


CEDEFOP

 European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

Annex I

Specifications for the 2021 ReferNet work plan

REFERNET WORK PLAN 2021

ReferNet's annual work plan for 2021 ⁽¹⁾ will be the object of a specific grant agreement based on the framework partnership agreement concluded between Cedefop and the partner.

General and specific conditions are available in the framework partnership agreement.

Deliverable type 1: Reporting on VET and VET-related policy
Deliverable type 2: Reporting on national VET systems
Deliverable type 3: Ad-hoc thematic and other support
Deliverable type 4: Visibility actions

⁽¹⁾ Start date of the annual work plan: January 2021 – end date: December 2021.

1. POLICY BACKGROUND

On 1 July 2020, the European Commission put forward a comprehensive plan to repair and prepare for the next generation Europe, including the [European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience](#). The preparation of the new European agenda was affected by the unprecedented disruption in the economies caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and in particular in education and training systems that had to respond immediately and go digital from one day to another. In 2019, the EU economy was already in the midst of a transition period, marked by weak economic dynamic and employment growth losing some momentum; the pandemic has severely disrupted labour markets and promises to bring in its wake a deep, global recession ([Cedefop, 2020](#)). Recovering from the crisis will require changes and adjustments in strategies and policies at the EU and national levels. The new plan bids on improving and adapting skills, knowledge and competences and investments in skills and education and training are now part of several financial programmes and initiatives (e.g. the [Next Generation EU](#)).

VET is at the point of convergence of numerous, if not most, forthcoming programmes and initiatives of the EU, such as the European Education Area, the Digital Education Action Plan, and will contribute to their successful implementation. The proposals for a [Council Recommendation on A Bridge to Jobs](#) and for the [Council Recommendation on VET](#) are important parts of the package and set a vision for the forthcoming decade.

With the overall aim of modernising the EU's VET policy, the proposal [for the Council Recommendation on VET](#) calls for:

- (a) streamlining the European cooperation processes and the use of the common instruments;
- (b) modernising VET systems to equally support young people and adults, people in employment and the unemployed, match the changing world of work and skills and embrace digital and green transitions;
- (c) reconfirming the central role of VET in the lifelong learning continuum with more transparency and permeability of learning pathways and more cooperation among education and training sectors and levels;
- (d) high quality VET offers, including apprenticeships and work-based learning (WBL).

The role of the common European tools for transparency, comparability, documentation and recognition of qualifications within and across borders remains important. The EQF and related comprehensive National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs), including all levels and types of qualifications, have increased common understanding and trust among qualification systems in Europe and proved efficient platforms for dialogue and communication among a wide range of stakeholders. The EQAVET and ECVET main principles are relaunched and integrated in the proposal. The new Europass supports individuals in their lifelong learning and career management.

Further work on transparency will support flexible and attractive learning pathways, help linking VET with other education paths and facilitate expanding VET to higher levels. Flexibility will be ensured through more modularisation and use of units of learning outcomes, through more systematic recognition and validation of learning outcomes.

At systems level, VET systems across the EU observe fewer clear-cut borderlines between VET for youths and adults, initial and continuing training and this calls for effective interaction between all education and training sectors in a lifelong learning perspective. For lifelong learning to become an operational reality, IVET and CVET provision must interact in more efficient and flexible ways to support individuals in their needs to progress in

education, training and learning throughout their lives. VET should become ‘age-open’ instead of ‘age-neutral’ and should address the gender imbalances. Increasing CVET offer for all types of learners could be a step towards the establishment of a lifelong learning culture.

VET needs to be agile and adaptive to the dynamic labour markets, WBL and apprenticeship continuing to be effective approaches for employability, reskilling and upskilling. VET programmes need to be more personalised and learner-centred, ensuring more engagement and ownership over learning by learners, teachers and trainers and employers. They will also adapt to prepare for the digital and green transitions: greening of VET programmes, curricula and content will go hand in hand with multi-dimensional digital strategies. Green and digital skills should become an integral part of upskilling pathways. Flexible, modern and excellent VET needs highly qualified and experienced teachers and trainers, including hybrid professionals who work both, VET institutions and companies and have most up-to-date knowledge and skills.

The proposal sets some quantitative objectives to be achieved by 2025:

- (a) the share of employed graduates should be at least 82%;
- (b) 60% of recent VET graduates benefit from exposure to WBL during their studies;
- (c) 8% of learners in VET benefit from learning mobility abroad.

