Education and Culture

Leonardo da Vinci

PROJEKT M-ECVET-S NO. DE/09/LLP-LDV/TOI/147 251

mecvets

ECVET COUNTRY REPORTS

2011

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CHAPTER I

PARTNERSHIP

1.1. The Consortium of The Project

IBS,from Germany, is an SME in Brandenburg dealing with software development, further education of university graduates, further education & management consultancy for SMEs. It has may years of experiences with EU programs. The offer of further education courses includes IT, commercial management and language acquisition. IBS coordinated the LdV pilot projects CEMES, ESO-CSA and ESO-CRS. In the LdV project 'CEMES' was developed a certification system for management competences in SMEs. The ESO-CSA project intended to create a system which enables us to identify, assess and acknowledge specialist competences in SMEs, also acquired through non-formal learning. This project received the Helsinki Award 2006. In the ESO-CRS project was created an internet-based solution for the recognition of competencies. IBS realized an EACEA project "Using the method of standardized competence verification and certification in a credit point system for vocational training – an approach for the integration of the ECVET" from 2007 to 2008.

IBS has the quality management system DIN EN ISO 9001.

METGEM,from Turkey, is a unique institution in Turkey. The vision of METGEM is to become a pioneering and guiding agency by following all developments and transformations in labor markets to integrate national and international networks and support development of contemporary vocational technical education.

Its mission is to provide all acquired information, experience, solution models gained from national and international researches regarding Vocational Technical Education for public use.

The outcome would be a new model for Vocational and Technical Education which would produce high qualified individuals for the needs and expectations of labour mark

On this occasion, collaborating with all sectors to:

- ➢ Augment sector's effectiveness
- ➢ Make Researches, organize meetings, seminars and conferences related with ECVET
- ➢ Contribute to accelerate Te Process of ECVET in Turkey

- ➢ Increase competitiveness
- ➢ Encourage R&D works
- ➢ Ensure the transfer of innovation
- ➢ Provide employment during training period
- ➢ Support entrepreneur skills of individuals
- ➢ Make sectoral survey to determine current and future labor needs
- ➢ Altogether raise the public credit of Vocational Education.

University of Bedfordshire, from United Kingdom, is a higher education institute in England, UK. It is the largest provider of undergraduate and postgraduate education in Bedfordshire. The Business School is the largest University Business School in the region. It offers practical, relevant, vocational courses underpinned by research excellence. The staff has a multitude of teaching, research and commercial experience and work closely with employers on the curriculum, while forging close links with UK companies to provide a broad range of training and accredited industry programmes.

Training 2000,from Italy, organizes Vocational training courses in the areas of ICT , Textile, innovative English training, Process Automation (Cad-Cam), specific training for : 1) development of social skills and competences, 2) better employment for women re-entering the work force, 3) business start-up, 4. import /export management. Training 2000 is recognized as " Certified centre for training" since it operates with Quality and within a network of major actors in the Region and in Europe: Labour Offices, Trade Unions, Associations of Enterprises , Public Institutions (Province of Pesaro and Urbino, Province of Aquila, Regions of Marche, Abruzzo and Sicily), Universities across Europe and Italy since 1991.

At the European level, Training 2000 is partner in LLP projects from most of the EU countries (Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig). In the last three years this organization is also concentrating in adults' training methodologies which include training of trainers, e-learning and informal learning in industrial districts of SMEs. (Creation of networks of SMEs). Regular seminars are conducted with umbrella organizations, trade unions and SME management to promote new trend in training and evaluation of informal competences.

TINTA, from Sweden, Utbildning AB/Tinta Education Ltd is a daughter company of ABF North Greater Stockholm. ABF is Sweden's longest established company for public education for adults. The aim of forming Tinta educational company was to spread the long established "folkbildning" or public educational methods of the mother company to new areas of concern

The company aims to provide educational packages directed towards adult education on an individual level in the context of lifelong learning.

Some examples of present work:

➢ Educational courses for newly arrived immigrants
➢ General courses for immigrants
➢ Tertiary education for immigrants
➢ Working – life practice placements
➢ SMILE – EU-Comenius and Grundtvig course for teachers in Stockholm, Dublin, Tuscanay and Istanbul.
➢ Information Technology

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CHAPTER II

THE PROJECT

'MODULAR ECVET SYSTEM-MS-ECVET'

2.1. Starting Point and Summary

It is generally accepted that informal and non-formal learning must be recognised but if we actually want to implement this, we have to overcome many obstacles. To recognise informal and non-formal learning, we need accredited assessment procedures and assessment centres but it is currently unclear how these can be financed without being part of a project. Moreover, people acquire competencies through lifelong learning – competencies for which they do not have a certificate. Since the labour market becomes increasingly dynamic, many careers tend to become a sequence of working periods and orientation phases. The periods of orientation are very often connected with further trainings. This gives us the chance to certify the knowledge and the skills that have been acquired through informal and non-formal learning in a final certification process.

This innovation transfer project (ITP) deals with a possibility to recognize informal and non-formal learning outcomes. This method is the only one that is currently actually applicable. Other methods or possibilities, such as external examinations at the chambers of commerce, have not achieved acceptance yet. The reason for this is the great complexity of the examinations and the barriers that result from it. The new system shall enable people who have gained a high level of competency in a certain profession, which they have not studied for or in which they do not have a degree, to have their learning outcomes recognized and thus being able to actually use them on the labour market. This goes hand in hand with greater transparency and wider acceptance.

2.2. Objectives and General Content of The Project

This innovation transfer project (ITP) shall advance and enhance the ECVET-based method for the assessment of professional competencies that has been developed in the EU-project ESO-CERT so that it will be applicable on a European-wide basis. This method allows certifying competencies regardless of how they have been acquired.

This means that learning outcomes from formal, non-formal and informal learning are merged. The enhanced method intends to assess modular training units that shall lead to complex action-oriented competencies. This assessment, which also considers the competencies that have been acquired at the work-place, leads to a greater transparency concerning the recognition and the acceptance of these competencies by the industry. This enhances the employees' company-wide

mobility. It must be guaranteed that the skills and the knowledge that have been acquired through informal and non-formal learning are taken into account. Therefore, we need competency tests.

For these tests, the innovation of the ESO-CRS project will be transferred and adjusted. These competency tests should be considered as grading tests so that a suitable training module corresponding to the level of competency can be recommended. This renders the learning process more efficient. After the training modules have been completed, there will be a final competency test which certifies the overall complex of the action-oriented competencies. This final test is the basis for the credit points that will then be given for the entire learning process. This whole process generates a full transparency of and also trust in the acquired competencies and moreover, all forms of learning are taken into account.

2.3.Description of The Transfer of Innovation

M-ECVET-S contains elements of sectoral transfer, geographic transfer, and method transfer. In the M-ECVET-S project, there will be a transfer of methods and results from the ESO-CERT project which was entitled "Using the method of standardized competence verification and certification in a credit point system for vocational training – an approach for the integration of the ECVET".

This transfer project shall advance and enhance the ECVET-based method for the assessment of professional competencies that has been developed in the EU-project ESO-CERT in order to make this method applicable on a European-wide basis. It is not relevant how the competencies that are assessed have been acquired. This means that learning outcomes from formal, non-formal and informal learning are merged. The enhanced method intends to assess modular training units that shall lead to complex action-oriented competencies. Since this kind of assessment also considers competencies that have been acquired at the work-place, it leads to a greater transparency concerning the acceptance of these competencies by the industry. This enhances the employees' company-wide mobility.

The method of the ECVET assessment that shall be transferred consists of the following steps, tools and elements:

Phase 1: Definition of the UNITS, the action-oriented competencies and allocation of the credit points

1. Description and definition of professional competencies
2. Estimation of the learning times that are necessary for the parts of the competencies that can be acquired through formal learning
3. Estimation of the duration of practical experience that is necessary to successfully deal with the expected tasks

4. Assessment/evaluation of the practical experience and conversion into a learning time equivalent

5. Calculation of the total learning time by adding the single components

6. Qualitative analysis on the basis of the EQF

7. Comparative assessment on the basis of steps 4 and 5

8. Definition of the UNITS and stipulation of the Credit Point according to ECVET

Phase 2: Assessment of competencies and recognition

9. Completing an internet-based self test tool

10. Submitting a professional portfolio to prove the necessary professional experience, if required

11. Taking a European-wide uniform computer-based test as a first step of the assessment procedure

12. Assessment with an accredited certification partner

13. Recognition of the credit points

We will use other innovative results from Leonardo da Vinci projects to implement this transfer successfully. There is the CEMES-method of competence assessment (ESO-CSA project) and the online-based multilingual competence assessment platform (ESO-CRS). Especially the latter plays an important role in the assessment of action-oriented learning outcomes that is comparable on a European-wide basis.

