



ECVET BULLETIN 2009/01

Welcome to the first edition of the ECVET Bulletin!

The Bulletin is a quarterly update about the latest developments related to the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

This first issue of the ECVET Bulletin introduces the newly launched ECVET pilot projects, which were selected in 2008 and are now beginning their work in testing and implementing the ECVET technical specifications.

This issue also contains a reflection on themes and issues identified by EQF pilot projects which have particular relevance to the ECVET testing process.

The coming issues of the Bulletin will present in more detail the work and findings of the ECVET pilot projects and other ECVET-related projects. Future Bulletins will also contain thematic articles on topics related to ECVET. These will be based on the work of the projects, as well as on the outcomes of the seminars that will be organised as part of the project coordination activities.

‘The adoption of ECVET will mark the beginning of a specific form of cooperation in vocational education and training across Europe.’

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Editorial by Odile Quintin
European Commission,
DG for Education, Training, Culture and Youth

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Editorial

Odile Quintin

Director General for Education, Training, Culture and Youth
European Commission

The process of designing a European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training will soon culminate in the adoption of a Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council. Already well known in Europe under its acronym, ECVET will complement other instruments conceived through European cooperation to enable citizens benefit fully from opportunities of mobility and lifelong learning, such as the European Qualifications Framework and Europass.

The adoption of ECVET will also mark the beginning of a specific form of cooperation in vocational education and training across Europe. Indeed the implementation of ECVET will build on the reinforced cooperation on the design and experimentation of methodologies, the development of active and sustainable partnerships and networks and the sharing of experience and good practice among parties in vocational education and training. This will require of all stakeholders engagement, creativity and willingness to cooperate beyond institutional and geographical frontiers.

The ECVET projects recently selected as part of the Lifelong Learning programme and its sub-programme Leonardo da Vinci are particular illustrations of the necessary cooperation: brought together in a community of projects they are engaged in a process of exchange regarding their challenges, sharing of research and joint working during seminars to which they will participate. This cooperation among projects aims at creating the synergies necessary for optimising the efforts of project promoters and of their partners.

By the quality of their results and their exemplary nature, the ongoing and future pilot projects will effectively contribute to the implementation of ECVET as envisioned by the European Parliament and the Council in the Recommendation. The quarterly bulletin and the web-site dedicated to the projects will enable a wide dissemination of project activities and outcomes.

The aim of this bulletin is to communicate about the nature and life of the projects. It is also a means to promote ECVET and to inspire new initiatives by giving the public at large essential information on the development and the progress and innovation potential of this new instrument.



Executive Summary in French and German

Voici le premier bulletin d'information dédié au développement du système européen de crédits d'apprentissages pour l'enseignement et la formation professionnels - ECVET.

Ce bulletin vise d'une part à informer sur les actions liées à ECVET et à susciter de nouvelles initiatives. D'autre part, il tend à présenter les progrès ainsi que les principaux défis auxquels doivent faire face les dix projets pilotes ECVET sélectionnés récemment dans le cadre du programme d'éducation et formation tout au long de la vie. Le bulletin d'information sera publié de manière trimestrielle, pendant trois ans.

Dans l'éditorial de ce premier numéro, Odile Quintin, directrice générale de l'éducation et de la culture de la Commission européenne, met l'accent sur l'importance de ces projets pilotes qui doivent contribuer à la mise en œuvre d'ECVET. Le lancement des dix projets pilotes s'inscrit dans un contexte propice, avec l'adoption prochaine par le Parlement européen et le Conseil d'une recommandation établissant ECVET.

L'article thématique de ce bulletin se penche sur l'analyse des résultats des projets pilotes CEC (cadre européen des certifications). La complémentarité des instruments CEC et ECVET amène à penser que les leçons apprises dans le cadre des projets pilotes CEC pourraient être utiles aux projets pilotes ECVET.

Cette première édition se livre à une présentation des dix projets pilotes et inclut également celle d'un projet réseau qui a souhaité s'associer au travail mené par les projets pilotes. Pour chaque projet, la motivation ainsi que l'approche adoptée sont détaillées. Les projets pilotes vont œuvrer dans des secteurs professionnels très variés, tels le spectacle vivant, l'aéronautique ou le tourisme.

Pour terminer, le bulletin présente les nouveautés en lien avec ECVET. L'organisation d'une conférence politique à Prague sur les instruments CEC et ECVET le 20 mai 2009 tient une place importante sur l'agenda.

Dieser neue Newsletter informiert Sie über das Europäische Leistungspunktesystem für die Berufsbildung (ECVET).

Wir unterrichten Sie einerseits über die im Rahmen des ECVET durchgeführten Aktivitäten und möchten dadurch zu neuen Initiativen anregen. Andererseits soll über Fortschritte und Herausforderungen bei den vor kurzem im Rahmen des Programms für lebenslanges Lernen ausgewählten zehn Pilotprojekten berichtet werden. Der Newsletter wird drei Jahre lang vierteljährlich erscheinen.

Im Leitartikel dieser ersten Ausgabe legt Odile Quintin, Generaldirektorin für Bildung und Kultur bei der Europäischen Kommission, den Schwerpunkt auf die Bedeutung der zehn Pilotprojekte, die zur Durchführung des ECVET beitragen sollen. Mit der baldigen Verabschiedung einer Empfehlung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Einrichtung des ECVET ergeben sich günstige Voraussetzungen für den Start der Pilotprojekte.

