ECVET

maGazine

Keeping you informed about European Credit system for Vocational Education & Training

ECVET
European Credit system for
Vocational Education & Training

www.ecvet-team.eu

Education and Training

EACEA
Education, Audiovisual & Culture
Executive Agency

Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme

ECVET maGazine

Editorial

Mr Antonio Silva Mendes

European Commisson,
Director - Lifelong Learning:
policies and programme

After a number of years and much progress, the ECVET recommendation calls all interested actors to nationally implement ECVET with a view to cooperating and sharing successful experience. As the Recommendation states, the credit system aims to facilitate the recognition and accumulation of the individual's learning outcomes on the way to achieving a full qualification. In so doing ECVET asks for technical and operational conditions (responsibilities, regulatory frame, capacity building) to be put in place. Thus all Member States have to join their efforts at institutional level and facilitate the environment of recognition at national level.

Europe is now facing a serious crisis. Indeed, all sectors are heavily affected by it. In our domain, that is education, training and the labour market, the unemployment rate is unbearably high, especially among young people. At the same time we experience a skills mismatch since there is a demand for a better skilled workforce and employers often struggle to recruit the right people in their region or sector. We firmly believe that first-class trained people are key to help recover our economies and to further develop an inclusive Europe.

Highly skilled employees and VET students are mobile both in a technical, geographical and educational sense in order to acquire or reinforce language skills, gain insights into different work organisation models and develop "soft skills". In short, they ask for opportunities to move on, be it within their training pathway or in their professional career. It is obvious that a credit system that facilitates the transfer and recognition of acquired skills and competences serves this purpose perfectly.

Accordingly, one of the central ideas underlying our VET policy is that mobility becomes an integrated part of VET training. It is our objective that international mobility becomes a normal part of VET training schemes. This would help learners to be better prepared for the labour market. I am pleased, in this regard, that Member States agreed about enabling 6% of all learners in initial VET to have completed a period of VET study abroad by 2020.

The education and training sector needs to be modernized to make it a more attractive and high-quality option, so that it provides young people with the right skills to find a suitable job and adults with an opportunity to update skills throughout their working life.

The collaboration with employers is key in this regard, because companies compete globally and have to constantly innovate their technology and process organization, which in turn asks for different qualifications. So our education and training systems need to be more flexible because due to the fast changing work environment employees have to continuously update and upgrade their skills. It is even more important if they want to professionally progress to a more demanding job that requires high level training, let alone the access to Higher Education. Therefore, we have to safeguard better and foster progression routes, both within VET and also from VET to Higher Education and vice versa. We must reflect on how we can exploit ECVET in this sense.

There are many projects testing ECVET, mostly funded under the Lifelong Learning Programme, but there are also national initiatives like in Finland or Germany or in the French speaking community of Belgium. There are also different working groups on the other tools and principles like EQF and the quality network EQAVET. The Cedefop virtual community for ECVET and EQF (set up in 2003) is paving the way to the ECVET community of practice. It is important to take stock regularly and to use the community of practice in view of 2012/2014 (2014: report by the Commission to the Parliament and Council on ECVET implementation). The ECVET community of practice will grow out of those experiences and the

annual forum which took place in Brussels on the 30 May and 1 June 2012 has been an important space to reflect on how to further proceed.

There are basically these steps to take us further:

- Member States safeguard the institutional and political environment needed for the ECVET implementation.
- Stakeholders build on the project results from the ground with a view to feeding them into the community of practice.
- The Commission boosts this work and develops further supportive instruments like templates etc., via the established productive cooperation with the key players.
- The Commission ensures short and long term results of its VET policy recommendations and key initiatives.

In order that this process keeps its momentum, we have to reach out to the people in the field, make sure they understand the added value of ECVET, make them exploit the existing toolbox and move from project activities towards a reliable community of practice.

In this context, the ECVET network with its seminars and workshops at national or sectoral level can significantly help facilitate the promotion of ECVET (see www.ecvet-team.eu).