2.4. Outcomes And Results

The project will have the following results:

➢ Methodology for an ECVET evaluation of modular further training systems in the field of professional further training, considering also informal and non-formal learning outcomes

➢ Action-oriented description of learning outcomes/competencies for a modular further training system for the field of commerce (10 selected commercial modules, each comprising 160 hours of training)

➢ Methodology/instructions for drafting action-oriented competence descriptions for modular systems in the field of professional further training

➢ Practical example of awarding credit points for action-oriented competences (field of commerce), considering also formal, informal, and non-formal learning

➢ Tested and ready-for-use online-based competence assessment process for commercial competencies in companies that can be applied in various areas, such as competence evaluation and awarding of credit points, tests to select the appropriate training measures, aptitude tests, training needs analysis, etc.

CHAPTER III

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECVET in EUROPE

3.1. European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)

ECVET is a useful and concrete device intended to facilitate transfer and accumulation (capitalisation) of learning outcomes of individuals who pass from a context of learning to another and/or from a qualifications system to another. And it is a methodical way for describing a qualification in terms of units of learning outcomes which are transferable and which can be accumulated (knowledge, skills and competence), with associated credit points.

ECVET is part of the overall project for developing European cooperation in the field of vocational education and training and constitutes one of its operational tools. In this regard, ECVET complements the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). In fact, EQF and ECVET are based on common principles and concepts which favour approaches:

- ❑ focused on learning outcomes expressed in terms of knowledge, skills and competence;
- ❑ based on a process of qualification;
- ❑ adapted to the demands of lifelong learning and all learning contexts, on an equal footing;
- ❑ geared towards the mobility of people.

ECVET could thus be adopted whatever the training and qualifications systems. Moreover, the actual implementation of ECVET should be based on common reference levels proposed by the EQF. The European framework should thus be a powerful lever for the adoption of ECVET by the various competent bodies, responsible in the Member States for its implementation at national level, regardless of the existence of a national qualification framework.

ECVET presents some principles, rules and conventions in a coherent and rational way. It aims to facilitate:

- ❑ the mobility of people undertaking training;
- ❑ the validation of the outcomes of lifelong learning;

- ❑ the transparency of qualifications;
- ❑ mutual trust and cooperation between vocational training and education providers in Europe.

The Education Council Resolution adopted on 12 November 2002 and the Copenhagen Declaration of 30 November 2002 on the future priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training (VET), emphasised that giving priority to a system of credit transfer for vocational education and training was one of the common measures needed to promote "*the transparency, comparability, transferability and recognition of competence and/or qualifications, between different countries and at different levels*"

Following up the conclusions of the Education Council of 15 November 2004, the Ministers responsible for vocational training in 32 European countries, the European social partners and the Commission agreed in the Maastricht Communiqué of 14 December 2004 to give top priority to the "*development and implementation of a European credit transfer system for vocational education and training (ECVET) in order to allow learners to build upon the achievements resulting from their learning pathways when moving between vocational training systems*".

The Commission, having been invited to explore the possible options for designing, implementing and developing a credit transfer system compatible with the specificities of vocational education and training, brought together a technical working group composed of experts appointed by the Member States and the representatives of the social partners. It is on the basis of the work of this group that this document has been prepared.

ECVET to Enhance Mobility:

In the general context of developing a lifelong learning society in Europe, the mobility of learners is identified in the Copenhagen process as a development priority. For more than a decade, the European Union has promoted the transnational mobility of people in vocational training thanks to the "mobility" measures of the Community action programme Leonardo da Vinci. Under this programme, the Union finances every year mobility projects for approximately 60 000 people, of which around 50% are young people in initial vocational training, including apprentices.

In spite of these efforts, the scale of mobility leading to a professional qualification is stil small in comparison to that organised for higher education under the Erasmus programme. The mobility of young people in initial vocational training usually corresponds to the minimum period of three weeks. It is considered to be more of an "interlude" than an integral part of the training pathway. This state of affairs can be explained by the obstacles to mobility in vocational education and training: these obstacles are regulatory and administrative, economic and financial, cultural and linguistic, etc.

One of the main obstacles to attracting more interest in mobility within the framework of initial and continuing vocational training is the difficulty in identifying and validating learning outcomes acquired during a stay in another country.

ECVET proposes :

➢ an approach whereby learning outcomes acquired abroad can be taken into consideration for the purposes of issuing a qualification in a learner's country of origin;

➢ a tool for providers, practitioners and competent bodies, enabling them to compare more easily the learning outcomes acquired in different countries, and to validate and recognise them.

ECVET to Validate The Outcomes of Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning may take place in a wide variety of contexts resulting in comparable learning outcomes:

➢ non-formal learning (programmes, modules completed outside the formal system of education and training);

➢ informal learning (self-teaching, on-the-job training, daily experience);

➢ different kinds of training programmes and modules of various durations, and involving various arrangements.

In addition, standardised training programmes may be pursued by different categories of learner (full-time, part-time, intensive or non-intensive training, ICT based learning, etc.). In its Resolution of 27 June 2002 on lifelong learning, the Council acknowledges that priority

should be given to "the effective validation and recognition of formal qualifications as well as non-formal and informal learning, across countries and educational sectors through increased transparency and better quality assurance".

In May 2004, the Council Conclusions on common European principles for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning10, emphasised again that "in the context of the principle of lifelong learning, the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning aim to make visible and to value the full range of knowledge and competence held by an individual, irrespective of where or how these have been acquired. Identification and validation are key instruments in enabling the transfer and acceptance of all learning outcomes across different settings".

What is needed therefore is a way of enabling people to pursue their learning pathway by building on their learning outcomes when moving from one learning context to another, in particular in the framework of mobility.

Given that it is based on learning outcomes:

1. ECVET can be implemented irrespective of the learning context. It facilitates the transfer and validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes;
2. ECVET helps to improve access to qualifications for all, throughout their lives.

ECVET to Increase Transparency of Qualifications

Vocational education and training in Europe encompasses a large number of qualifications, diplomas, levels, certificates, etc. Many countries have a national framework defining levels of qualifications or a classification for these levels. These tools may or may not be geared towards the organisation of education or training cycles which are based, in some cases, on the accumulation of units (with or without credit points). Moreover, depending on the system, qualifications may be obtained either after only one type of formal training programme or following several kinds of programmes, regardless of whether the learning pathway is formal, non-formal or informal.

Furthermore, depending on the country, there are many ways of using learning credits in vocational education and training. In countries where there are several sub-systems for vocational education and training, different systems for the allocation of learning credits may coexist. In other cases, there is no learning credits system at all. Against this background of diversity, several Community initiatives have recently made significant progress, in particular concerning increasingly easy access to tools for ensuring the transparency of qualifications (Europass, the certificate supplement) and information on training opportunities (Ploteus).

Greater transparency of qualifications is nonetheless required to enable the transfer of learning outcomes to be implemented effectively in the context of mobility.

ECVET
➢ is in line with the initiatives taken at European level, such as the planned introduction of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), designed to improve the transparency of qualifications;
➢ proposes a common approach to describing qualifications in order to make them easier to understand from one system to another, and to describing the procedures for validating learning outcomes.

ECVET for Mutual Trust and Cooperation

One of the most important challenges to be faced in the development and implementation of ECVET is the diversity, even fragmentation in certain countries, of vocational education and training systems in Europe. There may be a very large number of very different competent bodies, organisations and actors involved. Their activities may include the definition of qualifications, methods for assessing and validating learning, setting training objectives, determining the number and contents of units and the number of credits, implementing training programmes, etc.

