EFVET Newsletter

December 2005

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Message from the President (December 2005)

14th Annual EfVET Conference in Hungary

The conference in Budapest has been a very pleasant event. I want to thank the local organisers for their efforts and pleasant cooperation! I thank participants for their active participation and their feedback, either orally, or by mail or by the evaluation questionnaire on the internet.

The increased timeslots for roundtables have been appreciated, although about half of the respondents would have liked more workshops, or some of the workshops repeated. There has been the comment that the workshops could have been more focused and connected to the conference theme.

The social events have been very productive, quite a few members have used these to set up new projects and learn from each other. There was some demand for more free time.

Plenary sessions are still not participants’ favourites, but opinions are rather mixed. I do personally think that we need a few plenary presentations and certainly an annual overview of EU policies.

Dr. Stylianos Mavromoustakos is the local organiser of the next conference in Cyprus, that will take place from 25 to 29 October 2006. Pre-registration is possible through the form on our webpage www.efvet.org – surf to Conferences and than to EFVET 2006 Conference in Cyprus

EfVET Web

EfVET’s web gets about 40.000 hits per year. Kasper and Kent Andersen have been working hard to implement a completely new website. Its “hidden” structure provides a lot of possibilities for members and member-projects. Kasper and Kent will inform you gradually about these possibilities.
One of the innovations is the local search tool. You will find a Google logo in the left lower corner. Herewith you can search within the EfVET site and inside all the documents posted on our web. It is not the general Google search on the web.

We will evaluate the website at the next Steering Committee meeting by the end of January. If you have any comments on the new website, please do not hesitate to inform our webmaster Kent Andersen at ka@ots.dk

**EQF Consultation Paper July 2005**


A working party of EfVET is preparing a comment on the proposed framework. Members will receive a draft and have the possibility to react. However, time is short.

**Dissemination conference Information Society and Sustainable Rural Development & Sustainable Rural Tourism**

I had the pleasure to address the dissemination conference of the Leonardo-project “Information Society and Sustainable Rural Development & Sustainable Rural Tourism”, EFET being a dissemination partner. Details of the conference – including my own presentation - and the materials developed can be downloaded from the project website: [http://www.elearn-europe.com/trans-rural/conference/index.shtml](http://www.elearn-europe.com/trans-rural/conference/index.shtml)

**30 Years of Cedefop, Goodbye to Johan van Rens,, Aviana Maria Bulgarelli new director**

On 8th September 2005, CEDEFOP celebrated the 30th anniversary of its founding and the 10th anniversary of its arrival in Thessaloniki. A seminar was organised to see what we can learn about the history of vocational education and training(VET), especially in relation to the EU priorities in this field, such as more investment in human resources. The event was marked with the farewell to Johan van Rens as CEDEFOP's director and the introduction of Aviana Maria Bulgarelli as new Director of CEDEFOP. Johan has played an important role in making CEDEFOP's work much more relevant for the development of VET and its role in Europe. I have expressed my thanks to Johan for this and for the support EfVET has been given by CEDEFOP and the direct way of communicating between our organisations.

**Businet conference**

I was invited to address the recent Businet conference. A network of active business-oriented schools, managers and teachers, mainly in the tertiary domain. See [http://businet.org.uk/public/76.asp?PUB_Key=76](http://businet.org.uk/public/76.asp?PUB_Key=76) or details, including my own presentation to the conference.

**EfVET meets Ján Figel’ at EUCIS Meeting in Paris**

Our vice president Pete Hodgson and myself represented EfVET to meet the EU commissioner for Education and Culture Mr Ján Figel’ and members of his Cabinet in Paris. We had intensive and very fruitful discussions.