" We have to reach out to the people in the field, make them move from project activities towards a reliable community of practice "

This issue of August ECVET magazine keeps you informed about the ECVET annual forum including an overview, a concept paper as well as feedback of the workshops about community of practices.

This magazine will focus on the main outcomes of the workshop in Dublin (20th and 21st March 2012) which aimed at sharing, developing and adapting tools and methods to facilitate ECVET implementation; the workshop put emphasis on development of quality process involving relevant stakeholders as well as building networks between members of the ECVET Users' Group.

You will find in this Magazine three remarkable case studies reflecting the European diversity and highlighting the role of key stakeholders in the accomplishment of ECVET: national strategies in Portugal, Hungarian Team of ECVET experts, implementation in Germany.

Against this backdrop, two years later, in this particular crisis context characterized by depletion of resources with high level expectations from the citizens we must give momentum to key initiatives that have real impact on ECVET implementation and share best practices. ●

THE NETWORK   Martine Levreux, ECVET Team

Quality Assurance in ECVET mobility: a basis for trust

Credit: Kaléidoscope

The 5th ECVET workshop took place in Dublin on 20 and 21 March 2012. The main topics for discussion were quality assurance for VET, quality assurance for ECVET mobility and credit points within ECVET. The participants discussed the experiences and "lessons learnt" from ECVET pilot projects and national developments.

Ms Arancha Oviedo from the EQAVET Secretariat (see the article "EQAVET promoting a culture of quality assurance in VET") presented the various strands of work from the European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training initiative. This work supports the implementation of the Recommendation of the European Parliament on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET.

EQAVET is one of the four instruments arising from the Copenhagen Declaration which established vocational training and mobility within a vocational education framework as a priority at a European level. As quality assurance is central to building trust between partners, EQAVET secretariat has continued to develop a range of instruments and carry out activities that help to consolidate a European Quality Assurance community of practice.

One of the instruments is the Quality Circle of the European Quality Assurance Reference framework for VET. This aims to establish clear and measurable goals and objectives at each of the four stages in the VET quality assurance process (plan, implement, evaluate and review). The focus includes responding to feedback from partner organisations, liaison with key stakeholders in order to support their work with VET providers and education change agents at a national level. The Recommendation on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET, includes a set of selected quality indicators for assessing quality in VET. These cover the characteristics of VET systems and include measures such as employment rates and investment in training of teachers and trainers.

As the discussion on quality assurance was also supported by the presentation from Ms Daniela Ulicna, ICF GHK. While it was clear that the way in which projects look at quality assurance is still a "work in progress", many ECVET pilot project promoters had put in place processes that contribute to quality assurance. They often use ECVET's technical specifications which include elements of quality assurance e.g. the Memorandum of Understanding and the Learning Agreement.

Based on the results of the 2008-2012 pilot projects Daniela Ulicna looked at how the instruments used to support learners' geographical mobility aligned with the four stages of the EQAVET quality assurance circle.

Participants thoroughly grasped the first concepts of quality assurance process. There were 3 workshops associated with the following questions: what does Quality Assurance mean for VET system? Participants considered that "quality is not an absolute value but the result of a negociation between different actors aiming at providing trainees with knowledge, skills and competences needed in the society". The discussions while using the quality cycle and taking into consideration the overall actors involved, revealed the importance of going through the 4 phases of the EQAVET quality assurance circle (planning, implementation, evaluation, review). Many of the examples discussed in the workshops showed that using assessment criteria in the implementation phase requires a previous planning phase involving the relevant stakeholders in a rigorous training design of learning outcomes. The last review phase has been established as a crucial component for improvement in practice. ●

Arancha Oviedo - EQAVET Secretariat

EQAVET- promoting a culture of quality assurance in VET

Since the launch of the Copenhagen Process in 2002 the quality of vocational education and training (VET) has been an important policy priority in the wider context of European cooperation in education.

The challenges of promoting mobility, ensuring recognition of qualifications and supporting career progression in a European labour market continue to underlie VET policy developments at European level. The work in the area of quality assurance of VET is an important component of the process of building mutual trust between systems which is necessary if mobility and transparency of qualifications are to become a reality for much larger numbers of young people and workers.