Furthermore, the proposal calls for simplifying governance of the EU level that includes a monitoring framework to assess the progress towards identified objectives. The Member States are invited to define their sets of indicators and objectives for quantitative and qualitative performance monitoring of their VET systems. Cedefop in close cooperation with ETF has been monitoring the implementation of national VET reforms with valuable contribution and support of the ReferNet partners and this mandate has been reinforced and made explicit in the proposal.

[The Joint Cedefop and ETF Discussion Paper \(2020\)](#) informs the next steps in VET policy-making at EU level putting forward key challenges and opportunities for VET. Based on the intelligence, research and evidence collected over the years, the discussion paper calls for strengthening the focus of the EU VET policy on advancing CVET to meet the economic and societal challenges of the next decade states while keeping further development of IVET as essential aim.

In addition, 2020 is closing the current policy cycle of European cooperation in VET within the framework of the Copenhagen process. The synthesis report, [Enhancing European cooperation in VET: outcomes of the Riga cycle](#), has been published and the findings – to which ReferNet contributed substantially – discussed at the [joint Cedefop-ETF virtual conference](#) in June 2020 indicated the progress made on joint priorities for VET since 2015 and potential areas to focus on in the future. The German Presidency of the European Union prepares an informal [Ministerial Conference](#) in September 2020 to start the process towards the Osnabrück Declaration with the aim to reinforce the process of European cooperation in VET and define a set of concrete priority actions for the next five years.

2. PURPOSE OF THE 2021 ACTION

The above policy processes not only require regular monitoring and thematic stock-taking but increasingly also systematic country- specific information and analysis. Such analysis informs the Commission’s work on the European semester, several policy documents (e.g. the Commission’s Education and training monitor) and provides input to high-level policy relevant meetings of senior stakeholders such as Directors General (DGVET), the Advisory

Committee for Vocational Training (ACVT) and the European Commission working groups.

VET varies considerably between Member States. Analysis and understanding of policy developments and achievements within and across countries requires thorough information on how VET and labour market work. This requires timely and accurate information on VET's role, purpose, outcomes, governance and structure. Considered in its specific socio-economic and labour market context and tradition, this information helps understand countries' starting points and the progress they have made.

Wide ranging expertise is required to capture VET's role as an interface between education, employment, economic and social policies. To support evidence-based decision-making in VET, research findings, key documents and statistical data need to underpin analyses.

National ReferNet partners are well placed to inform on VET systems, VET-related challenges in their specific context and on relevant policy developments. ReferNet partners have the capacity to collect first-hand information from different stakeholders. They can also pool knowledge and experience from policy-making, implementation, evaluation and research at national, regional, local and sectoral levels.

ReferNet is also expected to help raising the visibility of Cedefop, its products and more generally VET issues at national level. The national ReferNet partner acts as multiplier and dissemination channel in the country, targeting various audiences.

National ReferNet partners' online presence, through national ReferNet websites and a professional presence on social media, can help improving visibility and dissemination. ReferNet websites also support exchanges of information with Cedefop and other national ReferNet websites.

Therefore, in 2021, Cedefop will require national ReferNet partners to:

- (a) report on VET policy and the way VET-related objectives are being addressed in their countries in line with the priorities defined in the Council Recommendation on VET, the updated European Skills Agenda and the Osnabruck Declaration;
- (b) provide up-to-date information on VET systems;
- (c) deliver thematic and other support to complement the information on VET systems and/or address topical information needs; and
- (d) carry out visibility activities, including maintenance and update of a national ReferNet site.

3. DELIVERABLES

Deliverable type 1: Reporting on VET and VET-related policy	
Deliverable 1a	VET policy reporting
Deliverable 1b	Ex-ante evaluation for the Timeline of policy developments
Deliverable 1c	National news on VET
Deliverable type 2: Reporting on national VET systems	
Deliverable 2a	VET in Europe database – updating information about VET systems
Deliverable 2b	<i>VET in [Presidency country] – Short description</i> (hard-copy publication based on the VET in Europe country report)
Deliverable 2c	<i>Spotlight on VET in [Presidency country]</i>
Deliverable type 3: Ad-hoc thematic and other support	
Deliverable 3a	Article on Supporting VET teachers and trainers [Thematic perspective series]
Deliverable 3b	Ad hoc thematic support – Article or other request
Deliverable type 4: Visibility actions	
Deliverable 4a	Visibility actions including maintenance and update of a national ReferNet website, social media activities and participation in events

All deliverables type 1-3 shall be checked and validated by the National Representative for ReferNet before delivery to Cedefop.