A wide range of providers may be involved: ministries (of education, employment, agriculture, etc.), agencies, occupational sectors, companies, social partners, chambers of commerce, non-governmental organisations, and so forth. In some cases, a national authority may accredit or empower training providers or other actors to prepare and issue qualifications,

credit points, etc. In other cases, these functions can be devolved to regional level, or even to the providers.

Several Community initiatives have recently made progress in developing common principles as regards this disparate pattern which creates obstacles to transnational cooperation:

➢ the adoption of common European principles in the field of quality assurance11;
➢ the adoption of common European principles on the identification and validation of nonformal and informal learning outcomes.

However, the persisting lack of mutual trust and cooperation between the competent bodies and other actors involved in training and qualifications systems impedes and even prevents the development of initiatives to resolve the various problems posed by the transfer and validation of learning outcomes.

ECVET proposes a methodological framework, agreements and common principles to foster dialogue between the providers; instruments for developing partnerships between the actors involved (competent bodies, providers, etc.).

3.2. Recommendation of European Parliament and of The Council, 18 June 2009

The purpose of this Recommendation is to create a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training ('ECVET') to facilitate the transfer, recognition and accumulation of assessed learning outcomes of individuals who are willing to achieve a qualification.

While the main objective of the EQF is to increase the transparency, comparability and portability of acquired qualifications, ECVET is aimed at facilitating the transfer, recognition and accumulation of learning outcomes of individuals to achieve a qualification.

This Recommendation should facilitate the involvement of competent local and regional authorities inECVET. Also This Recommendation does not replace national qualifications systems and does not aim at either the fragmentation or the harmonisation of qualifications systems, ECVET, from principles to implementation The long-awaited

recommendations of the European Parliament and of the Council on EQARF and ECVET, adopted on 18 June 2009, are a big step forward in the renewed Lisbon Strategy and the Process for vocational education and training.

The Recommendation on the establishment of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training formally entered into force in June 2009. Member States are free to adopt this recommendation and implement the system.

They are asked to introduce measures gradually voluntarily. By 2012 countries are expected to have created the necessary conditions and taken measures for gradual implementation of ECVET to vocational qualifications at all levels of the European Qualifications Framework.

In 2014 (five years after the adoption of the ECVET Recommendation) the Commission will report to the European Parliament and the Council on the results of testing and assessment of actions taken at Member State level. Launching Conference of ECVET and EQARF, 17-18 November 2009 (Brussels).

Now it is time to go further and move from principles to implementation. Bring together all stakeholders, explain what is at stake, and what has been achieved so far, and invite them to help shape the process with their ideas.

The launching conference, in Brussels on 17 and 18 November, is an important event to transform concepts and principles into practical methods.

By adopting the ECVET recommendation, the colegislators, the European Parliament and the Member States showed their will to make a European credit system for VET a reality for European citizens. The ECVET Recommendation gives the Member States the responsibility for creating the necessary conditions and adopting measures in view of the application of ECVET.

The European ECVET Network: The Recommendation foresees the creation of a European ECVET network, "involving relevant VET stakeholders and national competent

institutions", in which the Commission and the Member States will participate actively. The European ECVET network will meet at least once a year in a forum.

The ECVET Users' Group: Within the European ECVET network, The recommendation foresees the creation of an ECVET users' group to the quality and overall coherence of the cooperation process for the implementation of ECVET.

3.3. The Development of ECVET until 2010

The year 2010 is crucial for ECVET. While 2009 was marked by the key milestones that included the adoption of the Recommendation by the European Parliament and the Council in addition to two major conferences in Prague and in Brussels, 2010 is fully dedicated to the first phase of ECVET implementation. Subsequently, the European Commission has prepared a full range of coordinated and complementary initiatives to accompany Member States in their adoption and application of ECVET.

Firstly, the support structure for the European cooperation and governance of ECVET implementation is now in place. This structure, described in the previous issue of the ECVET Bulletin (November 2009), comprises of an ECVET network open to a wide range of parties engaged in vocational education and training and interested in the adoption and development of ECVET. Member State representatives in this network have already been nominated. The procedure to register other VET stakeholders is being prepared and will be based on a call for an expression of interest in participation in the network which shall be launched by the European Commission in the near future.

Particular attention will be paid to the representativeness of candidates for the network membership. Since ECVET is designed to facilitate validation and recognition of learning outcomes, in view of geographical mobility in particular, members of the ECVET network will be representatives of institutions, organisations, networks not only concerned with VET but also directly involved, in one way or another, in questions regarding the certification process in VET (assessment, validation and recognition). The first forum of this network took place in Paris at the end of June 2010.

Resources are allocated to supporting operational aspects of the network and, most importantly, services are proposed to its members. It is for this reason why a support team has been appointed and will, by the summer 2010, start providing a variety of services and activities, such as advice, information, seminars and workshops. The support team has been assigned the name of 'ECVET Synergie' and became active as from May 2010. Its work programme will be largely disseminated towards VET stakeholders.

The quality and coherence of cooperation regarding ECVET is ensured by a Users' Group, a body bringing together Member State representatives as well as various organisations and European social partners. This group is in charge of following the actions and processes in the countries as well as at the European level with a view to providing advice and opinions to improve cooperation mechanism. This Users' Group met for the first time in Brussels at the end of May 2010.

Another initiative that is running is the launch of the call for proposals specifically dedicated to ECVET implementation. Its goal is to support institutions in the effort necessary to adopt and apply the principles and technical specifications of ECVET. The focus of the new projects is on the necessary technical work that has to be undertaken, at the level of an organisation or a competent institution, in order to structure qualifications in units of learning outcomes, to apply the most suitable approach of allocating ECVET points to qualifications and units and finally to design or adapt the process and procedures that enable assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes.

This call is therefore aimed at actors who are involved in VET and have responsibilities in the field of certification and of qualifications. The selected projects joined the already existing pilot projects and will participate in their cooperation in view of sharing experiences and results and formulating common responses.

And finally a third initiative is imminent. It concerns the follow up of ECVET as a priority theme of the Lifelong Learning Programme and involves actors directly associated with the programme and its development on the ground – namely the national agencies. This project aims at establishing a dedicated thematic follow up to ECVET mainly in the frame-work of geographical mobility of young people, apprentices and adults enrolled in VET.

To create, by 2012, the necessary conditions for ECVET implementation is, by all means, a major challenge for many players in VET. The ongoing ECVET projects continuously show that this challenge is worth pursuing. Their work is valued and projects are encouraged to pursue their reflections even further with the same level of quality and engagement. The wish of the Commission is to strengthen the accompanying efforts and support to all ideas and projects who participate in addressing this challenge. The goal is for all of us to be ready for the implementation of ECVET in 2012.

PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING OUTCOME BASED QUALIFICATIONS STANDARDS

QUALIFICATIONS STANDARDS ARE OUTCOME-ORIENTED		THE INTRODUCTION OF OUTCOME-ORIENTED STANDARDS UNDER-GOING	NO FORMULATION OF OUTCOMEORIENTED STANDARDS/NO INFORMATION
BELGIUM DENMARK ESTONIA FINLAND FRANCE GERMANY HUNGARY ICELAND IRELAND LATVIA	LITHUANIA MALTA NETHERLANDS NORWAY POLAND PORTUGAL SLOVENIA SPAIN SWEDEN SWITZERLAND UNITED KINGDOM	AUSTRIA BULGARIA CZECH REPUBLIC ITALY LUXEMBOURG ROMANIA TURKEY	CYPRUS GREECE LIECHTENSTEIN SLOVAKIA

The Recommendation on the establishment of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training formally entered into force in June 2009. The European Parliament and the Council recommend that Member States create the necessary conditions and adopt measures, as appropriate, so that as from 2012 ECVET can be gradually applied to Vocational Education and Training qualifications at all levels of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), and used for the transfer, recognition and accumulation of individuals' learning outcomes achieved in formal and, where appropriate, non-formal and informal contexts.

In doing so, the co-legislators have given a strong signal to all actors in qualifications systems across Europe. On one hand, with the ECVET Recommendation, the European vocational education and training stakeholders now have a legislative basis for the process of cooperation regarding all aspects of ECVET. This cooperation becomes much more concrete with the development of the European ECVET network and the reinforcement of the pilot projects' cooperation process.