The most recent review of the Copenhagen Process – the Bruges Communiqué 2010 - has emphasised the importance of bringing closer the actions in the various initiatives of this process in order to provide a satisfactory response to these challenges.

Recommendation on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training

The Recommendation on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (Reference Framework) is making a major contribution to mainstreaming quality assurance within VET systems and providing the necessary confidence building in quality assurance processes. These processes play an underpinning role in the recognition and usability of the transfer instruments (notably the EQF and ECVET) which support mobility and the development of a single employment market.

With the establishment of EQAVET to support the implementation of the Reference Framework, there is a considerable strengthening and formalisation of the work in quality assurance at European level. The key challenges are to ensure the engagement of key stakeholders and social partners in the Member States, the development of a sense of ownership of quality assurance processes in VET, the mobilisation of VET providers around the principles of the Reference Framework, and the dissemination of information and policy practice within the Member States.

Building a community of practice and the importance of increasing cooperation between the EU transparency tools

EQAVET provides a basis for deepening the work on quality assurance in VET at European level by bringing together the Member States of the European Union, the Social Partners and the European Commission in a community of practice to develop a culture of quality assurance both within national VET systems and at a European level.

Since 2010 EQAVET has identified cooperation with ECVET and EQF as an important priority in ensuring the sustainability of the EU tools. Such cooperation will contribute to the development of a VET which is fit for purpose, relevant to the labour market, learner- centred and which promotes mobility.

The quality circle of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training

The quality assurance national reference points (NRPS) - which have been established in a significant number of countries - play a key role in supporting countries in the development and implementation of their national approaches to the EQAVET Recommendation. They provide the bridge between the EU agenda and national realities, facilitating the engagement and communication with the national stakeholders.

Progress to date

The work of the Secretariat ensures that EQAVET strengthens its capacity to support the Member States in the development of their national approaches to the implementation of the Recommendation. The steering committee, the various working groups, seminars and the work of their experts contribute to greater relevance for stakeholders in general and at system level within Member States, and increased coherence with EU VET policy objectives.

Key activities undertaken by EQAVET since 2010 have included:

- An annual forum in order to review the on-going work with the objective of identifying new objectives and priorities to respond to Member States' needs and the evolving EU broader policy context in relation to quality assurance in VET.

- A website launched in 2010 (www.eqavet.eu) to support cooperation and communication to the broader audience of VET providers and policy makers.

- The establishment of national reference points in the Member States.

EQAVET encourages and supports the development of a community of practice by facilitating opportunities and structures at which national reference points can share experiences and opinions; and can network and communicate. For more information on national reference points please visit our website here.

- An on-line tool for guiding Member States and national reference points to improve and develop their national quality assurance systems in line with the EQAVET Reference Framework and support their work with VET providers in this area. The tool is accessible from the homepage of the EQAVET website.

- An on-going process of reviewing the implementation process in the national contexts by conducting surveys which provide an overview of the state of play in relation to quality assurance developments, policies and approaches of VET in Member States in-line with the EQAVET Recommendation.

- A series of seminars addressing the sectoral dimension of quality assurance of VET, which bring together actors working on the industry sectors (in particular social partners) and focus on continuing VET and apprenticeship. Policy briefs and all information and material on these seminars are available here.

- A Joint Seminar organised by the EQAVET Secretariat in cooperation with EQF and ECVET in 2011 on VET qualifications and standards in terms of learning outcomes. This cooperation has resulted in the production of several materials:

- An 'Information Gathering Exercise on quality assurance procedures in the processes of certification, curricula setting, accreditation and training of trainers in European VET systems' (an interactive on-line version of the exercise is available here);
- A report on 'Assuring the quality of VET qualifications' and a policy brief.

- Concrete measures to increase cooperation with a broad range of stakeholders with an interest in the lifelong learning strategy and/or quality assurance of VET, in particular with the higher education and the Leonardo programme.

- Publication of a range of communication materials in all the EU languages:
  - Brochure and poster on the EQAVET Reference Framework;
  - Leaflet on 'what is EQAVET';
  - Booklet on the on-line tool;
  - The EQAVET Newsletter is published twice a year;
  - EQAVET Policy briefs.