Im thematischen Beitrag des vorliegenden Newsletters werden die Ergebnisse der Pilotprojekte des Europäischen Qualifikationsrahmens (EQR) analysiert. Die Instrumente EQR und ECVET ergänzen einander, und so ist es zu erwarten, dass die ECVET-Pilotprojekte aus den Erfahrungen der EQR-Pilotprojekte schöpfen können.

In dieser ersten Ausgabe werden die zehn Pilotprojekte, sowie ein angeschlossenes Netzwerkprojekt vorgestellt. Ziel und Ansatz eines jeden Projekts werden ausführlich dargestellt. Die Pilotprojekte werden in den verschiedensten beruflichen Bereichen wie der darstellenden Kunst, der Luftfahrt oder im Tourismus durchgeführt.

Abschließend wird in diesem Newsletter über Neuigkeiten betreffend das ECVET berichtet. Von besonderer Bedeutung ist die politische Konferenz über die Instrumente EQR und ECVET am 20. Mai 2009 in Prag.

ECVET testing: What experiences and lessons can be learnt from EQF pilot projects?

By Karin Luomi-Messerer at 3s

Daniela Ulicna at GHK Consulting

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and ECVET are complementary tools that share certain concepts and objectives. Both instruments require qualifications to be described in terms of learning outcomes. While the EQF improves the understanding of qualifications among countries by establishing a structure of levels that is neutral to how qualifications have been achieved, ECVET supports transfer of units of learning outcomes across countries, systems or qualifications. It also describes qualifications and units using ECVET points. To support transfer and accumulation of credit, ECVET requires a structure of levels to ensure that the credit is at the appropriate level. Because of this complementarity between the two instruments, it was felt that the ECVET pilot projects would benefit from the lessons learnt by the EQF pilot projects. This article presents some of these experiences and provides insights to how they might be accommodated in the ECVET testing projects.

Since 2006, the European Commission has financed projects for testing and supporting the implementation of the EQF (33 projects so far). In particular, the experiences gained and documented by the projects from the first call (2006) provide valuable inputs for the ECVET implementation and testing. Later issues of this bulletin will provide an opportunity to report on other projects (starting in 2007 or 2008), which are either mid-way through their development or have just started.

Understanding of concepts and terms

First of all, many of the EQF pilot projects report the necessity for establishing a common understanding of concepts and terms used in the context of their work. Some of the projects have even started to work on terminology, have agreed on certain terms or have developed glossaries. The clarification of key concepts and terms is ongoing and continued work, which will also be an issue in the ECVET projects. However, building on existing glossaries rather than starting from scratch would seem to be an advisable route to take. The newly published multilingual (EN, FR, DE, CS, HU, PL) *Terminology of Education and Training Policy*¹ constitutes one useful source of definitions.

Another difficulty related to terminology encountered by the EQF pilot projects is that of translation. While agreed definitions are reliable in English, French and German, their translation in official documents to other languages is sometimes problematic, as was exemplified by the translation of EQF descriptors. No doubt ECVET pilot projects will face similar challenges, which suggests that building on definitions and terminology produced by the EQF testing projects (e.g. the €FA project - www.eu-efa.eu or the project Competence Orientation and Learning Outcomes in Higher Education - www.he-leo-project.eu), would be the best way to proceed.

Learning outcomes approach as a means to enhancing transparency

Qualifications from different countries (and also within one country) are described and structured in different ways. Since the EQF, and also ECVET, are widely understood as instruments aimed at transparency and not at harmonisation, the EQF pilot projects have had to find ways to cope with this diversity and to establish mutual trust. One of the main questions addressed by the EQF projects was how to describe qualifications in order to ensure and increase transparency. The learning outcomes approach is seen as the “*via regia*” to achieving this aim and the description of learning outcomes is seen as a prerequisite for referring qualifications to the appropriate framework levels. Many curricula are not yet outcome-orientated. Furthermore, there are many different interpretations of the meaning of learning outcomes and no generalised method for identifying, defining and assessing them. The European definition of learning outcomes is interpreted differently by the projects. While some projects separate the three components (knowledge, skills and competence) others don’t and put emphasis on contextualising learning outcomes with the specific vocabulary and practice of the given sector. Some of the EQF projects have developed and tested methods for describing qualifications in terms of learning outcomes. It is interesting to see that some of these approaches focus on describing learning outcomes in relation to the work context.

The AMOR project (www.amor-project.eu) developed the following procedure: in the first phase, the curricula of selected trainings programmes were analysed to collect information about possible “working situations” (independent areas of professional activities, i.e. planning, organisation/ implementation and control) that the graduates of the chosen training programmes usually master successfully. An “activity-matrix” (a kind of qualification profile) was developed as a working basis for the next phase, namely the identification of learning outcomes. For the working situation “guarantee safety on the workplace,” for example, learning outcomes such as “check and evaluate electrical safety measures” were determined. The identified learning outcomes were then referenced against the EQF levels.