Peer review among ReferNet partners is strongly encouraged and, when indicated in the Work plan, shall be mandatory for certain deliverables.

All deliverables shall be provided in English. They shall be checked by a native speaker or a professional language editing service familiar with the relevant terminology used at EU level before submission.

Rules for citations, bibliographies and lists of references:

1. MS Word file

- **Uses endnote fields for all in-text citations as well as bibliographies and/or lists of references**
- **Uses Cedefop's publications template**
- **Follows Cedefop's referencing guide and style manual**

2. References file

- **Includes all references mentioned in MS Word file**
- **Format: preferably endnote format (.enl) if EndNote format not possible, RIS format (.ris) is ok**

Deliverable type 1: Reporting on VET and VET-related policy

Deliverable 1a VET policy reporting

Background/Aim

In 2021, ReferNet will be asked to provide updated information on progress towards the five medium-term deliverables (MTDs) set out in the Riga Conclusions. ReferNet will provide factual data on national policy measures and actions taken in 2020.

This input will inform country fiches and overviews of trends by deliverable and/or focus areas. Findings will be used to inform the European Commission Education and Training Monitor, discussions of Directors General (DGVT) and the Advisory Committee for VET (ACVT) at their biennial meetings. Where relevant, they will also be used for other Cedefop work.

Methods

Cedefop will provide ReferNet partners with the tool(VET REF) and guidelines to

- report on all five Riga MTDs, and
- provide more elaborate information on MTDs and focus areas that their countries are prioritising.

Building on the experience gained from the last information collection round, Cedefop's analysis of the input received and the ReferNet partners suggestions, the approach will be adjusted.

To understand VET policy developments requires collecting data in a structured way as well as information in response to 'open' questions that allow explaining comprehensive strategies which address more than one deliverable.

These key points are to ensure that the information provided clearly indicates

- concise background information and the main objectives of the policy action;
- the type and stage of development of the policy action;
- key stakeholders involved;
- in what way the new measure changes arrangements (previously) in place;
- results that have been identified.

Reporting should draw on a wide range of sources, including policy papers, legislation, evaluation reports, research and policy analysis as well as case studies. This also requires broad cooperation with various national stakeholders, mobilising their expertise, and preparing and validating the responses. Customised online meetings may also be organised between Cedefop and ReferNet partners to get a better understanding of latest national developments in VET.

Information shall be checked and validated by the national representative for ReferNet before delivery to Cedefop.

Information shall be provided in English. It shall be checked by a native speaker or a professional language editing service familiar with the relevant terminology used at the EU level before submission.

Cedefop may also seek feedback to its own analysis of progress at country level and ask ReferNet as well as DGVT/ACVT to validate the information.

Steps/Deadlines

The process will be deployed from January 2021 on with a deadline to deliver the requested information by end of February 2021. These timing arrangements are needed to enable discussion on initial findings with ACVTs and DGVTS and to support the Commission's work related to VET.

Cedefop will provide assistance and feedback throughout the process and ask for clarification/complementary information when analysing the input during the period from March to May.

Deliverable 1b Ex-ante evaluation for the Timeline of policy developments

Background/Aim

As agreed in the 2019 ReferNet partnership forums in Malta and Bergen and in the 2019 ReferNet working group in Thessaloniki, Cedefop will be designing a database presenting a Timeline of policy developments in Europe. The timeline would provide an overview of national policy developments and their implementation. An ex-ante evaluation in 2021 is part of this process.

Methods/Steps

Evaluation will comprise identification of the target groups and their needs through an online questionnaire.

Cedefop will design the questionnaire (*) that will require up to 20 minutes to fill in. The answers should be provided in English. The questionnaire will be seeking to discover stakeholder expectations about the to-be-designed database and its elements.

ReferNet partners will be asked to:

- fill in and submit the online questionnaire;
- in addition to ReferNet submission, identify 5-7 national stakeholders (**) and ask them to participate in the survey (send a link to the questionnaire (***) with a short note in the national language(s));
- provide support/clarifications to the stakeholders; this may include assistance in translating questions/answers;
- if needed, remind stakeholders of this exercise and ask them to submit responses to Cedefop.