We look forward to the cooperation with ECVET and learning from the considerable work developed within the ECVET projects. Our hope is that EQAVET can contribute and support ECVET to become a well functioning tool which facilitates mobility and transparency between VET systems for the benefit of European learners. ●

" Since 2010 EQAVET has identified cooperation with ECVET and EQF as an important priority in ensuring the sustainability of the EU tools "

Daniela Ulicna, ICF GHK

Quality Assurance and ECVET The results from pilot projects

The ECVET Recommendation invites Member States to apply quality assurance when using ECVET. However, when you ask ECVET pilot project promoters how they address the issue of ECVET and quality assurance, the answer is often vague. Many speak about the quality assurance of their project rather than quality assurance of the processes implied by the ECVET technical specifications. This shows that the understanding of what aspects of ECVET need to be quality assured, and how this could be done, is not yet clear for most of those involved in pilot projects.

Nevertheless, when you investigate the work of the projects, it becomes clear that pilot project promoters see the ECVET technical specifications as containing elements of quality assurance. Although they do not use the vocabulary of quality assurance or use the four stages of the European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) cycle, they put in place quality assurance processes. Sometimes it is not always easy to distinguish between what the technical specifications require and what is quality assurance. Tools such as a Memorandum of Understanding or a Learning Agreement are elements to ECVET implementation and they are also key instruments for quality assurance.

It is possible to consider the activities and processes used by the ECVET pilot projects in relation to the EQAVET quality circle of planning-implementation-evaluation and review. This is particularly relevant when thinking about the use of ECVET to support the geographical mobility of learners in a partnership framework. If we look at each of the four stages of the EQAVET quality circle, there are many activities within a mobility programme that contribute to quality assurance. The following analysis looks at the quality assurance processes used by the pilot projects:

Planning

When planning mobility, project organisers:

- identified the learning outcomes that the learners were expected to achieve abroad (all projects);

- discussed learning outcomes with a partner institution to ensure there is a common understanding between the partners (all projects had discussions about the definition of learning outcomes with their partners);

- described learning outcomes in a Learning Agreement which is signed by the learner who becomes aware of the expectations placed on them (all those projects that tested ECVET through real mobility did this);

- clarified how unit(s) based on learning outcomes would be validated and recognised and under what conditions (e.g. the CREDCHEM project discussed how units could be validated in the context of qualifications that are not based on units. The Be-TWIN project developed a methodology which validated ECVET and units in relation to higher education and ECTS);

- put measures in place to ensure that when the learner returns their unit(s) would be validated and if possible (depending on national rules) recognised (e.g. ECVET ASSET or M.O.T.O).

Implementation

When implementing the mobility projects, organisers:

- ensured that the learning activities are ongoing and that learners took part in activities which related to the agreed learning outcomes (e.g. in the Finland-Iceland exchange in the M.O.T.O project, a teacher from a partner institution kept in touch with the employer who hosted the mobile learner);

- ensured that the assessment is carried out abroad (e.g. the ECVET AS-SET and OPIR projects used assessment grids to support this);

- on the learners' return, received documentation about each learner's assessment (transcript of record). These were then reviewed and the organisers verified that the conditions that enabled them to validate credit had been met.

Evaluation

On the learners' return, the project organisers:

- gathered information of whether each learner's credit had been validated and recognised;

- identified, if this had not happened, the reasons why;

- collected feedback from learners, teachers and partner organisations on what had worked and what had not worked in relation to the instruments and methods they had developed (e.g. Aerovet and OPIR collected feedback from teachers).

Review

The pilot projects were designed to test ECVET. For many projects, the review phase was used to reflect on their experiences and to provide conclusions and recommendations for the future use of ECVET. When ECVET is implemented, the review phase should be used to improve future mobility exchanges.