Mr Figel’ joined members of the EUCIS (European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning, EFET being a member of EUCIS) and visited the Salon de l’Education in Paris. He joined Mr Guy Bono, vice president of the Education and Culture Commission of the European Parliament and the Ambassador of the Uk (the current EU chair) to discuss the EU activities in the area of Life Long Learning. More information about EUCIS at [http://www.eucis.net/about.asp](http://www.eucis.net/about.asp)

Mobilising Experience
I was invited to address the "Mobilising Experience" conference under the UK presidency. The conference explored the concept of "valorisation" and ways to improve the use of best practices and informed knowledge of practise in the VET community. Presentations and conclusions can be found at http://www.elwa.org.uk/elwaweb/elwa.aspx?pageid=4520

Keep up to date on European Policies
In case you may have forgotten, the site with information on European VET policies starts at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/et_2010_en.html

I wish you all a nice wintertime.
Hans F. van Aalst
President
president@efvet.org

Message du Président (decembre 2005)

14ème Conférence Annuelle en Hongrie

La conference à Budapest a été une experience vraiment agreeable. Je voudrai remercier tous les organisateurs pour leurs efforts et leur cooperation. Je remercie les participants pour leur participation active et leur evaluation de la conference, soit orale, soit du questionnaire sur l'Internert.

Tout le monde a apprecié les tables rondes plus longues. Cependant la moitié des personnes interrogées aurait préféré plus d'ateliers et la repetition de certains des ateliers. On a constaté que les ateliers aurait pu être plus au point et plus lies au theme de la conference.

Le programme social a été très fructueux. Plusieurs membres ont pu établir de nouveaux projets. On a demandé plus de temps libre

Des sessions plénières ont provoqué des opinions mixtes. Personnellement, je pense que nous avons besoin d'un certain nombre de presentations plénières et une vue d'ensemble annuelle des politiques européennes.

Dr Stylianos Mavromoustakos est l’organisateur en chef de notre prochaine conference au Chypre, qui aura lieu du 25 au 29 octobre 2006 Pour réserver votre place, accèdez au site web www.efvet.org

HYPERLINK EfVET Web

Notre site reçoit 40000 “hits” par an. Kasper et Kent Andersen ont travaillé dur pour créer un site web neuf. Sa structure 'cachée fournit plusieurs possibilités aux membres et aux projets des membres.

Une des innovations est un outil pour chercher de l’information. Vous trouverez un logo Google en bas à gauche. Vous pouvez explorer notre site. Ce n’est pas possible d’accéder au site general Google.

Nous évaluerons le site web pendant notre comité de pilotage à la fin de janvier. Si vous avez des suggestions pour notre site, contactez Kent Andersen – ka@ots.dk
La Commission Européenne a lancé une consultation sur le European Qualifications Framework. Vous en trouverez les détails:


Un groupe de travail de l’EfVET prepare une réponse à la consultation.

Conférence de dissemination Information Society et Sustainable Rural Development et Sustainable Rural Tourism

Détails de cette conference sur le site web


30 ans de Cédéfop – Au revoir à Johan van Rens

Le 8 septembre 2005 Cédéfop a célébré son 30ème anniversaire de sa fondation et le 10ème anniversaire de son arrive à Thessaloniki. Nous avons dit au revoir à Johan van Rens et nous avons accueilli son successeur Aviana Maria Bulgarelli.
EFVET aura la grande possibilité de travailler avec Cédéfop qui joue un rôle indispensable au développement de la formation professionnelle européenne.

L’EfVET rencontre Jan Figuel à la Réunion EUCIS à Paris

Avec Pete Hodgson, notre vice-président nous avons rencontré Jan Figel, le Commissaire pour l’Education et la Formation et membres de son cabinet et nous avons eu des discussions fructueuses.
Pour trouver des details de ‘EUCIS‘ voyez http://www.eucis.net/about.asp

From the Treasurer

The membership fee for 2006

Last 02 December 2005 the invoices for the membership fee for the year 2006 were sent out to you. I would like to remind the members that payment should take place within 30 days of receipt: an agreement that was made in the AGM in Helsinki in 1998. If you keep to this it will save us the quite expensive exercise of having to sent out reminder invoices.

The Data base: Highly important !!

To keep the database up to date we urge you to inform the Central Office of any changes in the information of your organisation: efvet@efvet.org
We are in the process of moving our Central Server to the USA, so the “edit possibility” is not available at the moment. As soon as this is available again we will inform you.
During the removal of the Central Server to America, the Website will be out of service for two days. Neither will you be able to contact EFVET for two days via email.
Festive season

I would like to take this opportunity to send you all my best wishes for the festive season and wish you a prosperous, healthy and happy 2006.

Frans Schneider, Treasurer.

EfVET as a dissemination partner

EfVET is a dissemination partner in a new Leonardo II project which took off on October 1st. The project is titled “pools” (Producing Open Online Learning Systems).