Cedefop will analyse the data and may ask ReferNet partners to provide feedback on the analysis, e.g. in the 2021 partnership forum(s).

(*) Selected ReferNet members may be asked to provide their feedback for a pilot questionnaire.

(**) Including representatives from ministries (education and labour) and other public bodies dealing with VET policy making and implementation, academia and social partners.

(***) Cedefop will generate the link(s).

The online questionnaire will be available for dissemination in March 2021.

Deliverable 1c National news on VET

ReferNet partners provide short news items to inform non-national readers on recent VET and VET-related developments in their countries. These include issues that are clearly linked to VET, e.g. labour market developments influencing VET provision, employment policies linked to training, guidance and counselling, validation.

News items should focus on topics that relate to the European VET policy agenda, particularly the priorities of European cooperation in VET, the European skills agenda, EU Presidency priorities as well as country-specific recommendations in relevant areas. Cedefop will provide ReferNet with guiding themes.

National news on VET will be disseminated via Cedefop's newsletter and website and/or magazine. They will also inform other Cedefop work where relevant, e.g. country fiches/chapters, thematic studies, discussions at DGVT and ACVT meetings or other events; they may also inspire proposals for country examples to be presented at EU-level events.

Methods

ReferNet partners submit news items electronically, as Word documents. These should not exceed 500 words and consider the characteristics of effective online content and style. Complementary information may be added as attachment or through links to related websites. Visual material (graphs, logos, photos, etc.) is welcome, provided it is in editable format and does not violate copyright.

It is ReferNet's responsibility to ensure that the information presented is original, recent, relevant, reliable and complete. Information shall be checked and validated by the national representative for ReferNet before delivery to Cedefop.

News items shall be provided in English. They shall be checked by a native speaker or a professional language editing service familiar with the relevant terminology used at the EU level before submission.

Cedefop reserves the right to publish the news items on Cedefop website or not based on a set of basic criteria agreed with ReferNet and described in the relevant Guidelines/Circular. News items that do not comply with the basic criteria, will not be accepted by Cedefop and can be corrected and resubmitted once.

Cedefop may request clarification and/or further information or revision. Cedefop may also seek feedback after editing or on information it has prepared based on news items.

Steps/Deadlines

ReferNet partners should submit news items as soon as national/regional developments in VET take place and not less than three news items per year. Guidelines will be provided by Cedefop in February.

Deadlines: March, June and October 2021

Deliverable type 2: Reporting on national VET systems

Understanding national VET systems, their characteristics, developments and priorities is a key element at different levels of the VET coordination and development process; it is a prerequisite for comparative work and analysis. Short descriptions of national VET systems based on ReferNet input are a comprehensive information source also used for or referred to in policy documents and reports by EU and international institutions, as Cedefop's performance measurement system demonstrates. In addition, Spotlights on VET in the EU Member States, Iceland and Norway, summarise key features of the national systems.

In 2021, ReferNet partners will be asked to:

- update information about VET systems in the VET in Europe database;
- (for Slovenia and France only) prepare, in cooperation with Cedefop,
 - *VET in [Presidency country] – Short description*, and
 - *Spotlight on VET*.

Close cooperation will be needed between Cedefop and ReferNet partners to discuss and finalise type 2 deliverables. Site visits in the countries may be organised between Cedefop representatives and national VET stakeholders to get an in-depth understanding of latest national developments and VET system characteristics. Customised online meetings may also be organised on request from either party, to discuss and clarify issues for the finalisation of the deliverables.

Deliverable 2a VET in Europe database – updating information about VET systems

Background/Aim

In December 2019, Cedefop in cooperation with ReferNet launched the [VET in Europe database](#) – an online tool that showcases 35 VET systems, generates more than 2500 pages of data structured by theme, including VET system charts and detailed information about each VET programme type, and allows comparing VET systems and downloading national reports.

In 2021, the database will be updated to reflect the most recent developments in VET systems in Europe.

Method

Cedefop will provide ReferNet partners with a Word document with the pre-filled 2019 data (identical to the online data). ReferNet partners will be asked to follow instructions provided in the document and update the information about their VET system(s) with the cut-off date 2021.

Data shall be provided in English in track changes to the original file. After receiving the data, Cedefop may come back to ReferNet partners to clarify the information provided.

Based on the updated text, ReferNet partners will also propose changes to the VET system charts as comments to PDF files that will be made available to them.

