century) dedicated to St George, containing mosaics of the period, and the Agia Sofia (8th century), which was converted into a mosque during Ottoman rule. In 1988, 15 monuments of Thessaloniki were listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Time

Greece is 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT +2) throughout the year.

Power supply

The standard current in Greece is 220 volts. Plugs are European standard with two round pins.

Weather

During the days of the event, the weather is expected to be cloudy, with temperatures ranging from 9–10°C in the morning to a high of 17°C.

Currency

The Greek currency is EURO. Credit cards are widely used in most establishments.

What to see

Monuments & Churches

- The White Tower (seafront avenue)
- The Ancient Forum
- The Arch of Galerius (Kamara)
- The Rotonda
- Agios Demetrios Church and the crypt
- The Old Walls
- Agia Sofia Church
- The Ahiropiitos Church
- Vlatadon Monastery (Upper Town)

Museums & Galleries

- Thessaloniki Archaeological Museum
- White Tower City Museum
- The Byzantine Museum
- State Museum of Contemporary Art
- Municipal Art Gallery
- Thessaloniki Museum of Photography
- Thessaloniki Cinema Museum and Cinematique
- Folklife & Ethnological Museum of Macedonia & Thrace (Villa Giacomo Modiano)

Shopping

The city center is one of Thessaloniki's top shopping destinations, featuring a variety of malls and department stores. In addition to the city center, several popular shopping malls are located in eastern Thessaloniki near the airport, easily accessible by ring road, public transportation, and taxis.

People & Life

Thessaloniki is a popular destination, promising a pleasant and engaging stay. The locals are friendly, proficient in English, and always ready to assist. The city offers a unique atmosphere: by day, its bustling commercial and shopping areas are full of life, and by evening, its diverse array of bars, restaurants, and theaters come alive with activity. Thessaloniki is famous for its scenic location along the Thermaikos Gulf, stunning sunsets, rich history, notable monuments, fascinating museums, and exceptional cuisine.

Night out

In a city with so many bars, you'll never wonder where to grab a drink! Thessaloniki is undoubtedly the liveliest city in Northern Greece—and perhaps even in the whole country. Most bars are clustered along the old seafront on Nikis Avenue and nearby, while many tavernas can be found downtown or in the old city (Kastra). Ladadika, the vibrant neighborhood with historic warehouses by the port, also offers a lively mix of nightclubs, bars, and restaurants. For more options, head to Krini in eastern Thessaloniki, or explore the bars in large shopping centers just outside the city on the way to the airport.

Useful phone numbers

- European Emergency Number (reachable also by mobile phones) 112
- Police 100
- Tourist Police station +30 2310554870 / 2310554871
- Ambulance 166
- Fire Brigade 199

Useful links

- Municipality of Thessaloniki https://thessaloniki.gr/?lang=en
- Thessaloniki Airport Makedonia https://www.skg-airport.gr/en/
- Organisation of Urban Transportation of Thessaloniki https://www.oasth.gr/en/
- Thessaloniki Travel Guide https://thessaloniki.travel/
- Modiano Food Market https://www.agoramodiano.com/en/
- Mediterranean Cosmos Shopping Mall https://mediterraneancosmos.gr/el

Contact

Cedefop
Europe 123
Thermi, 570 01
Thessaloniki, Greece
(+30) 2310490111