A suggested approach is to build upon these experiences and also to explore whether any of the methods developed could also be taken forward for the definition of “units of learning outcomes” in the ECVET context. There is, however, a need to further develop methods to support the learning outcomes approach and the transparent description of qualifications as well as the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

To test the use and utility of the EQF as a common reference point in the TransEQFrame project (www.transeqframe.net), selected qualifications were broken down into smaller sub entities. The project identified “core activity areas” that represent the tasks typical for the qualification in order to allow for a more transparent referencing process. Learning outcomes were then assigned to each of the core activity areas and matched with the EQF descriptors table. Through this approach, each core field of activities was linked to a certain EQF level and finally the selected qualification was referred to one EQF level.

Building on European transparency instruments

Another issue that could be taken up by ECVET pilot projects is the suggestion of some of the EQF projects to build on existing European transparency instruments. For example, a better use of the existing supporting documentation related to the content of qualifications was suggested by the EQF Network Testing project: Europass documentation, particularly the Certificate Supplement and the Diploma Supplement, are already in the same format for all European countries and include specific items which allow for the description of qualifications in terms of learning outcomes. However, the need for further development of these Supplements was emphasised to make them EQF-compatible and therefore suitable for the referencing of qualifications. How the existing transparency instruments could be improved for ECVET purposes could be further elaborated.

Involvement of stakeholders as a crucial aspect of the process

The involvement of stakeholders in the process of developing an NQF and implementing the EQF can be seen as a crucial aspect. For example, the EQF Stakeholders project (www.esib.org) stresses that in order to truly operate as a transparency tool, an NQF has to be built in agreement and debate with the relevant stakeholders. This will stimulate stakeholder ownership over the NQF and facilitate its design, understanding and adoption.

“Beyond the remits of the education policymakers and stakeholders, society at large has to understand the debates and the meaning of qualifications. Otherwise, there is a serious risk of the growth of a feeling of distrust and confusion regarding the work of education providers and the capacities of graduates and workers. The overall tendency to make this debate either too technical or carry it far away from the eyes of the public opinion is going on the opposite direction of the initial transparency objectives of setting up a qualifications framework.” (Final report of EQF from stakeholder perspective, p.11)

It is recommended that developing shared ownership should also be adopted by the ECVET projects. It is therefore of crucial importance to consider which stakeholders (both at national and European levels) are to be included and how and in what ways they need to be involved.

Dialogue between projects and the Commission

A first survey among the EQF testing projects in autumn 2007 showed a particularly interesting result with regard to following question: What would you - on the basis of the preliminary results of and experiences in your project - recommend to the European Commission about the upcoming implementation of the EQF? Many interviewees replied to this question by referring to the guidance and clarification they were seeking from the Commission. Thus, whereas the Commission was looking for support from the projects in developing the EQF implementation process, the project representatives were looking for support from the Commission for realising their projects. This finding clearly shows that the whole process of developing, implementing and testing can only be understood as a dialogue between the projects and the Commission. That the 2008 round of ECVET pilot projects will be supported by providing a platform for mutual exchange and learning as well as by organising other activities shows that this feedback has been taken up by the Commission and that the dialogue has already started.

Sources:

- (1) Cedefop (2008) *Terminology of European education and training policy: A selection of 100 key terms*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities
Survey of EQF pilot project activities done by 3S for the European Commission, DG EAC in 2007 and 2008.
Conclusions of the Cedefop Workshop on *Testing the European Qualifications Framework (EQF): Relating international, national and sectoral qualifications to the EQF* organised on 11 November 2008 in Thessaloniki.

The CAPE-SV project

Capitalisation of learning outcomes in Europe's live performing arts
Capitalisation des Acquis Professionnels dans l'Europe du Spectacle Vivant

Capitalization of Learning Outcomes in Europe's Live Performing Arts



Motivation:

The career pathways of people employed in the sector of performing arts are characterised by mobility and internationalisation.

The use of new technologies, together with the development of new production structures and evolution of the market have important impacts on the qualifications and competence requirements for the technical and administrative personnel in the live performance industries, such as theatre, opera, shows, music halls, etc.

People working in the sector participate in various types and forms of ongoing training and gain important skills and competences on the job. This requires specific arrangements for the assessment and validation of what they know and can do, so that their knowledge, skills and competence are made visible (i.e. documented) and recognised.

Approach:

The objective of this project is to use ECVET principles or credit accumulation and transfer in the performing arts sector in order to secure staff career pathways and to ensure that credit gained can be internationally recognised.

The project will therefore define common learning outcomes for technicians and administrative personnel of the sector. Using the ECVET principles, these will be grouped into units of learning outcomes. The common units of learning outcomes will be based on an analysis of existing national qualifications. It is envisaged that units and qualifications can be achieved both through formal training (initial or continuous) and through validation of non-formal and informal learning.

A common grid for assessment and validation will also be developed and made applicable to the different national qualifications concerned. It will be accompanied by methodological guidelines for the assessment.

An important aspect of the approach used by the CAPE-SV project is that of peer review. Transnational juries will be formed to test and validate the assessment grid throughout the duration of the project. At the end of the project, a procedure and a mobility programme will be published that will include the terms of a trans-national agreement of recognition between partners.