The Recommendation calls on Member States to enter the process of experimentation and gradual implementation of ECVET, of course in line with the principle of voluntary application of the Recommendation. On the other hand, the Recommendation provides these same actors a set of principles and technical specifications which are now agreed and set. The "ECVET triangle '(Units-Points- Validation of learning) is now described with precision, although discretion is left to the actors for its implementation. Now it is time to go further and move from principles to implementation. The launching conference, organised in Brussels on 17 and 18 November 2010, is an important event in this process of transforming concepts and principles into practical methods, usable tools and operational devices.

3.4. The Development of ECVET in 2011

In 2011, a number of new actions has started being implemented through the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) to support the development and testing of ECVET at European level. The pool of ECVET pilot projects will be enhanced and the implementation of ECVET technical specifications is also a priority of the recently launched LLP call for proposals under the Leonardo da Vinci sub-programme.

It is hoped that these initiatives will contribute to further raising the understanding of ECVET and strengthen the pool of methodologies and tools available to implement this still rather new initiative. It is also hoped that more and more stakeholders will take the opportunity to get involved in using ECVET.

New projects to support the implementation of the ECVET system Eight new ECVET pilot projects have been recently selected by the Executive Agency Education, Audiovisual and Culture. Applications were submitted to the Executive Agency in July 2011 in the framework of the call for proposals "Support to national projects to test and develop the credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET)" (EACEA/2010/08).

The objective of this call was to award grants to projects aiming at setting up or consolidating partnerships between competent institutions to apply and implement in concrete terms the ECVET system, as set out in the technical specifications annexed to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Projects are expected to help putting the ECVET system into practice and preparing the measures required for its adoption by the Member States. Although each project has been submitted by a multinational consortium, their focus is mainly national. However, the international partners play an important role as advisors and testers that provide feedback and check the possibilities to transfer the project outcomes to their own context.

Project coordinators are from Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Malta, with in total 43 partners coming from 16 coun tries participating to the LLP programme. Projects will start their work between January and March 2011 and will last from 24 to 36 months. Project summaries will shortly be available on the Executive Agency website on the page http://eacea.ec.europa.e u / l l p / r e s u l t s _ p r o j e c t s / p r o j e c t _ c o m p e n d i a _en.php

It is foreseen that the new projects will also be shortly presented on the ECVET website http://www.ecvet-projects.eu ECVET in the general LLP call for proposals 2011

This year, the development of ECVET has been encouraged by projects that will be selected in the framework of the general call for proposals 2011 of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

In fact, ECVET features as a priority in two actions of the Leonardo da Vinci programme in the 2011 call: Multilateral projects for Transfer of innovation (ToI) (priority 3.2.5 "ECVET for transparency and recognition of learning outcomes and Qualifications") and Multilateral projects for Development of innovation (DoI) (priority 3.3.1 "Implementing ECVET for transparency and recognition of learning outcomes and qualifications").

In addition, the development and implementation of ECVET elements (description of learning outcomes, assessment and recognition of learning outcomes) is also encouraged under Leonardo da Vinci Mobility and Partnership projects.

The general LLP call for proposals has been published in October 2010; deadline for submission of applications is:
➢ 4 February 2011 for Leonardo da Vinci Mobility,
➢ 21 February 2011 for Leonardo da Vinci Partnerships;

➢   28 February 2011 for Leonardo da Vinci Multilateral projects (ToI and DoI).

For further information on the call see the European Commission − DG Education and Culture webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/doc848_en.htm

A description of the various actions (or types of projects) of the Leonardo da Vinci programme can be found on the webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/ doc1943_en.htm

Leonardo da Vinci Multilateral projects for Development of Innovation (DoI) is a centralised action, for which the assessment and selection procedure is managed by the Executive Agency, to which applications are to be submitted. All information on application submission for the centralised actions and all documentation, including application form, instructions for applicants, etc. are available on this webpage on the Executive Agency website: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/funding/2011/call_lifelong_learning_2011.php

Leonardo da Vinci Multilateral projects for Transfer of innovation (ToI), Mobility and Partnership are decentralised actions, managed by the LLP National Agencies, which are responsible for the selection procedure; information on the application procedure and all documentation are available on each National Agency's website, a list of which can be found on this webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc1208_en.htm

3.5. The Evaluation of ECVET Pilot Projects Results

Eleven ECVET pilot projects started their work in 2009. They now have two years of work on designing and testing ECVET technical specifications behind them. Many of them are starting to see the preliminary results of their work as well as the limitations of some of the approaches originally envisaged. Two of the projects (M.O.T.O and OPIR) are completing their work this winter and will make their results and recommendations public shortly.

Given the experience accumulated by the projects in putting the ECVET concepts into practice, the sixth seminar of the pilot projects gave rise to enlightening discussions and exchanges on these topics:

➢ Development of ECVET related documentation (Memorandum of Understanding - MoU, Learning Agreement-LA and Transcript of record);

➢ Assessment of learning outcomes in the context of geographical mobility; and

➢ Validation and recognition of units of learning outcomes.

The two projects which are completing their work this year presented their findings and these were discussed and reflected upon by the other projects.

Based on these examples a number of similarities between the templates were identified.

A large part of the discussion on the topic of ECVET documentation revolved around differences in the understanding of Who should sign a MoU. Indeed the ECVET Recommendation is not explicit on this point. In general, there are two possible understandings of the role of the MoU in the use of ECVET. Based on these two alternatives different approaches to signing a MoU can be distinguished:

➢ One alternative is to envisage the MoU as a very broad framework for cooperation at a high level, between the authorities in charge of the qualification (for example the ministries or sectoral bodies).

In this case the MoU would be less specific than in the second case. It would contain the main principles for using ECVET for mobility, identify in broad terms the possibilities for validation and recognition of credit from partner systems and designate the types of actors entitled to operate within the framework of the MoU. It would most likely not give detailed information about the content of qualifications or the detail of mobility arrangement but only information about the type and level of qualifications.

Given the 'high level' nature of such agreements, the MoUs could cover a range of qualifications (or types of qualifications) and be signed by networks of authorities to avoid multiplications of agreements.

Another alternative is to use the MoU as a more operational framework for mobility exchanges (for example among a group of regional authorities or a network of VET

providers). In this case it is likely to contain more detailed information about the qualifications concerned, the mobility exchanges and the conditions for assessment, validation and recognition of credit.

It is not feasible to envisage that such operational agreements would be signed by high level authorities such as ministries. Consequently, they would need to be signed at another level. However, the decision on who needs to sign such an agreement would also depend on the responsibilities of different actors within the qualifications system.

It is necessary that those authorities that decide on whether credit can be validated and recognised agree with the conditions described in the MoU.

Furthermore, pilot projects generally agreed on the following points in relation to MoUs and Learning Agreements:

➢ The MoU is an umbrella agreement and therefore it should be able to cover a range of situations over a certain duration (several years). It should not be expected to be modified each time the detailed arrangements for a given mobility exchange are adapted. The nature of information included and the level of detail should be in line with these expectations.

➢ The way the responsibilities over the functions involved in ECVET implementation are distributed among actors in qualifications systems differs greatly from country to country/system to system. Sometimes the responsibilities are highly centralised while in other cases they are highly decentralised. It is unlikely to see ministries from one country signing a multiplicity of agreements directly with VET providers from another country. Therefore it is important, in view of implementing ECVET at large scale, to find arrangements that would enable the creation of networks according to the needs on the ground, without imposing administrative burden on the different actors in the systems.

➢ The fact that ECVET can only be operational if it is used in an environment where there is trust among the different parties is highlighted in all policy statements and documents about this instrument. In general, trust is understood as horizontal trust between authorities with equivalent competencies from different countries.

However, there is also a need for vertical trust between the national/sectoral authorities and the VET providers, including all other parties that intervene in the processes related to ECVET. Unless certain responsibilities can be managed at local level (by the VET providers possibly in cooperation with local/regional authorities) there is a risk that the development and signing of ECVET related agreements would create unnecessary bureaucracy.

Assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes The discussion on assessment in ECVET started in the seminar held in Barcelona in June 2010. In that seminar all projects presented their approach to assessment and the issues they are facing with regard to this aspect of ECVET.