In addition to aspects of quality assurance that can be organised in relation to the EQAVET quality cycle, it is possible to think of quality assurance from the perspective of 'ECVET functions'. For each function the outcomes need to be quality assured e.g. most projects made sure that descriptions of learning outcomes covered the knowledge, skills and competences that are relevant for the professions involved in the mobility project. They involved experts in the process (such as the chamber of commerce) or included a validation stage where experts reviewed the descriptions of learning outcomes.

To ensure the host organisation provided appropriate learning opportunities and could deliver the unit to the required quality, the MOTO project provided guidance to the host institution from the sending organisation about the expected learning outcomes. Teachers in the host institution then made sure that the local host enterprise was able to prepare the student to meet the expected learning outcomes.

" The way projects consider quality assurance is still a 'work in progress'. More work will be needed to develop this common understanding "

To ensure assessment in the host organisation was comparable to assessment by the home institution, some projects developed common assessment grids to record students' results e.g. in the OPIR project, descriptions of a unit's learning outcomes were accompanied by a description of the assessment criteria and indicators which supported the assessment process.

The way projects consider quality assurance is still a 'work in progress'. However we know that the expectations and requirements for quality assurance are likely to differ depending on whether conversations are with a certification body or a training centre. The requirements also differ when credit transfer relates to organised mobility of students compared to another form of mobility. Some quality assurance measures are likely to appear too onerous for a short-term mobility project.

In conclusion, based on the work from the pilot projects, it is clear that there isn't a common understanding of what is important for quality assurance when using ECVET. More work will be needed to develop this common understanding. In this context, it is worthwhile noting that the updated version of ECVET's Guide on Mobility, adopted by the ECVET Users' Group and due to be published by the European Commission, will identify quality assurance issues that support geographical mobility. This should start the process of building a common understanding. ▪

Joint seminar: using units within professional qualifications

Location:
Lycée hôtelier Guillaume Tirel
237, boulevard Raspail
75014 PARIS
Dates:
1st and 2nd of October 2012

Around 65 participants - representing the various European networks that support ECVET, EQAVET, EQF - should attend this second joint seminar. A new trend starts with the connection between VET and higher education.

A second joint seminar

Last year, as part of an on-going process to identify European synergies and complementarities, national stakeholders met at the National Agency in the German Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (NA-BIBB) in Bonn to consider how these instruments could enhance co-operation and support the development of high quality qualifications. This seminar focused on the learning outcomes based approach to qualifications.

Focus of the 2012 seminar

The 2012 seminar will focus on the use of units in relation to EQAVET, EQF, ECVET and the European Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (ECTS) used by the higher education sector.

The seminar will help participants to consider the synergies between these European instruments and to learn from each other's experiences. It will also identify where there is a shared understanding of the use of units within professional qualifications, and identify common questions for the European networks that support EQAVET, EQF, ECVET and ECTS to consider.

The main issues will turn on using units to support employability, access to the labour market, improving the mobility of learners, and learners' progression to higher VET and higher education (HE).

To know more about the conclusions of the seminar: the final report will be available on ECVET TEAM website in November www.ecvet-team.eu ▪

Monday 1 October 2012	
14:00 - 14:20	Welcome by the French Ministry of Education: Jean-Marc HUART – Deputy Director Welcome by the European Commission: Antonio SILVA MENDES - European Commisson, Director - Lifelong Learning : policies and programme Presentation of the seminar by the ECVET Team: Richard MANIAK
14:20 - 14:45	**Presentation of the main issues and key concepts:** Keith BRUMFITT
14:45 - 15:15	**Session 1 – Using units to support the mobility of learners** Presentation of the case study - Designing units for mobility in the personal care sector – Centro Europeo di formazione per gli affari sociali e la sanita pubblica - Italy: Michela VECCHIA *Questions and answers*
15:15 - 15:45	Coffee break
15:45 - 17:00	**Session 1 – Workshops** Four concurrent discussion groups based on issues raised in the case study