Project promoter:

CFPTS, (Centre de Formation Professionnelle aux Techniques du Spectacle, Vocational Training Centre for Performing Arts Techniques), France

Partners:

DAMU (Divadelni Fakulta Akademie Muzických v Praze), Czech Republic

Institut del Teatre de la Deputacio de Barcelona, Spain

STAFF (Spectacle et Technique Association Française de Formation), France

ISTS (Institut Supérieur des Techniques du Spectacle), France

Fondazione Accademia d'Arti e Mestieri dello Spettacolo Teatro alla Scala, Italy

Rose Bruford College, United Kingdom

The OPIR project

Practical and interregional tools for ECVET

Outils Pratiques InterRégionaux pour ECVET

Motivation:

OPIR builds on the earlier experience of a European working group which aimed at strengthening the role of regions in the mobility of learners and young people undertaking professional training. The working group concluded that mobility should become an integral part of young learners' training curriculum.

The regional partnership, OPIR, has chosen to work on two distinct professions (hairdressing and automation¹).

Several reasons underlie the choice of these two sectors: first, these two sectors have a clear European dimension. Hairdressing is a quickly evolving sector, with the emergence of new trends (stylistic, hairpiece, social and medical aesthetics...) and new groups with branches in various countries.

As for the automation sector, there have been important technological developments in this sector and systems used across Europe have been developed.

It was also relevant to choose professions in two widely different sectors in order to test the transferability of tools and schemes from one sector to another. That is why the OPIR project is based on professions that differ in terms of tradition, products and systems of production.

Furthermore, job-profiles for these two professions have already been developed in all the regions involved. These two professions will also ensure that a wide audience of learners will be concerned.

Approach:

The project does not wish to establish common qualifications but aims to ensure transparency of the existing qualifications in these two professional sectors.

The qualifications will be organised in "common units". These units will be defined based on an analysis of the existing qualifications. The learning outcomes common to all the qualifications studied will form the so called "common units", which will be the basis for learners' mobility.

This project will also support:

- Cross-border mobility of learners, which is the first goal of ECVET; and
- Mobility across VET providers within each country or region.



Project Promoter:

Centre de coordination et de gestion, Communauté française de Belgique

Partners:

Centro Europeo di formazione per affari sociali e sanità pubblica, Italy

Centrul National de Dezvoltare a Invatamantului Profesional si Tehnic National Centre for TVET development, Romania

Conseil régional Rhône Alpes, France

Consejería de Educación de la Junta de Andalucía, Spain

Consejería de Empleo, Servicio Andaluz de Empleo. Dirección general de formación para empleo, Spain

Fondation des régions européennes pour la recherche en éducation and en formation (Freref), Belgium

Generalitat de Catalunya - Departament d'Educació, Spain

Rectorat de l'Académie de Grenoble, France

¹ Automation is the use of control systems (most often computers) to control industrial processes or machinery.

The ECVET ASSET project

ECVET Automobile Service Sector ECVET Testing

Motivation:

The ECVET ASSET project is focusing on the automobile services sector. This sector presents several interesting characteristics to test ECVET. The automobile services sector has a clear European dimension:

- The products concerned as well as the job tasks across Europe are the same or are very similar;
- These products undergo constant technological changes requiring updating of qualifications;
- The sector concerns a large number of enterprises, mostly SMEs.

Because of the comparability of training needs across Europe, increased mobility of learners is expected to provide important added value to the individuals as well as the training centres.

Approach:

Each country participating in the project has selected a job profile in the field of car maintenance. The job profile chosen corresponds to levels 4 or 5 of the EQF. Partners will identify, in each country, the most suitable qualification corresponding to the job profile.

The qualifications selected will illustrate the systems of the four partner countries. In the next step, similarities, in terms of learning outcomes, among the qualifications will be identified.

The project will develop a common methodology for describing units of learning outcomes. It will also identify and define a set of common units that will be “open to mobility”. Finally, the project will examine how these units can be integrated into training curricula preparing for the qualifications concerned.

In addition to the remaining ECVET specifications, such as development and signature of a memorandum of understanding, a template for a learning agreement and ECVET points’ allocation, the project will test ECVET on a group of learners who will participate in a mobility exchange resulting in recognition of their learning outcomes.

Project Promoter:

Chambre des métiers de l’artisanat de Vienne - Espace formation des métiers et de l’artisanat, France

Partners:

Association nationale pour la formation automobile (Rhône-Alpes), France

Autoalan Keskusliitto Ry AKL, Finland

Centrul National de Dezvoltare a Invatamantului Profesional si Tehnic, Romania

GNFA as member of Comitetul sectorial transporturi, Romania

Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Megyei Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara, Hungary

Nemzeti Szakképzési és Felnőttképzési Intézet, Hungary

Omnia / Training centre, Finland

Omnia Competent institution, Finland

School cluster "George Bibescu", Romania

Ványai Ambrus Gimnázium, Informatikai és Közlekedésgépészeti Szakközépiskola, Hungary

The SME Master + project

Skilled Mobile-European Master Plus

Motivation:

Partners and countries involved in the SME Master + project represent the interests and needs of the skilled craft sector. Some of them are already part of the European platform Euronaver (www.euronaver.net), which aims at enhancing mobility in VET. They consider the establishment of transnational mobility programmes as an important part of the vocational education and training of apprentices in the craft sectors and of Master craftsperson trainees. Master craftsperson trainees are the entrepreneurs of tomorrow.