During this seminar a series of messages was identified. These messages were further discussed in Prague.ECVET Recommendation about assessment:

➤ During mobility periods, the assessment is carried out abroad, by the host institution;

➤ Assessment concerns the learning outcomes that form the unit(s) which the learner should achieve during mobility;

➤ Positive assessment is the basis of validation and recognition of credit.

The following points were highlighted in the discussions in Barcelona and Prague:

➤ In the mobility context, partnerships should reflect on the feasibility and suitability of the assessment they envisage.

➤ This implies taking into account constraints such as time and resources available or the language skills of learners and assessors;

➤ The ECVET partnerships bring in partners from different qualifications systems, each of which has its own practices and traditions in using assessment methods. It is important to accept that the same learning outcomes can be assessed using different approaches/methods or that the profile of assessors may differ from one country to another. Otherwise there is a risk of imposing too much burden and changes on the partner institutions which will in the end constrain the possibilities for organising exchanges.

➢   When grouping learning outcomes into units that are to be used in transnational mobility, partnerships should reflect on the implications for assessment. Some units can be too large to be assessed during a mobility period or they may require an assessment that is too complex to be carried out abroad (possibly in a foreign language).

➢   The learning outcomes description is an important basis for assessment. The description should be clear and contain the necessary information (for example about context or autonomy). When the learning outcomes descriptions are unambiguous the understanding of assessment criteria and the choice of assessment methods is facilitated.

The assessment procedures/methods and criteria used in the partner systems to assess the units of learning outcomes concerned by the mobility exchange should be transparent (for example described in a Learning Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding).

➢   The results of each learner's assessment need to be documented so that when the learner returns to his/her home institution s/he brings with him/her the evidence on the assessment results that is sufficient to validate and recognise his or her credit. This can be done using simple grids or templates that are based on learning outcomes descriptions.

➢   Given that partnerships are likely to use different approaches and methods for assessment, the mechanisms to ensure the quality of assessment and of its result should be clear. This is expected to stimulate trust among partner systems. Pilot projects have put in place different solutions to this issue, for example: agreeing some common principles (e.g. range of methods to use), sharing common documentation (e.g. assessment grids), organising joint assessment (with the home and host institution) in the initial phases of the partnership.

The issue of validation and recognition will be further discussed in the upcoming seminar in Vienna, but some initial ideas were gathered during the seminar in Prague. It is clear from these discussions that there are different understandings of how the two concepts (validation and recognition) translate into practice.

The ECVET Recommendation defines validation and recognition as follows:

'Validation of learning outcomes' means the process of confirming that certain assessed learning outcomes achieved by a learner correspond to specific outcomes which may be required for a unit or a qualification.In other words: the knowledge, skills and competences that have been assessed and the assessment confirmed that the learner has achieved them are compared with the required/expected learning outcomes.

If they correspond, meaning the learner has indeed achieved what s/he was expected to, the assessed learning outcomes are validated.

'Recognition of learning outcomes' means the process of attesting officially achieved learning outcomes through the awarding of units or qualifications. In other words: recognition results in an official document which states that the learner has achieved the expected learning outcomes to award the unit or the qualification.

The differences in the understanding of validation and recognition among the pilot projects stem from the fact that these processes are not always explicit in the qualifications systems in which they operate (even though they are nearly always present implicitly).

The following points were raised in Prague:

➢ In some systems it is currently not possible to validate learning outcomes: it is only possible to validate the learning pathway (in other words avoid duplication of learning activities). However, even in these systems there is added value in identifying the learning outcomes the learner achieved abroad as this makes the added value of mobility clearer;

➢ There is no contradiction between the concept of accumulation and the use of a final assessment. The final assessment typically concerns the way learners are capable to combine all the knowledge, skills and competence they have acquired in more complex tasks.

The learning outcomes achieved abroad can be validated for the purpose of learners' progression in the learning pathway and recognised once the final assessment is successfully completed;

➤ The validation is often done at the level of the VET provider, while recognition can include other type of authorities (national, regional or sectoral).

They carry out recognition based on certain type of evidence about the fact that the assessment and validation were carried out in line with the overall qualification requirements. That is why the issue of vertical trust (see above) is important for the use of ECVET;

➤ There is also a need (possibly at a later stage) to reflect on the solutions that could be put in place in case the learner achieves abroad only a part of the expected learning outcomes. How could these be validated?

➤ The question of how a learner will know that his/her learning outcomes are validated and recognised and what it means for him/her, was also raised and will be discussed in the next steps of pilot projects exchanges.

CHAPTER IV

ECVET IN THE PARTNER COUNTRIES

4.1. ECVET IN GERMANY

ECVET MILESTONES:

- ➤ Part of the Copenhagen Process 2002
- ➤ Recommendation of the European Council and the EP from 23 April 2009
- ➤ Launching Conference on ECVET in Brussels on 17/18 November 2009
- ➤ Call for proposals issued by the national agency (addressing the national priority of mobility)
- ➤ Call for proposals on pilot projects issued by the European Commission in spring 2010
- ➤ Pilot phase until 2012

Review of recommendation 2014

RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTIONS (COORDINATION):

BIBB Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung

BMBF Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung

KEY ACTORS (MONITORING OF ECVET-PROCESS)

DGB Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund

BAQ Forschungsinstitut für Beschäftigung, Arbeit und Qualifikation

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz

Spitzenverbände der Deutschen Wirtschaft

VLW Verband der Lehrerinnen und Lehrer an Wirtschaftsschulen

MAIN LAWS AND REGULATIONS WITH REGARD TO ECVET

10 guidelines for modernization of vocational education – Results of **'**Innovationskreis berufliche Bildung' – (BMBF / 2007)

Vocational education reform Vocational Training Act 2005

German Qualification Framework (DQR) 2009

FACING THE CHALLENGE OF ECVET: THE (GERMAN) DILEMMA

ECVET requires the validation of learning results which is not part of the dual vocational training system in Germany at the moment.

Learning outcomes can only be transferred (outside a partnership) if the necessary requirements are met. This must be proven: „proof and security".

If there is no sustainable proof of the learning outcomes the vocational training and educational system will not achieve a source of mobility.

The program 'Leonardo da Vinci-mobility' is being tested. The test phase is focused on the agreement and on the description of learning results for formal learning.

Awarding/calculating credit points is not a priority. This holds true for the recognition of non formal and informal learning.

THE GERMAN PROJECT PHASE 2009 - 2012

In autumn 2009 the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research has launched the pilot initiative „DECVET – development of a credit point system for vocational training".

The initiative focus on the implementation of pilot projects to test a credit point system systematically.

The initiative aims at identifying and testing the credit point potential at the interfaces all around the dual training system.

10 projects in the field of German dual vocational training, each running three years, are funded.

The following targets are associated with the development of a German credit point system:

- ➤ Increase in the transparency of qualifications and learning outcomes,

- ➤ An easier and more flexible access to educational pathways/vocational training,

- ➤ Avoidance of waiting loops, redundant qualifications and educational one-way streets,

- ➤ Better connection between places of learning and enhanced cooperation between the training centers,

- ➤ Validation and transfer of informally acquired learning outcomes,

- ➤ Increase of vocational mobility.

The credit point system is developed on the basis of the existing vocational training system and under consideration of its structural characteristics.

GOOD PRACTICES AND PROJECTS

Title	:AEROVET
Project's type	:LdV Pilot project
Project's aims	:The aim of AEROVET project is to develop units of learning outcomes based on an inventory of Typical Professional Tasks (TPTs) to cover the profession of aircraft maintenance staff too.
Start Date and Duration	:01/2005 36 month
Main Products and Results	:Technical development of European units, sub-units, judgements about the the application of the whole approach to ECVET
Links	:http://www.pilot-aero.net/about/
Title	:CREDCHEM
Project's Type	:LdV Pilot project
Project's Aims	:The CREDCHEM project aims to foster mobility in the chemical sector, by creating lasting partnerships.
Start Date and Duration	:03/2009 36 month
Main Products and Results	:Development of learning units, methodology of validation, testing of instruments, credit point fixing
Links	http://www.credchem.eu/
Title	:SME MASTER Plus
Project's Type	:EACEA Project

Project's Aims	The project will provide a learning outcome oriented description of master craftsperson qualification in six EU member states. Final product will be an "ECVET-toolbox" for the master craftsperson qualification.
Start Date and Duration	:01/2006 36 month
Main Products and Results	ECVET toolbox for master craftsperson in bakery, ECVET toolboxes for master craftsperson in hairdressing, woodworking and floristy, mobility exchanges.
Links	:http://www.sme-master.eu/

4.2. ECVET IN TURKEY

THE HISTORY OF ECVET:

➢   Analysis of skills needed in a comprehensive labour market

➢   Occupational standards and respective training standards

➢   Development of modular VET curricula based on competences (for 58 job families and 224 branches in use in VET)

➢   Introduction of an educational year (grade 9) between primary and secondary schools, which allows students to have an extra year to decide whether to proceed with academic education or VET

➢   Establishment of the Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA)

➢   Competence building for teachers and managers (further training, study visits, twinning programs etc.)