After the data and charts are finalised, they will be transferred to the database by Cedefop. ReferNet partners will be asked to make the final check of the online data for any inconsistencies or errors.

Steps/Deadlines

The pre-filled Word document and PDF file with system charts will be made available to ReferNet partners in April 2021.

ReferNet will submit the updated data to Cedefop by 31 August 2021.

ReferNet will check the final version of online data and report any hiccups to Cedefop in November-December 2021.

Deliverable 2b *VET in [Presidency country] – Short description* (hard-copy publication based on VET in [country X])

Background/Aim

To raise VET visibility in the countries holding the EU Presidency, Cedefop and ReferNet partners cooperate to publish hard copies based on their updated most recent VET in Europe reports. The reports will be published in English and, if Cedefop and the partner wish so, in the official language(s) of the Presidency.

As this publication should be available for the Presidency, it is prepared during the preceding semester. In 2021, work will focus on:

1. VET in Slovenia, in the first semester
2. VET in France, in the second semester

These hard-copy publications will be distributed together with Spotlights (see Deliverable 2c) during Presidency conferences and events, for instance meetings of DGVT.

Methods

Cedefop and ReferNet partners of the future Presidency country will discuss the structure of the Short Description. ReferNet will prepare updated information based on the VET in Europe database to present the information within around 50 pages. ReferNet will prepare updated information for the report in consultation with Cedefop.

Cedefop will review and edit the document, add other parts (foreword, abstract) and be in charge of the publication process. Cedefop may organise translation of the publication into the official language of the Presidency country. Printing will be done on demand.

Preparing the Short Description entails close cooperation between the ReferNet partner and Cedefop. This may include joint working sessions at the ReferNet partner's seat or at Cedefop.

Making the Short Description an informative and attractive publication for international stakeholders will improve the visibility of the country's VET system and inform the Presidency conferences and events.

Steps/Deadlines

Detailed work plan and submission date to be agreed bilaterally with Cedefop experts.

Deliverable 2c *Spotlight on VET in [Presidency country]*

Background/Aim

Spotlight on VET summarises key features, challenges and developments within the national VET systems. They include a chart which depicts how VET relates to other education and training sectors. The main aim of *Spotlight on VET* is to present a country's VET system in a 'nutshell', i.e. within a few pages and in clear and simple language. It addresses readers who need a brief, easy-to-read introduction to VET in a specific country, and the broader public.

In 2021, Cedefop will publish *Spotlight on VET* in presidency countries only: Slovenia and France. They will be published in hard copy and disseminated during Presidency events.

Methods

ReferNet will prepare updated information based on the 2020 Compilation of *Spotlight on VET*.

The ReferNet national partner will ensure that *Spotlight* highlights key features, developments, challenges and policy responses of the national VET system. The partner will work in close cooperation with Cedefop and shall submit *Spotlight* electronically, in Word format and using 'track changes'.

Updated information should be checked and validated by the national representative for ReferNet before delivery to Cedefop.

Cedefop will provide feedback to the ReferNet partner to ensure that information is presented in a concise and clear manner.

Cedefop will take care of the publication process for the hard-copy versions. Cedefop may organise the translation of the hard-copy publication into the official language(s) of the Presidency country. Printing will be done on demand.

Steps/Deadlines

Detailed work plan and submission date should be agreed with the Cedefop expert in charge. The publication needs to be prepared in the preceding semester and should be ready for the start of the Presidency.

Deliverable type 3: Ad-hoc thematic and other support

Deliverable 3a Article on Supporting VET teachers and trainers

Purpose and scope

The purpose of the articles is to gather updated information regarding systematic national approaches to, and opportunities for, initial and continuing professional development (CDP) of VET teachers, trainers and mentors in both school and work-based settings.

The articles should be an updated version of the articles prepared in 2015 and published in 2016, available here: <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/networks/refernet/thematic-perspectives/supporting-teachers-and-trainers>

They should describe the situation in the country; national definitions of the key terms ‘teachers’, ‘trainers’ and ‘mentors’; give a clear snapshot of the teaching professionals that work in initial VET, including apprenticeship schemes and how their professional development is organised and supported ⁽²⁾.

The article should cover national strategies and policies, guidelines and frameworks as well as major initiatives supported by EU funding (Erasmus +, European Structural and Investment Fund, etc.).