The pools partnership want to cluster with other language projects (or relevant eLearning project, e.g. for disabled users etc.). We can offer free pages or links in our web portal www.languages.dk - the site is already well visited because we as “grass root” language teachers have continued our previous project (BP-BLTM) with new materials for more than a year after the funding period.

There are many advantages in clustering / cooperating with other projects, first of all we can share results and expertise and avoid repeating the same work - secondly and not less important - cooperating / clustering projects mean better dissemination, e.g. by exploiting exchange of web links, descriptions of projects across the web, handing out brochures at conferences, and speaking about conferences: If five projects cooperate a joint conference instead of five individual ones then the number of participants would greatly increase.

We are willing to help set up and run a conference (e.g. in connection with EfVET 2007). We have not proposed a conference in our own pools application, so it would be an extra;-) We have a network of participants from our last project conference who have urged us to set up a new event. So perhaps your project should consider cooperation with us

The web from our last project www.languages.dk/methods is still number one in Google and Yahoo when searching with the key words language teaching materials (and also number one when using language teaching methods) so we believe we have something to offer other project promoters.

Best regards
Sean O Miadhachain, Project Coordinator and Kent Andersen, Project Whip (and EfVET webmaster)

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e-mail ka@ots.dk or webmaster@efvet.org

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EfVET Conference 2006

Dear EfVET members,

As promised in Budapest for early registration, on-line registration for the next EfVET conference in Cyprus is now available. All conference details have been finalized during Frans Schneider visit to Cyprus in early November. The conference Theme and detailed program will be on line early February. Many of the comments made during our discussions were considered in drafting the program. The on-line evaluation will help us fanilize the program in an effort to maximize the benefit for all participants.
The conference has already stirred up a lot of interest at the local level. The two Ministries involved in Vocational Education and Training, (the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor), are very keen to see the conference getting through successfully. We hope that participation from their part will be high.

A request to all of you. Please register as soon as possible to give us time to organize the event. Many of you expressed an interest in bringing along your family. We would like to plan some activities for the accompanying persons. Therefore, early registration and knowledge of the numbers and the ages of the accompanying persons will be helpful.

Best regards,

Stelios

AGM in EfVET-DK

November 23d EFVET had called for the AGM in Odense. We made a whole-day arrangement out of it, so that members were informed on new developments in the Leonardo programme, the work on the EQF, how to run a project, and project dissemination. And naturally we told about the conference in Budapest and the next conference in Cyprus. As for the AGM we were happy to note that 2004-05 gave us more members even though we loose some through institutional merging (big is beautiful?). Annie, Paul Andy and Louise were re-elected to the board.

Louise Rosthøj, EFVET-DK

A Leonardo da Vinci pilot project:

Strengthening and disseminating middle management training in the European Training Sector

(European Middle Management Training - EMMT 2)

In November 2005 a group of VET-middle managers and potential middle managers finished their training seminars in “the challenge of change in the new Europe”. The participants came from LIT, PL, CZ, BG, ES and DK. The evaluation of the whole project will take place in January and be available on www.teseinternational.dk – click on EMMT 2 in the left hand column.

The general evaluation from the participants has been very good throughout the four training seminars. It has been frustrating for them to do homework as they are already very busy, but they have been eager to fulfil the commitment and have been very happy with the European dimension. Newcomers are eager to work in EU-projects in the future. During the course two of the participants have been promoted to middle managers thanks to this training programme.

The end of the training was celebrated thoroughly with our hosts from Norton Radstock College (UK), and there were tears in the eyes of many, but they do hope to meet again.

Together with a diploma the participants were given “Who moved my Cheese” – a small but very good book on change.

Louise Rosthøj, EFVET DK
2004-07: Leonardo Pilot project “Skills demonstration abroad” (SKILLDA)

The theme “skills demonstrations” or “competence based qualifications” has been a main theme for European countries in the past few years. However, the educational systems, practices, and traditions in different countries vary quite a lot. Students are encouraged to do part of their on-the-job-learning abroad and to do skills demonstrations during these periods. Because of the differences between the countries, it is difficult to organize skills demonstrations in foreign companies qualitatively, that means in the way that the requirements of the national curriculum of the sending country are met. This project is planned to tackle this problem in order to develop manuals for the use of all involved. We work with the educational sectors textile and catering, and later the results can be adapted to any education. We have also applied for a mobility project in order to test the material. There are 22 partners (schools and companies) in five countries (FI, DK, NL, HU and BE) and the Savo Consortium for Education in Finland is the co-ordinator. EFVET is a disseminator.

www.skillda.fi is not ready yet, but look at EFVET’s website, and you will be able to download the brochure.