➢   Grants for projects implemented by social partners in order to improve social dialogue and build competences

➢   Introduction of a lifelong learning approach in all its aspects

Turkey, since being formally recognised as a candidate for EU membership at the Helsinki European Council in December 1999, has been engaged in the accession process, preparing itself to fulfil all the conditions of the membership known as the «Copenhagen Criteria». For this reason the education sector, VET in particular, is one of the important areas that Turkey has been working on. The Turkish Ministry of National Education, the responsible body for managing the overall education system, has been implementing a

comprehensive reform process in all aspects of vocational education and training (VET) since 2004.

The process is based on a new global understanding of VET. It particularly refers to the priorities of the Copenhagen Process of November 2002 along with national decisions set out in development plans, government programs and declarations by the Education Assembly. Some of the milestones of the VET reform implemented since 2002 have been summarised below. Reforms were mainly achieved through some EU funded projects (via MEDA and IPA programs) under the administration of the Ministry of National Education, in close cooperation with social partners. All the achievements outlined here were based on international approaches in the field of VET, such as the consideration of ISCO 88 and ISCED 97.

In order to successfully implement the European Credit Transfer System in Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) a viable National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is essential. Turkey is aware that the development of these two systems (NQF and ECVET) needs to be done in parallel.

Therefore, before talking about the Turkish initiatives for ECVET, let's have a brief look at the development process of the NQF in Turkey. A major milestone towards a working NQF in Turkey was the establishment of the Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA) in 2006. This was the result of two years of intensive work on an EU funded VET project with the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) and a diverse range of relevant stakeholders, mainly social partners.

The VQA acts as the EQVET reform in Turkey: the key of ECVET Turkey, since being formally recognised as a candidate for EU membership at the Helsinki European Council in December 1999, has been engaged in the accession process, preparing itself to fulfil all the conditions of the membership known as the «Copenhagen Criteria». For this reason the education sector, VET in particular, is one of the important areas that Turkey has been working on. The Turkish Ministry of National Education, the responsible body for managing the overall education system, has been implementing a comprehensive reform process in all aspects of vocational education and training (VET) since 2004.

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Vocational Qualification Institution (MYK)'s first General Assembly was collected on 8 December 2006 and determined the Board of Directors. After determination of Board of Directors, Establishment of this new institution from scratch such as the creation of secondary legislation, staffing, budget creation, building of service building and hardware supplies has been realized. Action plan including the principal activities of the institution was prepared in 2008.

It is expressed clearly that Professional standards, testing and certification services will be done by institutions and organizations authorized from MYK.

The Regulations on "Preparation of the National Professional Standards" and "Establishment of The Sector Committees, Duties and Study" were promulgated on October 5, 2007 and 27 November 2007 respectively.

When Examination of The Regulation on "Preparation of the National Occupational Standards", it is understood that preparation of the drafts of professional standards by elected institutions / organizations with objective criteria, revision of these drafts by sector

committees and approval by MYK and announcement as National Occupational Standards in Official Gaezette is ensured.

Determination of The Format of Professional-standards according to international practice and levels of vocational qualification compatible to EQF were adopted.

In addition, a temporary article was added to this regulation so that draft occupational standards prepared through projects of the institutions and organizations with their own means or the support of international organizations within this scope have been enabled the evaluation as national savings.

In this context, All the documents related with 250 Occupational Standards prepared through the coordination of ISKUR's (Turkish Employment Organization) between 1995-2000 and Approximately 300 Occupational Standards prepared by TSE (Turkish Standards Institution) with its own means and the standards prepared through the coordination of MoNE thanks to SVET Project (Strengthening the Vocational and Technical Education in Turkey Project) between 2003-2007 period have been taken from these institutions and were started toevaluate.

The Studies of determination and provision of Occupational Standards Savings of Other institutions and organizations are being continued. Being an authorized testing and certification organization ahould be applied to MYK.

First of All, willing the institutions / organizations after creating the necessary infrastructure, must be accredited by Turkish Accreditation Agency (TURKAK) or an accreditation institution with an multilateral recognition agreement in EU.

At this point, the formation of the centers for occupational standards, testing and certification are required.

Therefore, "Strengthening Vocational Qualifications Authority and National Qualifications System "Project with 11 million budget was prepared with the almost establishment of MYK synchronously.

EARGED has translated Commission Staff Working Document and Questionnarie Form of Consultation into Turkish and distributed to The Departments of Ministry of National

Education, Local Education Authorities, Universities, The Education Departments of Other Ministries, Ngo's and Workers 'and Employers' Unions. According to their feedbacks, "Turkey Country Report On Ecvet" has been prepared and presented to European Commission.

The introduction of learning outcomes into the curricula development process has been underway for several years as is a part of the secondary education and training reform project in Turkey (Strengthening Vocational Education and Training in Turkey Project-abbreviated as SVET).

The studies oriented to establish a National Qualifications System has been carried out within the framework of SVET Project in Turkey. The most important output of these studies is the law on Vocational Qualifications Authority approved on 21st September 2006. The establishment of the Vocational Qualifications Authority has been seen as the most important advantage of our country for implementing ECVET.

Designing the modular educational programmes and application of them will also facilitate the implementation of ECVET in Turkey. Since most of the universities has already started to apply ECTS successfully for some time, it is evaluated as another advantage in terms of implementing ECVET.

THE RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTIONS AND KEY ACTORS IN ECVET:

MYK (VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION INSTITUTON)

MYK is responsible for establishment of National Vocational Qualification System compatible to EU. MYK realizes its duties in cooperation with Ministry of National Education, Higher Education Council, Employees and Employers'Organizations and other related institutions. Its Board of Directors consists of the following:

Mr.Bayram Akbas-President
Representative of Ministry of Labour and Social Security
Prof. Dr. BORAT- Deputy Director
Representative of the Ministry of Education
Asst.Assoc. Dr. Omar AÇIKGÖZ-Member

Representative of The Board of Higher Education

Prof. Dr. Yucel Altunbaşak-Member

Representative of Public Professional Organizations

Dr. Osman YILDIZ-Member

Representative of Confederation of Employees' Unions

Mr.Celal KOLOGLU-Member

Representative of Confederation of Employers' Unions

In the context of the basic tasks of MYK, determination of professional standards has a priority., Occupational standards is the basis of creating of training and education programs according to the requirements of the labor market, determining individuals' ability to perform skills in the professio

Studies of ECVET within a consultation process are coordinated and carried out by EARGED, Education Research And Development Directorate. The Main Responsibilities of EARGED are as follows:

- ➢ To ensure the validity of certificates taken from Vocational and technical training schools / institutions of the document and internationally
- ➢ To enable reflexion of The European Qualifications Framework and European Credit Transfer System in Vocational Education to Turkish Vet sytem
- ➢ To credit Each of the modules according to the weight in occupational levels
- ➢ The people graduated from Vocational and technical education in all levels or gratuated from any levels should be evaluated based on their qualifications and certified
- ➢ Establishment and Dissemination of centers for measurement of qualifications and prepare the projects to increase the number these centers.