While describing the actual situation in the country, the article should highlight policy and practice developments of the last five years 2015-2020.

Cedefop will analyse the information and map the situation in the Member States to create a basis for mapping developments from 2015 to 2020.

Cedefop may decide to produce and publish a synthesis paper drawing from all articles.

The articles will also serve as background material to support [the new feasibility study on a European survey to teachers and trainers](#).

Initial VET is understood as vocational education and training aimed at equipping people with knowledge, skills and competences necessary to enter particular occupations or more broadly the labour market ⁽³⁾.

Depending on the country’s VET system, different categories of VET teaching professionals can exist, such as:

- (a) teachers of general and vocational theoretical subjects in VET schools/centres,

⁽²⁾ In case of decentralised systems, the article should describe general approaches and frameworks applied to support VET professionals.

⁽³⁾ As countries can have specific definitions of initial VET, they should use their own, clearly stating it in the introduction of the article. It is recommended to consult [VET in Europe country reports](#) to identify and present the IVET programmes in your country.

- (b) teachers of practical subjects in school workshops or simulated learning environments,
- (c) apprentice tutors (mentors) in companies,
- (d) practical training instructors who accompany students during work-based learning parts of the school-based programmes, which take place in companies, etc.

As it is not possible to list all categories of teachers for each country, please choose and describe all relevant categories that apply in your country's initial VET system. The categories should be clearly stated and defined in the introduction to the article.

Methods

ReferNet will conduct the activity in accordance with guidelines provided by Cedefop.

Information shall be checked and validated by the national representative for ReferNet before delivery to Cedefop.

Information shall be provided in English. It shall be checked by a native speaker or a professional language editing service familiar with the relevant terminology used at the EU level before submission.

Steps/Deadlines

Cedefop plans to share guidelines and structure of the article in March 2021.

Deadline for submission of the articles: June 2021.

Deliverable 3b Ad-hoc thematic support Article or other request

To respond to topical information needs, this activity aims to address VET-specific issues of European relevance nationally or at EU level. The activity may not be the same for all partners. Requests will be driven by Cedefop's work on VET and related issues in the countries for the collection, analysis or presentation of information either in hard copy or electronic format.

Background/Aim

The activity could take the form of ⁽⁴⁾:

- articles,
- verification of information,
- surveys,
- organising meetings,
- mobilising stakeholders, or

⁽⁴⁾ All activities will imply approximately the same workload.

- any other format having comparative or analytical aims. The activity will tackle a specific issue selected for its actuality and European policy relevance, for instance the Presidencies' semester themes to support the Copenhagen process or ad-hoc requests on thematic information on issues that are high on the EU agenda. It may also focus on in-depth reviews involving one or more countries.

This activity is planned to feed into:

- Cedefop's contribution to the discussions of the Directors General for VET and the Advisory Committee for VET,
- other policy forums, as needed,
- Cedefop's own research work and its contribution to the work of the European Commission and its thematic working groups or similar activities.

Methods

ReferNet will conduct the activity in accordance with guidelines provided by Cedefop. Whenever possible, Cedefop will involve ReferNet in defining them. However, type and degree of involvement will depend on the given parameters.

In case the activity involves delivering an article or a survey, information should be checked and validated by the national representative for ReferNet before delivering it to Cedefop.

All information shall be provided in English. It shall be checked by a native speaker or a professional language editing service familiar with the relevant terminology used at EU level before submission

Steps/deadlines

ReferNet will be informed about the theme and the format of the activity as soon as they have been defined.

Deliverable type 4: Visibility actions

Deliverable 4a Visibility actions, including maintenance and update of a national ReferNet website, social media activities and participation in events

Background/Aim

Partners will act as multipliers and dissemination channels for VET-related information and the cooperation between Cedefop and ReferNet at the national level, targeting various audiences.

Cedefop intends to increase the visibility of Cedefop/ReferNet outputs by making potential users aware of the quality, reliability and relevance of the information and analysis they provide.

The visibility strategy, currently based on recommendations developed in 2012 by the ReferNet working group on visibility and agreed by Cedefop and ReferNet partners, also includes recommendations for ReferNet national websites following the ReferNet workshop on visibility (February 2017). New strategic aspects will also be explored among ReferNet partners as a follow-up of the recommendations of the ex-post evaluation of the ReferNet FPA 2012-2015.

