

## **Introductory speech**

**Irene Psifidou, Cedefop project manager**

**Dear ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,**

**I would like to welcome you all in the second day of Cedefop's conference on Qualifications for lifelong learning and employability.**

**We have completed an intensive day of presentations and discussions yesterday around Qualifications, a key issue of European cooperation for many years now, through both the Education and Training 2010 programme, as well as the Bologna process.**

**We show how the understanding of qualifications has changed over time and how today the focus is on transparency, validation and learning outcomes, these last contributing to establishing a common language and building trust in Europe. We also discussed the various dimensions of change of Qualifications, bringing evidence from recent and ongoing research findings conducted by Cedefop.**

**A plethora of interesting questions and points of view were raised during the three workshops yesterday afternoon, addressing the main themes of this Conference: qualifications and its stakeholders; qualifications as currencies and expressions of value; and qualifications and lifelong learners.**

**The day was concluded with a good dinner. So, today we will begin by digesting the main messages drawn from the workshops to be presented by the three rapporteurs I have in my side.**

**Suite later, the stakeholders representing national policy makers, industry and sectors, as well as research, will briefly react and respond to the presentations and discussions of the plenary and workshop sessions, and will initiate further questions and exchange of views.**

**The conference will conclude with the session on "Putting the pieces together: qualifications towards 2020" in which 5 speakers representing Cedefop, the European Commission, the Swedish and Belgian Presidencies as well as the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry will synthesise the proceedings of the Conference and will give the perspective of the challenges and next steps for the years to come.**

**After this brief overview of yesterday's and today's work, I come back to our current session, and I would like to welcome each rapporteur to present within 10 minutes the main messages based on the questions of each workshop. Then, participants are welcome to complement or raise questions.**