Louise Rosthøj, EFVET-DK

Translation of Bve Raad letter on the EQF

N.B. This text is not an official translation. It is purely meant as input for discussion for the EFVET reaction on the EQF. Translation of Bve Raad letter on the EQF.

EfVET will produce her own reaction as was decided at the Budapest Conference

Mevrouw M.J.A. van der Hoeven
Minister van Onderwijs Cultuur Wetenschap
Postbus 16375
2500 BJ DEN HAAG

Dear Mrs. Van der Hoeven,
The development of one European Qualifications Framework (EQF), that making communication between different European qualification structures better, is not only a good ambition. The Steering Group Competency Based Vocational Education and Training considers it a necessary step on the way to a Europe strengthening its competitiveness in the global economy. A common reference point as the EQF leads to more transparency on levels and competencies. It is a necessity in enlarging the mobility of workers and learners and will, in our opinion, strengthen competition in the European labour market. In order to achieve this, necessary steps need to be taken at national as well as on European level.

**Recognition role employers**

The EQF also emphasises accreditation of prior learning that took place besides (initial) education. With this, it distinguishes rightly the qualifying function of working and non-formal learning pathways, and thus offers excellent opportunities to enlarge the competence level, and with that the employability of the workforce. We thus consider the development towards an EQF as a recognition of the growing role that trade and industry fulfils in developing qualifications, both as partner in initial education as in a professional career.

The main principles of the EQF-design confirm that competencies can only be really visible and developed in a specific (professional) context. What is referred to as “Competences”, “Skills” and “Knowledge” in the EQF will always have to be filled in from sector, branch or even profession based specifications. Only when dealing with them from this starting point, these concepts have informative value for the (European) labour market. In accordance with this, in the Dutch VET qualification structure we experience how important it is to agree on definition of concepts on beforehand.

**A recognisable process**

VET in The Netherlands is changing towards competency based vocational education. This ‘future proof’ way of learning is based on the competency based qualification structure. There is a clear link with the EQF in the development of this qualification structure:

1. The EQF makes, like the Dutch VET qualification structure, a clear division between formulating “performance standards” (what should be learned) and how these standards can be achieved through formal and informal learning (how it should be learned). However, the EQF cannot fully resist the temptation, by means of the “supporting information”, to indicate which educational characteristics belong to what “level”. The comparability of the educational structures in Europe is hindered by the diversity of VET structures. We are convinced that the additions concerning educational characteristics detract from the systematic. We thus propose to leave this information out of the final document that will be sanctioned by the European Union. Additionally, the EQF would gain strength if a choice was made for a framework that was grafted upon a division in professional requirements. Labour markets in Europe show more resemblance than the educational systems that train people for it. Based on the above mentioned principle, we do not consider it a good idea to add a system of credit points to the EQF. This too would detract from the chosen systematic.

2. The EQF strives, just like the Dutch VET qualification structure, towards more transparency. A transparency that will lead to, among others, a clearer communication between (vocational) education and the labour market system. Knowledge centres work from the perspective of the labour market on an extensive transparency in the Dutch VET qualification structure. For this they more frequently use (meta) standards, like a common list of competencies and the European Language Framework. The EQF has the ambition to be a similar common language, and we will investigate whether it is usable, specifically in the field of level definition in the Dutch VET qualification structure (and perhaps within the entire ‘uninterrupted learning pathway’). More information concerning the argumentation of the levels is desirable for this process.

3. Leading principle of the EQF is the characterisation along main lines of necessary knowledge, skills and competencies at different levels of control. This too matches an important step that was taken with the introduction of the competency based qualification
structure in Dutch VET: taking main lines in the profession as basis and organising a ‘qualification chain’ in which the national civil effect of the diploma’s is guaranteed.