National ReferNet partners will be ready to adapt visibility and dissemination activities to Cedefop's strategy and annual objectives, and include in their annual work plans other deliverables, such as translations of Cedefop products into national language, organisation of meetings with VET stakeholders on Cedefop activities, cooperation with other European or global networks, etc to raise the visibility of Cedefop, its products and more generally VET issues at national level. Translations into national languages are strongly encouraged as an efficient dissemination and visibility tool.

Methods

A **national ReferNet website** in the national language plus English, if the national ReferNet partner wishes to do so, will be regularly maintained and updated to raise visibility of VET and Cedefop's activities in the member states. The national ReferNet website can be autonomously hosted on its own domain or a dedicated section in the ReferNet national partner's website. It is considered an essential tool allowing for a broad national audience to become aware of and use Cedefop publications through the creation of links to Cedefop webportal.

In 2017, Cedefop has provided technical SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) audit reports with recommendations for national websites on search visibility, domain authority, keyword rank, desktop and mobile page speed, mobile usability and external links to optimise their visibility online. Partners are expected to implement the recommendations gradually. Reporting of the web statistics will allow Cedefop and the partners to evaluate the impact of the various efforts.

National ReferNet websites can be accessed from

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/about-cedefop/networks/refernet/3314.aspx>

To reach a wider audience at the national level, ReferNet partners are encouraged to translate and disseminate Cedefop publications in their national language(s). Cedefop may also ask partners to carry out the **language adaptation** of a specific Cedefop publication or audiovisual content.

It is also recommended to use the full potential of other types of online presence, for example professional participation in **social media**, tagging Cedefop events, blogging online, discussions in VET forums, to reach a wider audience. National ReferNet social media accounts are encouraged to follow/like Cedefop's social media accounts, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and retweet/share/view Cedefop's posts to enhance visibility, including by translating them in the national language. ReferNet partners should use Hashtag [#refernet](https://twitter.com/refernet) to connect with users and engage conversations with partners. Cross-promotion of all partners' activities will also be encouraged.

Visibility actions will also include the dissemination and/or production of papers, flyers, newsletters, web banners, videos, etc. and the organisation of – and participation in – **public events** involving relevant stakeholders.

Steps/Deadlines

Continuous activity.

Cedefop will annually review the national websites and report on their status and progress.

A survey on all visibility actions carried out at the national level, including details on the audience targeted, the channels used, possibly the outcomes of the action, will be filled in by the ReferNet partner at the end of the 2021 action.

BUDGET AVAILABLE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REFERNET 2021 WORK PLAN

The total available budget for ReferNet work plan 2021 in all eligible countries ⁽⁵⁾ is approximately EUR 980.000.

The total available budget for ReferNet work plan 2021 is distributed as follows ⁽⁶⁾:

Country groups	Maximum grant amount
<u>Country group 1:</u> Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovenia and Iceland	EUR 23 615
<u>Country group 2:</u> Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and Norway	EUR 33 625
<u>Country group 3:</u> France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain	EUR 43 620

See also the Call for proposals full text, in particular the general and specific financial conditions of the Framework partnership agreement. Cedefop reserves the right not to award the total budget available.

⁽⁵⁾ EU-27, Iceland and Norway

⁽⁶⁾ The allocated amount may not under any circumstances exceed the amounts indicated in the table.

2021 DRAFT TIMETABLE

Start date of the annual work plan: January 2021

End date of the annual work plan: December 2021

Duration of the annual work plan: 12 months

Activity	Deadline/Frequency
1. Reporting on VET and VET-related policy	
1a. VET policy reporting	End February 2021
1b. Ex-ante evaluation for the Timeline of policy developments	April 2021
1c. National news on VET	March, June and October, or more frequently on own initiative
2. Reporting on VET systems	
2a. VET in Europe database – updating information on VET systems	31 August 2021
2b. <i>VET in [Presidency country]</i> (hard-copy publication based on the VET in Europe country report)	To be agreed with Cedefop experts (Slovenia and France)
2c. <i>Spotlight on VET</i> in [Presidency country]	To be agreed with Cedefop experts (Slovenia and France)
3. Ad-hoc thematic and other support	
3a. Article on supporting VET teachers and trainers	15 June 2021
3b. Ad hoc thematic support – Article or other request	Theme still open
4. Visibility actions	
4a. Visibility actions, including maintenance and update of a national ReferNet website, social media activities and participation in events	Continuous