MAIN LAWS AND REGULATIONS WITH REGARD TO ECVET:

- ➢ Law on the vocational qualifications authority
  Law no 5544 and vqa legislation, saturday, october 7, 2006 official gazette issue no: 26312,

- ➢ Regulation on preparation of nationaloccupational standard,
  Law no 5544 and vqa legislation, friday, october 5, 2007 official gazette issue no: 26664,

- ➢ Regulation on vocational qualification, testing and certification,

Law no 5544 and vqa legislation, tuesday, december 30, 2008 official gazette issue no:27096

EXPERIENCE IN ECVET:

The system will be based on certifications within the accepted occupational standards. It is worth noting here that Turkey has adopted 8 reference levels from the EQF for the National Qualification Framework

(NQF) which are to be developed. VQA has two major responsibilities that are crucial to strengthening the relationship between the VET system and employment. First, it is expected to develop occupational standards (OS) based on competences currently required by the labour market. These OS will shape the development of training standards to be used by all training institutions in the country.

They will provide VET schools with the much needed objectives in terms of competency-based curricula. Over 150 OS have been prepared so far in cooperation with social partners and sector representatives. Providing social partners are involved in this task their commitment to the VET system will increase and the relevance of VET for employment will improve. VQA also has important responsibilities in the area of assessment and certification of learning outcomes gained by all individuals. It will contribute to overcoming major weaknesses in the Turkish VET system, including the lack of standardised mechanisms to assess and control the quality and the relevance to employment of the learning process that takes place in training institutions leading to the improvement of mobility in VET.

In Turkey, ECVET is considered as a tool for supporting mutual trust in the field of qualifications and for increasing transparency. It would thereby enable knowledge, skills and competences acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to be accumulated, transferred and recognised. The adoption of ECVET principles in Turkey however, is a relatively new area of interest within the Turkish VET reform. The development process started about two years ago and it is still ongoing. Turkey has not only been working on ECVET at a national level but also participating and contributing to studies that take place in a broader EU context.

Despite being a new concept, the development of ECVET in Turkey has already reached some technical milestones. Turkey is committed to developing an ECVET system under the lifelong learning approach. This commitment was officially declared in an international meeting concerning ECVET on 28th March 2007 in Ankara. The Educational

Research and Development Directorate (ERDD) of MoNE is the unit responsible for the development of ECVET in Turkey. First, in the same year, an extensive consultation process took place, with over 250 responses from a broad range of stakeholders. ERDD then prepared a Country Report on ECVET, reflecting the views of the stakeholders.

The major conclusions compiled in the country report are the following: MoNE then organised a series of workshops with the participation of representatives of CoHE, social partners, teachers from VET, trainers and members of the curricula working groups of MoNE. An ECVET approach specific to Turkey was discussed and based on lessons learnt from the practices of EU Member States.

As a result of this development process, an ECVET Discussion Paper for Turkey - including a proposed Action Plan based on SWOT Analysis - was prepared. In keeping with the Action Plan, a multi-actor working group agreed on an approach to assigning credits to the existing VET curriculum. Following this, a national credit-allocation approach was used to allocate credit points to all learning outcomes based on knowledge, skills and competences.The basic elements of the ECVET approach specific to the Turkish VET

context are:

- ✓ Learning outcomes are credited based on total learning time.
- ✓ Learning outcomes which lead to qualifications of similar scope, content, complexity and duration are allocated the same amount of credits.
- ✓ Learning outcomes gained through one-to-one learning of up to 20 hours are equivalent to 1 ECVET credit.
- ✓ One full educational year of VET education is equivalent to 60 credits.
- ✓ 240 credits can be gained upon completion of 4 years of secondary formal VET education.

An example of ECVET conversion has been adopted to allocate credits to units of qualifications at levels 2, 3 and 4 in a selected field of training, namely: "Computer and Information Technology" (level 4 curriculum for Network Operator).Given the studies carried out so far for ECVET, it is good to know that the Turkish VET reform, including ECVET development works, will soon be strengthened by the promotion of the Lifelong Learning Project (The LLL project).

The overall objective of the project is to promote the development and implementation of coherent and comprehensive strategies for lifelong learning with the purpose of establishing an institutional framework and capacities for LLL, in line with the EU practices. Projects will

support individuals' access to education in order to raise employment opportunities within a system designed to value learning. It is expected to begin early March 2011 with a life-span of 24 months.

During the LLL Project, the above proposed ECVET model will be reviewed, adopted for 50 occupational areas and tested in pilot schools, with the ultimate aim of a nationwide implementation by the end of 2012 according to the ECVET Action Plan for Turkey.

Turkish citizens have experienced some difficulties while they apply for visa with a view to getting a training course in a European country. If some measures could be developed cooperatively this will increase the participation rate of Turkish citizens in mobility projects designed in the scope of Community Education and Youth Programmes, in particular of LdV since 2004.

GOOD PRACTICES AND PROJECTS:

1.   "ECVET Guide for Users" to be envisaged for the potential users facilitators of the system. ECVET guides to be prepared separately according to the features of the sectors and even of the jobs would be useful.

The respondents consider ECVET as a mechanism based on learning outputs, guaranteeing quality assurance and supporting lifelong learning. These points of view support the secondary education projects, which could be esteemed as reforms, designed and carried by the Ministry of National Education, and they also support the approaches related to Bologna Process.

Even though it is indicative, 120 ECVET credit points on average is seen eligible by the respondents to reflect learning outcomes achieved by an individual in a year in a formal full time 15 VET contexts. It is emphasized that credit points should be determined separately for each vocation by taking into account their standards as well as duration of the learning/training activity.

2.   As a part of Strengthening Vocational Education and Training Project (SVET) learning outcomes have been taken into account in curricula development processes for some years.

The respondents emphasized the importance of cooperation with vocational and technical education institutions led by the stakeholders. Most of the principles in the Commission Working Document on ECVET are in line with the reform studies (validation of non formal and informal learning, quality assurance and promoting life long learning etc) in

Turkey.

The respondents believe that deciding on the details of the learning outcomes will take some time. They also believe that, ECVET might be put into practise in the coming 3-5 years.

3. Ikmep Project:Within This Project, The Studies Of Credit Transfer In Vocational Educatioon Are Ongoing

Within the scope of this Project, development of the quality of vocational secondary education and vocational higher education and its harmonization with the European Union countries are ongoing. In this direction, between 5 to 8 January 2010 The Workshop related with Credit Transfer System in Vocational Education (MKTS) was carried out in Ankara.

4. The Project of Strengthening Vocational Qualifications Authority (Vqa) And The National Qualifications System

Three main outputs would be obtained at the end of the Project as follows:

Establishment of National Qualification System in a Sustainable and efficient framework and making the system functional in the selected prior sectors,

Increase the capacity of the Centers for Vocational Standards, Knowledge and Skills Testing and Certification (VOC-TEST through the institutional capacity of Vocational Qualification Authority to serve all stakeholders sustainably and coordinately.

To increase levels of knowledge and awareness of all stakeholders (from public and private sector actors, workers 'and employers' organizations, Non Govermental Organizations on the National Qualification System and the provision of system ownership.

4.3. ECVET IN UNITED KINGDOM

THE HISTORY OF ECVET:

The Department for Education and Skills in the United Kingdom launched a UK wide consultation on the Commission Staff Working Document on the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) on 12 December 2006. 173 stakeholders were invited to respond to the consultation directly, including from the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The consultation was closed on 15th March 2007 and the summary was presented in a document "UK HE sector response to the European Commission   consultation on a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)".

There are no official documents published regarding the implementation of ECVET in the UK. However, regarding EQF, in March 2010, the single, comprehensive report setting out how the qualifications frameworks in the United Kingdom are referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) was published and submitted to the European Commission. The report establishes the referencing to the EQF, in accordance with the Criteria and Procedures agreed by the EQF Advisory Group, of three frameworks that accommodate a wide range of qualifications in the UK countries: the Qualifications and Credit Framework (England and Northern Ireland), the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework and the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales. The report aims to provide a coherent approach to the adoption of the EQF across the UK.

THE RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTIONS AND KEY ACTORS IN ECVET:

The Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA)

 (http://www.qcda.gov.uk/about/96.aspx) - QCDA develops the curriculum, improve and deliver assessments, and review and reform qualifications. QCDA wants to make sure everyone can get the knowledge, skills and qualifications they need for life in the 21st century. Vocational qualifications is within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).