Program of Thursday, October 2nd in following page

Tuesday 2 October 2012	
9:00 - 9:30	**Session 2 – Using units to support progression to higher VET and HE** Presentation of the case study – Designing a HVET Level 5 qualification to make it compatible with ECTS – France : Sylvie BONICHON – Bologna expert *Questions and answers*
9:45 - 11:15	**Session 2 - Workshops** Four concurrent discussion groups based on issues raised in the case study
11:15 - 11:45	Coffee break
11:45 - 12:30	**Session 3 – Using units to support employability and access to the labour market** Presentation of the case study - Quality assuring the design of units in the commercial sector – BBM/KC HANDEL - the Netherlands: Dorien KRASSENBERG and John BRES *Questions and answers*
12:30 - 13:45	Lunch
13:45 - 15:15	**Session 3 – Workshops** Four concurrent discussion groups based on issues raised in the case study
15:15 – 15:45	Panel discussion on the main conclusions and messages from the workshops: Keith BRUMFITT
15:45 – 16:00	Conclusions from European Commission: Erik Hess - Policy Officer - European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)

Martine Levreux, ECVET team

Annual ECVET forum

Taking the next step: Building the ECVET community of practice
Brussels 31 May - 1 June 2012

The 2012 European ECVET network forum, co-organised by the European Commission and Cedefop with the support of the ECVET team, took place in Brussels on 31 May and 1 June 2012. This was the third annual ECVET forum and one of this year's major events dedicated to the development of ECVET in Europe. The forum focused on how to transform the current range of ECVET initiatives, projects and networking activities in order to create reliable, resourceful and sustainable cooperation by 2014.

The implementation of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) is making good progress across Europe as Member States set up the necessary conditions for implementation. Good practice, solutions, proposals and debates are emerging from ECVET projects, and strategies are in place to enable progress throughout Europe. Many networks are being developed which are helping to establish a community of practice (CoP).

This article introduces the forum, and looks at the key issues and challenges for ECVET implementation. The main outcomes from the workshop discussions are included. Soren Nielsen's presentation considers different approaches to creating a CoP and what could an ECVET CoP look like.

The last few years have shown the beginning of ECVET implementation and associated activities within a large number of organisations, including those in the public sector, the private sector, involved in education provision, ministries, sector organisations, trade unions, teachers and trainers etc. These organisations and individuals have been involved in discussions on issues such as the transfer of best practices, the general development of ECVET and specific aspects of ECVET which are carried out in many different settings. The time has come to transform this wide range of diverse activities and discussions into a more reliable, and sustainable arrangement which will enable cooperation to continue. This would mean letting the ECVET community of practice take shape.

Key messages from the opening session

The debate was opened during a round table led by the European Commission's Director of Lifelong Learning: policies and programme - Antonio Silva Mendes, the Acting Director of Cedefop

Christian F. Lettmayr and by a representative from the world of work, the President of the ANFA (French training joint body of the Automobile Services Sector) - Stéphane Rivière.

Mr Silva Mendes emphazised the severity of Europe's current unemployment situation and the mismatch between training providers' offer of qualification and the demand. He highlighted one of the purposes of the forum: i.e. to recognise that while "*Encouraging mobility is one important step; you learn languages, gain "soft skills" and get other experiences. The second important step is the recognition of the competence acquired.*" After underlining that ECVET was one the European instruments that can help to increase the recognition of competences, he encouraged those who had significant responsibilities in the VET sector and in Member States to concentrate their efforts at the institutional levels in order to facilitate an environment that recognises competence at a national level.

Mr Christian F. Lettmayr outlined the role of the European Commission and Cedefop as facilitators who would encourage the discussion and developed of the concept of an ECVET community of practice. "*The idea is to take successful examples and adapt them to our national contexts. We have to show that diversity is a benefit, using the different success stories. A Community of Practice is the right area for that.*"

Mr Stéphane Rivière emphazised the added value of ECVET in the automobile

services sector. He stressed the need to recognise outcomes acquired abroad by young people who were involved in a mobility process. In France, social partners of the automobile services sector had been very active in this area and they had compiled a national inventory of qualifications and re-designed qualifications in terms of units. In this way it was now possible to obtain a qualification unit by unit. This has been in response to the need to create the necessary conditions for the implementation of ECVET.