In our point of view, the above mentioned experiences with the Dutch competency based qualification structure in vocational education and training are rich and forge ahead. They also show a strong resemblance with the recent developments around the EQF. In the official Dutch reaction to the EQF, we expect the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to put forward these experiences prominently. We look forward to receiving the draft reaction.

**Strengthening the ‘uninterrupted learning pathway’**
The EQF provides the national ‘uninterrupted professional learning pathway’ with opportunities. By naming learning profits from the entire educational spectrum, the EQF will give insight in how the different educational levels (can) relate to one another. We see the EQF as the starting point for one national framework for (vocational) education. The attempt to come to one European framework for key competences for lifelong learning has our interest. In our opinion such a widely supported reference document is a comparable step towards more transparency. However, we specifically ask to attune the framework of key competences to the EQF. We also plea for more participation from member states. An obligatory EQF via the use of key competences and/or a new framework besides the EQF, is not desirable.

**Mutual Trust**
From our point of view, it is a logical choice not to use a (European) organised accreditation system to assess qualifications or educations at a certain EQF level. Namely, one of the most important pillars of the EQF is the notion of mutual trust between member states. The big challenge on national as well as on European level is to fill in this concept. The Steering Group is convinced of the importance of the expertise of Colo and Nuffic within the national structure of Evaluation of Foreign Credentials for the translation of the EQF levels to the Dutch situation. This will also be a mean to further ensure the mutual trust. A validated quality assurance instrument for adjudging EQF levels is desired.

Within the Dutch Europass Consortium, in which both Colo and Bve Raad participate, the connection between the Europass instruments and the EQF is a point for attention. Both organisations deserve national as well as international support for this.

**Finally**
The EQF is a robust system of ravishing simplicity. In the years to come, it will proof whether the employers in the EU will see it as a usable and understandable instrument as well. According to us the biggest challenge for the near future is the creation on national and European level of recognition and acknowledgement of the EQF by employers. In order to facilitate this process, we suggest to create a working group at national level in which a number of stakeholders (steering group plus social partners) jointly come to some actions:
- Analyse the working of the EQF, and investigate, by means of pilots, whether and how the national qualifications fit into the EQF;
- Investigate to what extent the EQF can serve as an instrument to get more transparency and comparability in the Dutch VET qualification structure (e.g. in the field of level indication);
- According to us, it is necessary, in order for the EQF to be a useful instrument, to design an additional framework, grafted upon a division in professional requirements. From our point of view, this would better fit the central thought in the VET qualification structure. In the future, perhaps this could become a fixed component of the EQF. The involvement of employers and the principle of “keep it simple” are essential in the development of such an additional framework.

As shows from this letter, the Steering Group is positive on the development of an EQF. However, it pleas for a well considered and systematic result of it in the near future. It is of great importance for the end users of the EQF to be in the central position, both on national and European level.

A.M. Vliegenthart,
WHAT IS VALORISATION?
Originally a French term, "valorisation" is a concept which is now widely used and accepted in the European educational and training community. It can be described as the process of disseminating and exploiting the results of projects with a view to optimising their value, strengthening their impact, transferring them, integrating them in a sustainable way and using them actively in systems and practices at local, regional, national and European levels. To achieve these objectives, "valorisation" must be based on the analysis at an early stage of the requirements which a project must meet. It is also essential to ensure the active involvement of potential end-users and target groups during projects developments. In short, "valorisation" involves disseminating and piloting the most innovative practices, exploiting them, developing them in different contexts and gradually incorporating them into formal and informal systems of training, into the methods used by businesses and associations, and into the learning experience of every individual.

WHY HAVE A VALORISATION POLICY?
There are a range of very valid reasons for developing the systematic dissemination and exploitation of results. It can contribute in particular to:
- improving/ensuring the sustainability of project results
- enhancing the impact of EU funded programmes and projects at systems level
- capitalizing on investments, transferring results to transform systems
- generating savings from not 're-inventing the wheel'
- reducing timescales for policy innovation
- feeding the policy process

WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?
To be effective, the process requires:
- a focus on end user/target group needs from project inception;
- dissemination of innovative products and results;
- selection and analysis of their suitability for transfer to meet identified new needs;
- translation and adaptation to targeted new contexts;
- piloting and experimentation;
- full integration into the new context.