The UK Higher Education Europe Unit - The Europe Unit is a sector-wide body which aims to raise awareness of the European issues affecting UK higher education and to coordinate the UK's involvement in European initiatives and debates. Launched in January 2004, the Unit seeks to strengthen the position of the UK higher education sector in debates on the Bologna Process and EU policy.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) – ensuring individual universities and colleges meet their responsibilities for academic standards and quality in UK higher education, identifying good practice and making recommendations for improvement; publishing guidelines to help institutions develop effective systems to ensure students have high quality experiences.

The UK Credit Forum - aims to share information about contemporary developments in credit and qualification frameworks and related matters; offers comments and advice on UK and European proposals that are put out to consultation.

MAIN LAWS AND REGULATIONS WITH REGARD TO ECVET:

The UK welcomes the Commission's proposal for a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training, but no any laws and regulations have been established regarding the ECVET implementation in the UK so far. Stakeholders responsible for qualification regulations and accreditations include:

Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF): the new framework for creating and accrediting qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (**SCQF)** - promotes lifelong learning in Scotland.

Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) - a formal partnership between the Welsh Assembly Government's Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning & Skills (DCELLS) and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) with its intention to bring together all forms of recognised learning into a single unifying structure that is applicable to all types and styles of learning and all qualifications.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA)

 (http://www.qcda.gov.uk/about/96.aspx) - QCDA develops the curriculum, improve and deliver assessments, and review and reform qualifications. QCDA wants to make sure everyone can get the knowledge, skills and qualifications they need for life in the 21st century.

Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)

 (http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/home) - They regulate qualifications, examinations and assessments in England and vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland.

EXPERIENCE IN ECVET:

According to the UK response to ECVET, the following important issues that need to be addressed as ECVET develop further:

➢ The UK questions the need for separate credit systems for higher education (ECTS) and vocational education and training (ECVET). We recommend that the Commission evaluates the two systems and examines how the two can be brought closer together to provide a single system for lifelong learning.

- The basis for allocating credit needs to be defined more clearly for all participating Member States if ECVET is to operate outside specific bilateral arrangements. The UK recommends that the Commission examines this issue in more detail.

- The process for allocating credit should be based on an incremental, bottom-up approach, where units can stand apart from qualifications. The UK recommends that the proposals are revised to reflect this.

- Proposals around quality assurance mechanisms will need to be clarified and strengthened. The UK recommends that this is made more explicit.

- As the ECVET proposals develop, efforts should be made to support countries who have not yet adopted a learning outcomes and unit-based approach to their vocational qualifications. The UK recommends that the Commission examines ways to achieve this.

- Currently several EU funded projects are running with the UK participation using their approaches to test ECVET in the UK

- Most ongoing projects are working in the perspective of developing certain forms of common units

- Once they are developed, they will be related to the existing qualifications in the systems concerned.

4.4. ECVET IN SWEDEN

On 19 January 2007 the Ministry of Education and Research made a submission for comment to 76 stakeholders, including trade unions, student organizations, universities, regional councils and accreditation organizations. The results showed that all organizations were positive to ECVET but that a great deal of coordination and development was needed.

Utbildningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Research) is giving the directives for the ECVET implementation.

Skolverket (Swedish National Agency for Education) were responsible for higher vocational training until july 2009, when "Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan" was established.

Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education) has the responsibility for EQF. It is likely that they will become responsible for ECVET in the near future.

Myndigheten för yrkeshögskola (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education) is a newly formed government organisation (2009). They have been given the

responsibility to assimilate Swedish national Qualificiations with the European Qualification Frameworks, which will be the bases for Sweden's regulations and contributions to ECVET. Representatives for the Ministry of Education, the Swedish National Agency for Education and Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education have recently been invited to join a EU working group on ECVET to work with legal regulations. The working group will meet for the first time 16/7/2010

GOOD PRACTICES AND PROJECTS:

Elov Lindälvsgymnasiet - Kungsbacka kommun- European class in Truck maintenance

This is a three year EU-project that will end in autumn 2010. The project is working with ECVET within the truck mechanic program in several European countries.

http://www.euroclasstrucks.eu/

Kalmar Maritime Academy – Securitas mare

A ECVET based project on security and crisis management in the marine industry.

http://www.tg4transparency.com/Events_files/Securitas%20Mare.pdf

4.5. ECVET IN ITALY

THE HISTORY OF ECVET:

The referencing process to EQF is ongoing. It is operated by Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Education with the technical support of a National Coordination Point appointed at ISFOL. The referencing report is expected to be prepared in the year 2010.

Furthermore, a National Committee (Tavolo Unico Nazionale) composed by representatives of Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, Social Partners and all Regions in the country, is working on the definition of national standards for professions, training standards and standards for recognition and certification. The aim of the Committee is to build a framework based on "broadband vocational profiles" structured in units of competences in different economic sectors. The testing phase has been successfully carried out in 2 sectors (tourism and mechanics (Spring 2010) – see web site of the National Reference Point for qualifications appointed in ISFOL www.nrpitalia.it – available in Italian language), standards for 22 other sectors are in the process of being defined.

The on-going work has been presented On December 2009 - the Leonardo da Vinci Italian National Agency has organized a seminar on the European common tools for transparency and certification of competences and qualifications (ECVET and EQF) and the non formal and informal learning addressed to TOI potential promoters in Italy and EU

A national priority was defined in the LdV Call 2010 for TOI projects addressing EU priority 1 (transparency and recognition of competences) and referring to the current systems of classification and tools for transparency envisaged at national level.

The Responsible Institutions and Key Actors in ECVET: Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education and University (MIUR), nationale reference point for qualifications – ISFOL, Social Partners and all Regions for the country

MAIN LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

From the National web site for ECVET , the page -
http://www.nrpitalia.it/TavoloStandard2/DocTavolo.asp, file " 061026_TUN Impianto generale" is making reference to all set of laws regulating relationship between Regions and the Central government in the domain of Education , Training and ECVET.

In particular:

1. Agreement between State and Regions from 18/2/2000 , ..to identify a national and regional system of certification of competences..;
2. Decree of the Ministry 174/2001, .. to warranty transparency in training and validation and accreditation of competences…
3. Law 53/2003 – new system regulating education , training, labour market
4. Decree 276/2003, defines the format for the " Training booklet for the citizen" applied in all regions in terms of policy in education, training and services for employment

EXPERIENCE IN ECVET:

The Qualification system developed in the past by each region of the country (20 regions), needs to be adapted to the National training standards according to EQF/NEQF. At the same time the Regional experiences support the new development of ECVET National and Regional standards

All the economic professions have been grouped in 24 areas -
http://www.nrpitalia.it/isfol/nup/admin/aep_rep.php

Each professional area developed for ECVET to contains National standard profile, Regional profile, training, description of the profession.

It is a plan to complete few unfinished descriptions of National standard profiles.

Most of the work is already completed, including pilot testing in the mechanical and tourism areas.

GOOD PRACTICES AND PROJECTS:

TOI project, year 2007 "Highlight the competences" (www.highlightcompetences.eu) promoted by ARIS (Perugia) - Establishment of the European correspondence between qualifications. (Site Supervisor in the Logistics Services / Cleaning Services) and learning results concerned by transfer, evaluation, validation processes (units, unit parts and related credits);

Pilot project ECVET 2008 "M.O.T.O." (http://ecvet-moto.isfol.it/), promoted by The Ministry of Education, University and Research (coordinator: ISFOL) - (EQF 3 level – occupational sector: Tourism)

N.E.T.WORK" (http://www.provincia.perugia.it/1264), promoted by CST – Italian Center for advanced studies on Tourism and Tourism promotion (Assisi).

Italian organizations are participating in 11 EU projects related to ECVET

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ISFOL, MLPS - www.nrpitalia.it

ECVET pilot projcts - http://www.ecvet-projects.eu/Projects/Default.aspx

http://www.ecvet-projects.eu/bulletins/default.aspx

http://www.ecvet-projects.eu/Seminars/Default.aspx

MIUR -Ministry of Education, University and Research

http://www.istruzione.it

MLPS - Ministry of Labour and Social Policies

http://www.welfare.gov.it

PROJECT PARTNERS
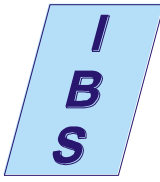
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