

BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

Open public consultation on the evaluation of the four EU agencies falling under the remit of DG Employment (Eurofound, Cedefop, ETF and EU-OSHA)

Purpose of this public consultation.

This consultation seeks feedback from the citizens and stakeholders of the four decentralized EU agencies falling under the remit of DG Employment: the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working conditions (Eurofound); the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop); the European Training Foundation (ETF); and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA). An open public consultation to support the external evaluation of the ETF has already been conducted, from April to June 2016¹. Therefore, this consultation mostly focuses on Eurofound, Cedefop, and EU-OSHA. Nevertheless, the questions on the cross-cutting and prospective assessment include as well the ETF.

Decentralised agencies have been set up by the EU to perform technical and scientific tasks that help the EU institutions implement policies and take decisions. They are located in many Member States and work on issues and problems affecting the everyday lives of the 500m people living in the EU. They have a major impact in areas as diverse as the food we eat, our medicines, the chemicals we come into contact with, our education, the quality of our working lives & environment, justice, transport, safety, security and our fundamental rights. In particular, these are the main missions of the four agencies under the remit of DG Employment and Social Inclusion:

- **Eurofound's** main mission is to carry out research in the area of employment, industrial relations, living and working conditions, to assist in the development of better social, employment and work-related policies. Eurofound is located in Dublin, Ireland. The Agency has around 110 staff, and an annual budget of 21 million euro.
- **Cedefop's** main mission is to assist the European Commission in encouraging the promotion and development of vocational education and training (VET) and in-service training at EU level. The Agency also aims to contribute to the implementation of a common vocational training policy at national level. Cedefop is located in Thessaloniki, Greece. It has around 122 staff, and an annual budget of 18 million euro.
- **EU-OSHA's** main mission is to raise awareness and advance knowledge of occupational safety and health (OSH). The Agency develops, gathers and provides reliable and relevant information, analysis and tools to facilitate the exchange of information and good practice, serving the needs of those involved in OSH at EU and national levels. EU-OSHA is located in Bilbao, Spain. It has around 66 staff and an annual budget of 16.7 million euro.

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=333&langId=en&consultId=23&visib=0&furtherConsult=yes>

- **ETF** aims to contribute to the improvement of lifelong learning and the development of individuals' skills and competences. This is achieved through the development of VET systems in EU partner countries within the Southern and Eastern European Neighbourhood²; the Enlargement region covered by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance³; and a number of countries in Central Asia⁴. ETF is located in Turin, Italy. It has around 130 staff and an annual budget of 20 million euro.

In order to know more about the mandates, objectives and activities of each Agency you are invited to consult the following Agencies' webpages:

EUROFOUND: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/>;

CEDEFOP: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/>;

ETF: <http://www.etf.europa.eu/>

EU-OSHA: <https://osha.europa.eu/>

The evaluation of Eurofound, Cedefop, ETF and EU-OSHA

The purpose of this external evaluation of Eurofound, Cedefop, ETF and EU-OSHA is to assess their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and added value, both individually and from a cross-cutting perspective, identifying potential synergies and overlaps in their mandates, objectives and activities. The scope of the evaluation covers:

- The **operation** of Eurofound, Cedefop, ETF and EU-OSHA, and similar tasks performed by the European Commission, by other EU decentralised agencies (such as FRA and EIGE), and by other relevant EU instruments and networks (such as Eurydice);
- An evaluation of the changes that occurred during the **period 2011-2016**, based on a comparison of the situation before 2011 and at the end of 2016;
- **A retrospective analysis** (an assessment of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and EU added value of the agencies' performance) **and a prospective analysis** (of potential relevant changes that would help the agencies to better achieve their objectives, or which could deliver efficiency gains or other potential changes including rationalisation).

The Common Approach on EU decentralised agencies, published in 2012, aims to improve the coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and transparency of the EU decentralised agencies. In line with the Common Approach, on 23 August 2016, the European Commission published three proposals for the revision of the Founding Regulations of Eurofound, Cedefop

² Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestine, Russia, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine.

³ Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland (until 2015), Kosovo (*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence), Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey.

⁴ Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

(from 1975) and EU-OSHA (from 1994). These revisions offer each of the three agencies the opportunity to update its respective objectives, tasks and activities in order to better reflect recent societal, institutional and economic developments, and respond to new needs. The evaluation of the four agencies will provide new evidence and specific recommendations on other changes to their structure and operation. The evaluation will also help to assess whether further revisions are required to the agencies' Founding Regulations.

Scope of the open public consultation

This public consultation constitutes a key part of the overall consultation activities carried out in the context of the evaluation of the four agencies under the remit of DG EMPL. It complements other targeted consultation activities, including interviews, surveys, case studies and workshops.

All citizens, public and private organisations are welcomed to contribute to this consultation, to ensure that the process remains inclusive, transparent, effective and coherent. Contributions are sought in particular from stakeholders of Eurofound, Cedefop and EU-OSHA during the period 2011-2016.

The consultation process aims to collect information and opinions from the general public and stakeholders on the work of the Agencies, particularly 1) on the future of the agencies, gathering new ideas on issues central to their future, including governance issues, and comparing alternative policy options, and 2) on assessing how useful the agencies have been with regard to the following evaluation criteria:

- **Relevance:** assessing the extent to which the work of Eurofound, Cedefop and EU-OSHA is relevant, with respect to the EU's current needs and to the emerging challenges it faces. Respondents are asked to provide their views on the extent to which the agencies properly address the issues faced in the policy areas that are relevant to their work.
- **Effectiveness:** assessing the extent to which the actions and activities of the four agencies have achieved their objectives, and whether they have had an impact on their specific sectors, and on society at large.
- **Efficiency:** determining whether the intended outputs and results of the four agencies have been efficiently achieved. The public consultation aims to gather opinions and views on the costs and benefits of the simplification and harmonisation of the agencies' work.
- **Coherence:** gathering opinions on the perceived coherence of the four agencies' mandates and activities between themselves, as well as with respect to other bodies that have similar objectives. The consultation also aims to identify potential synergies and complementarities between the activities of the four agencies, and to highlight the risk of duplication between their work and the work of other agencies and actors.
- **EU added value:** gathering opinions on the perceived additional value provided by the activities of the four agencies, compared to what could be achieved by Member States at national, regional and local levels. Questions also focus on the perceived consequences of the termination of the agencies.
- **Cross-cutting issues:** the public consultation includes questions relating to relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence and added value, with a particular focus on synergies and overlaps between agencies. This aims to provide the best outline for the future,

having analysed different scenarios, including the scenario that the agencies do not continue to exist as separate EU agencies.

Results of this consultation:

Once the online public consultation has ended, the contributions made by stakeholders and general public will be published in the languages in which they were submitted. In parallel, a consultation report will be published on DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion website, summarising the key issues and results raised in the consultation. The results of the consultation will also be used to support the Staff Working Document presenting the final results of this evaluation, thereby better informing policy making.