

# EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

## STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE EFTA STATES

Ref. 16-6283  
7 March 2017

### SUBCOMMITTEE IV ON FLANKING AND HORIZONTAL POLICIES

#### EEA EFTA Comment

#### **on the Commission proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing CEDEFOP and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 337/75**

1. The EEA EFTA States welcome and support the Commission proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing CEDEFOP and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 337/75. Once adopted, the new regulation will not only align the existing regulation with the Common Approach on Decentralised Agencies, but also bring the objectives and tasks of CEDEFOP in line with its actual activities and with developments in the field of vocational education and training.
2. The EEA EFTA States have cooperated with CEDEFOP – the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training – for over 20 years. The current founding regulation on CEDEFOP is included in Protocol 31 to the EEA Agreement on cooperation outside the four freedoms, according to which “appropriate cooperation between the competent organizations, institutions and other bodies in their respective territories” shall be encouraged “where this would contribute to the strengthening and broadening of cooperation”. In this spirit, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway concluded a framework agreement with CEDEFOP in 1994, allowing them participation in CEDEFOP’s activities and representation on the Management Board of the agency.
3. Over the past 20 years, the EEA EFTA States and CEDEFOP have engaged in a range of successful cooperation projects, such as the European Forum on Transparency of Vocational Qualifications, the validation of non-formal and informal learning, CEDEFOP’s European network for vocational education and training (ReferNet), the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), the Study Visits Programme, Europass, and forecasting skill demand and supply.
4. Cooperation between the EEA EFTA States and CEDEFOP under the bilateral framework agreement has worked smoothly and led to many fruitful projects. The EEA EFTA States would therefore support the continuation of this cooperation under the same terms. The EEA EFTA States also welcome the fact that Article 29 of the CEDEFOP proposal opens for the possibility to cooperate with organisations in the EFTA States, in the spirit of Article 4(6) of Protocol 31 EEA.