The partners, which are the competent and/or intermediary bodies in their countries will support national networks of skilled craft chambers and training providers in order to achieve this goal.

The SME Master + project builds on the experience and outcome of an earlier project, the SME Master project. The SME Master project concerned the qualification of master baker. The final outcome of this project was a grid of units of learning outcomes for this qualification. However, the SME Master project did not result in either the allocation of ECVET points to units or the development of template for a partnership agreement.

The SME Master + project will therefore try to focus on these aspects while transferring the methodology used for the SME Master project to other crafts sectors (floristry, hairdressing and woodworking).

Approach:

The SME Master + project will be undertaken in two stages.

The first stage will finalise the learning outcome matrix of the master baker craftsperson qualification, developed under the previous project. The remarks of partners new to the project will be incorporated into the matrix. It will also develop a template for the memorandum of understanding and the learning agreement. It is at this stage that partners will reflect upon the requirements for assessment, validation and recognition of the units in the context of transnational mobility.

The second stage (running parallel with the first one) will concern the transfer of methods for identification of units of learning outcomes to the three other sectors identified.

The different ECVET tools will eventually be tested through a mobility experience of apprentices.



Project Promoter:

Zentralverband des Deutschen Handwerks (ZDH), Germany

Partners:

Assemblée Permanente des Chambres des Métiers (APCM), France

Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft (ibw), Austria

Mesterbrevneminda, Norway

Obrtno- podjetniška zbornica Slovenije, Slovenia

KOC Nederland, Netherlands

Fédération Nationale de la Coiffure Française, France

The M.O.T.O project

Model Of Transferability of learning Outcome units

Motivation:

Countries involved in the M.O.T.O project are currently at different stages in defining and developing their national qualification frameworks and vocational and education training systems. The Austrian and Italian partners are at present developing tools to describe learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and competence. In contrast, the Finnish and Icelandic partners are more advanced, using knowledge, skills and competence as integrated components of their qualifications systems.

The main motivation for setting up the M.O.T.O project is to test the extent to which the tools developed at national level are capable of supporting credit transfer in a trans-national context.

The M.O.T.O testing will target all the qualifications related to the tourism sector, corresponding to level 3 of the European Qualification Framework. The tourism sector has been selected as a pilot sector because:

- It is a key economic sector in all the partner countries;
- It is a sector characterised by similar working processes in spite of local and national specificities;
- It provides job opportunities to many workers who do not have formal qualifications and are considered as disadvantaged.

Approach:

The M.O.T.O project focuses on fostering transferability of units of learning outcomes in order to facilitate the professional and geographical mobility of workers in the tourism sector with a specific focus on disadvantaged persons.

A core element of the project is the establishment and further consolidation of an ECVET partnership in this sector in order to create a framework for credit transfer.

The M.O.T.O project has the following successive phases:

- The partners will first develop a methodology in order to analyse and describe qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes;
- They will then develop a model of transferability of learning outcomes (M.O.T.O.) units among the different systems and approaches to ECVET;
- The feasibility of the created methodology and of the model will be tested through practical activities (periods of mobility). Some of these will be carried out in technical secondary schools. Others will focus on disadvantaged people involved in different training pathways. The testing activities will be carried out in trans-border regions of Italy and Austria.

Project Promoters:

Ministero dell' Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca, Italy
Istituto per lo Sviluppo della Formazione professionale dei Lavoratori, Italy

Partners:

3s, Austria
The Finnish National Board of Education, Finland
The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Iceland

The Be-TWIN project

Testing a joint ECVET-ECTS implementation

Motivation:

The two credit systems, European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for higher education and ECVET for VET, represent different methodological approaches that both aim at facilitating credit transfer and accumulation.

However, to fully support lifelong learning, it is crucial that these systems become connected. In several of the countries participating in this project, qualifications are at boundaries between ECVET and ECTS. For example, the French BTS and the UK Foundation Degree are both designed using the learning outcomes approach and would naturally fit the ECVET logic. However, in order to receive financing of their students' mobility, institutions awarding these qualifications have to use ECTS.

The project has chosen to test ECVET on qualifications at different EQF levels (4, 5, 6 and 7). These qualifications are situated at the junction of VET and higher education as they are designed according to the learning outcomes approach, favour on-the-job training and respond to a professional standard needed by companies.

Three sectors have been selected: plastic industry, hospitality management and training of trainers.

The choice of the plastic industry sector stems from the fact that some of the partners have already been involved in the Europlastic project - www.europlastic.org - which aimed at developing a European curriculum in this sector, including teaching in English and internships abroad.

As for hospitality management, this industry requires its workers to be mobile and to experience different types of national cuisines and services in order to progress in their careers.

Lastly, training of trainers appeared to the partners to be of particular relevance in the linkage between ECTS and ECVET.

Approach:

The BE-Twin project intends to develop tools and methodologies to facilitate a common implementation of ECTS and ECVET.

The project will first identify common denominators and a translation tool between the two systems. These will then be tested through three case studies, based on three different sectors, corresponding to four EQF levels (levels 4, 5, 6 and 7):

- Levels 4 and 5 - Plastic Industries;
- Levels 5, 6 and 7 - Hospitality management;
- Levels 6 and 7 - Training of Trainers.