WHAT ARE 'PRODUCTS' AND 'RESULTS'?
The definition of a 'product' is generally very broad. Under the Leonardo da Vinci programme, for example, this has included education and training manuals and guidelines, course curricula and software; surveys and analyses; cooperation processes and methodologies; managerial lessons learned, know-how and good practices; new forms of cultural expression and intercultural dialogue; and new transnational partnerships and cooperative ventures. A product can be exploited in its entirety or partially (e.g., extraction of modules, findings, learning objects etc).

The definition can be adapted to match the specific nature of the outputs and products from each EAC programme.

AT WHAT LEVEL DOES DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION HAPPEN?

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This process can take place at the micro project level to address specific requirements in another company, organization etc; or it can take place on a macro level, at regional, sectoral, national or European level. Obviously, the impact and economies of scale are likely to be greater at the macro level. The ultimate aim is to achieve full and sustainable integration of previous results and products into local, regional, national and/or European systems and practices. To take the Leonardo da Vinci example, this included formal certification of qualifications, transformation and reform of public delivery systems, and successful product commercialization.

How have dissemination and exploitation activities been developed within DGEAC?
Systematic dissemination and exploitation activities are relatively new in the field of education and culture and DGEAC has therefore been investigating and developing methodologies to define and implement it on the ground, for example through a series of valorisation events promoting a meeting of supply and demand around a range of successful Leonardo da Vinci products, through pilot projects, and through two experimental Calls for Proposals for the Transfer of Innovation (2004).

The Leonardo da Vinci National Agencies have gradually been increasing their valorisation activities to ensure the wider application of completed project results in response to a real demand for innovative materials and best practice. More recently, these approaches are being extended to the Socrates programme, for example by means of the new Information, Communication and Valorisation Network and to all other programmes and initiatives in the fields of activity covered by DG EAC (multilingualism, sport, citizenship, culture, youth).
For further information:
Internet: http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/culture/valorisation/index_en.html
Email: eac-unite-c3@cec.eu.int

The EfVET website

The EfVET website is in the continuous process of being modernized and moved from the server in Odense to an international web server.

The first part of the process has been accomplished with a new design (skin) and a database structure known as CMS (Content Management System). CMS means that anyone (with username, password, and proper rights) can update and create articles in the server.

Problems ahead

The good
Moving the EfVET site to an international web server is a lengthy process, all files have now been physically moved to the new server and apparently everything is up and running, but some serious work is still waiting (and problems lurking in terms of possible downtime).

The bad
When you type in www.efvet.org in your web browser your browser actually pays a quick visit to a server in USA (where we presently also have the efvet e-mail server, this server then redirects your browser to the new server. This may seem to work perfectly, but try to move around in the efvet website and then have a look at the address line in your browser – it still says www.efvet.org and worse all pages that you print out have another address than efvet.

The ugly
Worst of all, because of the name/address problem Google and Yahoo searches do not work properly...
Why is the efvet website not perfect, yet?
To have the EfVET website up and running perfectly we also need to move the international address pointer (so-called DNS) from the server in USA to the European server, this involves quite a lot of bureaucracy and coordination and can depending on the Americans take several months before everything is in place:

1. We need to have an authorization code from the American website,
2. We need to move the e-mail server as well, and finally set up the new,
3. We need to have the InterNic point at the new server, and
4. We need your patience because there is bound to be some days of downtime in the process also the official efvet mail addresses can suffer a few days of downtime

What can you do if the EfVET server does not respond?
Really very little, but in the interim period you can make use of www.colleges.dk which will serve as a mirror of the EfVET site in the coming months, just in case...

The expected down periods are expected to be one or two days, but when and where is unknown and this is why I have not yet committed the final stage, I had to wait till after the conference and then allow some time for the participants to read the information from the conference. But today I’ll start the final process, let’s keep fingers crossed;-)

What can you do to make the EfVET website better?
I function as the webmaster which is somewhat different from being a web author, so I need input from you:

1. Information about your projects ready to place in the website
2. Updates on existing information

Kent Andersen
EfVET webmaster

Impressum:

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The EFVET Newsletter is published electronically on the EFVET website and sent to members by e-mail.

New deadline for manuscripts: 15th February 2006.

Merry Christmas and a Happy EfVET New Year to all of you.