The project will then define a global framework in which both credit systems will be complementary and not opposed. This will enable:

- the enhancement of vertical mobility of learners in VET, to bridge the gap between higher education and VET, by enabling recognition of ECVET and ECTS credit; and
- the combination of the learning pathways approach of ECTS with the learning outcomes approach of ECVET.

Specific attention will be paid to the dissemination of project outcomes at both national and European level.

Project Promoter:

CCIP, Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Paris, France

Partners:

DEKRA akademie GMBH, Germany

Ekonometpika, Greece

Ente nazionale accli istruzione professionale, Italy

European Marketing Confederation, Belgium

Fédération de la plasturgie, France

Fondazione Giacomo Rumor Centro Produttività Veneto, Italy

Lifelong Learning Network Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, UK

Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe (UNICA), Belgium

Rectorat de Paris -Délégation Académique à la Formation professionnelle initiale et continue, France

Rusenski Universitet "Angel Kanchev", Bulgaria

Stratford-upon-Avon College, United Kingdom

Ufficio Scolastico Provinciale di Venezia, Italy

Zakład Doskonalenia Zawodowego, Kielce, Centrum Kształcenia Zawodowego, Radom, Poland

The AEROVET project

Identification of sector-related qualifications according to common demands of being employed by enterprises of the European aeronautic and space industry

Motivation:

Qualifications in the aeronautics sector are characterised by:

- The existence of European standards regarding qualifications of certain professions in this industry (namely regarding maintenance);
- The fact that aeronautic products for a single airplane are produced in different countries across Europe and have to meet the same quality criteria;
- Constant changes of work processes and materials used.

This high-tech professional sector therefore requires the establishment of a common language and strong transnational cooperation in order to ensure the quality of the final product.

The work of the AEROVET project is based on the outcomes of the AERONET pilot project (www.pilot-aero.net). AERONET aimed at acquiring in-depth knowledge of qualifications in the four partner countries in the aeronautic sector. It developed in-depth understanding of specific training regulations in the countries concerned and resulted in a repertory of “Typical Professional Tasks”. These are tasks that are common to the work of all aircraft construction professionals across Europe.

Approach:

The AEROVET project will further develop the repertory of Typical Professional Tasks (TPTs) to cover the profession of aircraft maintenance staff. On the basis of TPTs, learning outcomes and units of learning outcomes will be developed. The formulation of the units will also have to take into account some normative requirements in the aerospace industry.

The AEROVET project will also explore the links with ECTS, as some of the qualifications concerned are awarded by higher education institutions using ECTS.

The project outcomes will be tested during three-month transnational exchanges of trainees within Airbus. Whilst such exchanges already exist, the learning outcomes of students who participate in them will this time be recognised.



Project Promoter:

Universität Bremen, Germany

Partners:

Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung, Germany

Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications, France

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, United Kingdom

Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Spain

University of Warwick, United Kingdom

The N.E.T.WORK project

ECVET System for 'No borders in tourism hospitality' European Training and WORK

Motivation:

Countries involved in this project represent a variety of qualifications systems and are at different stages regarding the coordination of their national systems with ECVET (or in other words "ECVET readiness"):

- France and Slovenia represent an advanced situation where units of learning outcomes are already used;
- In Italy and Portugal, the situation regarding "ECVET readiness" is less clear at this stage, but strong emphasis is put on experimentation.

The professional areas of tourism, and more specifically tourist welcoming, are characterised by traditions of transnational training and staff mobility. These will be the focus of the project work.

This project builds on the experiments started by an earlier pilot project (i.e. the New Hospitality Project: <http://www.newhospitalityproject.com>) to improve the transparency of qualifications in the sector of tourism and hospitality.

Approach:

To implement ECVET, the N.E.T.WORK project will make use of processes and tools which are already in use in the partner countries (e.g. regarding the construction of units). The partnership will:

- provide a shared framework for the development and testing of ECVET;
- define, validate and recognise meaningful and measurable elements of qualifications (learning outcomes and units) which will be valid for all the partner countries. These will be identified based on the analysis of existing training pathways in the chosen areas of qualification;
- enable comparison of qualifications using ECVET and their recognition within the formal systems.

Systematically building on the existing methods and practices, the project will design specific operational tools to facilitate the common definition, delivery, recognition and validation of modular training pathways. These will be tested in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses in supporting credit transfer and accumulation, mobility and employability.

Project Promoter:

Centro Italiano di Studi superiori sul turismo e sulla Promozione Turistica, Italy

Partners:

Association France-Europa, France

Center Republike Slovenije za poklicno izobraževanje, Slovenia

Consultis - Consultoria empresarial, unipessoal, lda, Portugal

Federazione delle Associazioni Italiane Alberghi e Turismo, Italy

Provincia di Perugia, Italy

Sviluppo & Competenze, SV&CO S.r.l, Italy

The CREDCHEM project

Development and testing of a credit transfer system to improve mobility within the chemicals sector / Entwicklung und erprobung eines credit-transfer-systems zur verbesserung der mobilität im chemiesektor

Motivation:

The CREDCHEM project aims at bringing closer the interests of employers in the chemical sector with those of learners (potential employees). While the former are seeking a skilled workforce, the latter are interested in obtaining learning/ working experiences abroad. The integration of recognised mobility periods into the formal training programme would benefit both parties.

The project assumes that, given the commonalities in work processes and tasks, operators and laboratory professionals in the chemicals sector have comparable knowledge and skills, regardless of the country in which they followed their training. Consequently, this profession provides a good opportunity to test the ECVET principles.

The CREDCHEM project has important synergies with other projects and initiatives related to ECVET:

- It is parallel to a German initiative called DE ECVET (www.decvet.net) which focuses on the permeability of different VET systems. Partners from a DE ECVET project focused on chemistry are involved in CREDCHEM.
- It will build on experiences gained during an earlier project “ECTS in chemistry”. This project revealed that despite the commonalities in the knowledge and skills of staff within the chemicals sector, the training programmes that are the basis of ECTS, differ significantly.

Approach:

The CREDCHEM project aims to foster mobility in the chemical sector, by creating lasting partnerships.

The work of CREDCHEM will focus on qualifications for production and laboratory staff. It is interesting to note that in some of the countries the qualifications concerned are delivered by higher education institutions (thus using ECTS), while elsewhere these are VET qualifications.

Besides the implementation of ECVET principles (i.e. formulation of learning outcomes, design of units, etc.) the CREDCHEM project will test ECVET during two mobility periods (in 2010 and 2011). It is expected that mobility periods will consequently be mainstreamed into partners’ formal training programmes through the signature of agreements.

The CREDCHEM project also pays substantial attention to the dissemination and mainstreaming of ECVET into national and sectoral practices in the partner countries. National councils will be established, bringing together policy makers and social partners of the chemistry sector. These councils will have the objective of validating the tools developed and ensuring the recognition of credit gained abroad, as well as supporting mainstreaming of ECVET into national VET policies. The outcomes of the project will also be transferred into the European Social Dialogue in the chemicals sector.

The project will also establish communities of practice which will operate on a more operational level, linking training providers and enterprises that organise mobility.

Project Promoter:

Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung

Partners:

Istituto Tecnico per Attività Sociali “Pietro Scalcerle”, Italy

Národní ústav odborné vzdělávání, Czech Republic

Natzionalna agentzia za profesionalno obrazovanie i obuchenie, Bulgaria

Sächsische Bildungsgesellschaft für Umweltschutz und Chemieberufe Dresden mBH, Germany

Štátny Inštitút Odborného Vzdelávania, Slovakia

Technische Universität Dresden, Germany

The VaLOGReg project

Value the learning outcomes in the "Grande Région"

Motivation:

The VaLOGReg project works in the context of the so-called "Grande Région". The Grande Région is at the junction of four different countries (Belgium, France, Germany and Luxembourg) and is formed of the following regions: Saar-Lorraine, Luxembourg, Rheinland-Pfalz and Wallonie. It is an active economic and social area with 11.3 million inhabitants of whom 5.3 million are economically active. The region is marked by significant cross-border working population: around 180.000 people cross the border daily in order to work in another region. Many enterprises settled in this area are active in the whole Grande Région. In addition many people cross the border for learning purposes.

Several of the countries concerned (namely Germany and Luxembourg) have put in place legislations stating that parts of training can be undertaken abroad. Nevertheless, despite this political willingness, there is currently no formal framework for recognition, with the exception of certain regulated professions.

The existence of four different training systems and two different languages presents an additional challenge to the recognition process.

Approach:

In order to support recognition, it is important to develop mutual trust and understanding between the different actors of vocational training and this is the main objective of the project.

Project Promoters:

Lycée Technique d'Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg

Ministère de l'Éducation nationale et de la formation professionnelle, Luxembourg

Partners:

Institut wallon de formation en alternance et des indépendantes et petites et moyennes entreprises, Wallonie, Belgium

Ministerium für Bildung, Familie, Frauen und Kultur, Saarland, Germany

Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Jugend und Kultur / Abteilung, Berufsbildende Schulen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany

Formation tout au long de la vie, Lorraine, France

The VaLOGReg project will focus on two professional qualifications in the fields of:

- Electronics in energy and building technology; and
- Car mechanics.

These qualifications are already designed in units in most of the regions concerned.

The VaLOGReg Project is structured in three phases:

- It will first carry out an analysis of the different systems of units and their structure in the four countries. This analysis will take into account the current legislative developments and reforms in the vocational training field for each country.
- It will then proceed to the elaboration of a common understanding between all the different national partners of the Grande Région. The project does not aim to establish bilateral agreements of recognition but to set up a concrete learning agreement viable for all the partners.
- Finally, a testing mobility phase will be organised.

Stakeholder involvement is another key aspect of the project. From the start VaLOGReg will involve stakeholders competent for the management and delivery of the two qualifications identified. This will guarantee their commitment in the future and ease the establishment of a regional learning area.



The RECOMFOR network project

RECOMFOR is a network bringing together competent institutions from ten countries, more specifically concerned with the sector of trade. RECOMFOR is a network project that voluntarily participates to the coordination activities of the ECVET pilot projects.

Motivation:

RECOMFOR builds on the results of the COMINTER project, which was completed in September 2007. During the COMINTER project, partners, in cooperation with sectoral organisations, produced a common qualification profile for the profession of import-export assistant. This profile is unit-based and its application rules are flexible to enable adaptation to country-specific contexts and requirements. This profile as well as the tools developed will be the basis of the mobility network created through RECOMFOR.

One of the findings of the COMINTER project was that, even if there is a strong potential for training centres to enhance the mobility of their learners, obstacles still remain. These obstacles are mainly related to the lack of guaranteed work placement abroad and insufficient mutual recognition between the different competent institutions.

Establishing a permanent network to help overcome these obstacles is the main objective of RECOMFOR.

Approach:

RECOMFOR will create a platform where mobility will be an integrated part of training pathways and where training centres and companies will develop mutual trust.

The following principles will ensure the sustainability of mobility in this context:

- Clear quality criteria will be set up to guarantee mobility;
- The role and responsibility of companies taking on foreign trainees will be described; and
- The operating procedures as well as the role of the competent institutions will be defined and simplified.

Partners in RECOMFOR are at present coming from ten different countries. However in the long term, the partnership aims at involving new partners, from different countries and possibly concerning different qualifications. This will enable to expand the work placement possibilities.

Project promoter:

CGI, Confédération française du commerce interentreprises, France

Partners:

CIEP-MEN, Centre International d'Etudes Pédagogiques, Ministère de l'Education nationale, France

CEF, Conseil de l'Education et de la Formation, Belgium

DGEPaIE, Generalitat de Catalunya Departament d'Educació Direcció General d'Ensenyaments Professionals, Artístics i Especialitzats, Spain

AGEFA PME, Association de gestion des formations en alternance pour les PME, France

OEEK, The Organisation for Vocational Education and Training, Greece

USP Venezia, Ufficio Scolastico Provinciale Di Venezia, Italy

CPV, Fondazione Giacomo Rumor, Veneto Productivity Center, Italy

KCHandel, Kenniscentrum Handel, The Netherlands

IVS, International Vocational Studies Alliance, The Netherlands

NVG, Nederlands Verbond van de Groothandel, The Netherlands

CECOA, Centro de Formação Profissional para o Comércio e Afins, Portugal

CCP, Confederação do Comércio e Serviços de Portugal

NCTVETD, National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development, Romania

CCIB, Bucharest Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Romania

CPI, Center RS za poklicno izobraževanje, Slovenia

CPU, Gospodarska zbornica slovenije, Center za Poslovno Usposabljanje, Slovenia

CNCCEF, National Comity of French Foreign Trade Advisors, France

IUFFP, Istituto Universitario federale per la formazione professionale, Switzerland

IEFP, Instituto do emprego e formação profissional, Portugal

What's New...?

ECVET in the Copenhagen process

The recent Cedefop review of the Copenhagen process entitled *Continuity, consolidation and change: Towards a European era of vocational education and training*, highlights the importance of testing and experimentations in ECVET implementation. The report underlines that ECVET is complementary to many of the objectives pursued through current VET reforms (e.g. individualisation of training pathways, bringing VET systems closer to the needs of the labour market). At the same time, the lack of experience with credit systems in VET in most EU countries requires evidence on the feasibility and added value of the instrument as well as clarifications concerning its implementation arrangements.

For more information see Cedefop (2009): *Continuity, consolidation and change: Towards a European era of vocational education and training* p. 114-117, available for download from the Cedefop website:

http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Information_resources/Bookshop/publication_details.asp?pub_id=528

Terminology of Vocational Training Policy

The updated Cedefop glossary presents the key definitions and terminology used in vocational education and training policies at European level. The glossary is multilingual, containing definitions in English, French, German, Czech, Hungarian and Polish.

The Glossary can also be downloaded from the Cedefop website:

http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/img/dynamic/c313/cv-1_en_US_glossary_4030_6k.pdf

Political launching conference on ECVET

The Czech presidency of the EU will organise a conference dedicated to the two new instruments for modernisation of VET (ECVET and the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework - EQARF) on 20 May 2009 in Prague. The conference will bring together European VET policy makers and important stakeholders with the objective of stimulating political commitment to the implementation of ECVET.

First seminar for ECVET pilot projects

The ECVET pilot projects selected through the 2008 call for proposals will, for the first time, come together during a seminar on 23-24 April 2009 in Brussels. The objectives of this first seminar are to stimulate cooperation among the projects by making sure they know of each other's work programmes, to provide more in-depth information to the projects about the implementation arrangements for ECVET and to discuss and agree cooperation arrangements for the future. The first seminar will be followed by a series of technical seminars (three per year) dedicated to specific themes agreed with the projects. The outcomes of these seminars will be disseminated through forthcoming issues of the ECVET bulletin.

The ECVET Bulletin presents news and articles on ECVET developments. It is published quarterly, by GHK Consulting, as part of the contract to Support testing and development of ECVET, commissioned by the European Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.

The next issue of the ECVET Bulletin will be published at the beginning of July 2009.

If you want to subscribe to the electronic version of the Bulletin, you can register following the instructions here: <http://www.ecvet-projects.eu/Bulletins/registration.aspx>

Any comments or suggestions regarding the ECVET Bulletin should be submitted to the following address: contact@ecvet-projects.eu .

If you are involved in an ECVET pilot project or a related initiative and interested in sharing your experience and achievements, we would be very pleased to publish an article about your work.