" **The ECVET forum was designed as a place to exchange information and create networks, as well as to challenge colleagues and peers** "

The workshops organisation

The ECVET forum was designed as a place to exchange information and create networks, as well as to challenge colleagues and peers. It was also a place for active participation and open discussions during the two thematic sessions "challenges for the ECVET Community of practice" and "towards an ECVET community of practice".

These two thematic sessions were supported by workshops where key issues relating to implementation could be

addressed. The discussions were informed by participants' experience and evidence from selected ECVET projects and initiatives. The experiences of the pilot projects show that ECVET is a valuable instrument that enhances learners recognized mobility. It also has the potential to help increase the options for movement between sectors and systems.

The thematic session that focused on the "challenges for the ECVET Community of practice" considered issues of implementation. Participants identified many key issues that would need to be resolved and could form part of a future community of practice.

The second day focused on how to organise future collaborations within the ECVET Community of Practice. The proposals and possible solutions suggested by participants from the pilot projects, initiatives and networks will contribute to new projects and initiatives within the future ECVET Community of Practice.

Session 1: Challenges for an ECVET Community of Practice

The first session focused on ECVET implementation and the challenges that would be faced by an ECVET community of practice.

Before the workshops began, Ms Isabelle Le Mouillour (CEDEFOP) presented some of the results from CEDEFOP Monitoring of ECVET implementation

(1) The presentations are available in the ECVET Forum proceedings

in 2011. Mr Didier Gelibert from the ECVET team[1] took stock of the ECVET network's situation and ECVET Secretariat's activities for network members. There were two workshops associated with the first thematic session. These considered "ECVET as a multiplier for geographical learning mobility" and "ECVET as a multiplier for lifelong learning." The discussions revealed the variety of ways in which it was possible to implement ECVET.

Ms Sibilla Drews from the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training in Germany (BIBB) – DE introduced a workshop on learning mobility based on the NetECVET project[2] (2011-2013) which aims at produce a toolbox that helps mobility projects in applying ECVET. Based upon the analysis of practitioners' needs and expectations, and personal experience of European mobility issues, Ms Sibilla Drews presented the ECVET added value and implementation obstacles for setting up and organizing a learning mobility.

The workshop dedicated to lifelong learning was introduced by Mr Rolf Aslaksrud Kristiansen from EUROMASC Ltd (European Masters of Skilled Crafts) - NO. He highlighted the main issues relating to lifelong learning in terms of learning pathways, horizontal and vertical mobility, transfer of credit, validation of learning, learning outcomes and the role of qualifications frameworks. As the coordinator of the PERMEVET project developed by Oslo and Akershus University College, Mr Kristiansen summarized their work on how the learning

outcomes could combine with the European tools (EQF, ECVET) to support movement between different qualification levels in a selection of four occupations (automotive, ICT/electronics, construction, floristry).

The third workshop "Sharing the Added Value of ECVET" focused on developing a shared understanding of the added value of ECVET. Workshop participants were invited to reflect on how best to communicate the added value of ECVET and how to use the idea of added value to motivate and gain commitment for ECVET in their respective national, sectoral, regional or local contexts. Mr Jean-André Lasserre from AFT-IFTIM[3] (Association Française pour le Transport - Institut de Formation aux Techniques d'Implantation et de Manutention – FR) set out his thoughts on added value from the perspective of a VET provider and a professional association. This was based on Mr Jean-André Lasserre's experience of leading his organisation's work in 15 projects dealing with ECVET and European mobility in the field of transport, logistics and tourism in a European and international context.

The fourth and fifth workshops "moving to an effective implementation of ECVET" focused on the achievements and challenges of ECVET in order to inform the further development of a credit system for VET in Europe. These workshops aimed to produce a shared statement on what is working and which obstacles still need to be overcome. The workshops helped to identify a series of challenges

and a set of proposals for actions that will support discussion in the ECVET community of practice.

" Four main issues to develop the ECVET Community of Practice: sharing, solving, committing and making visible "

Ms Christiane Eberhardt from the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training in Germany (BIBB) – DE introduced the topic based on her experience in the European CREDCHEM project. She commented on the development of ECVET in the German VET context as highlighted the observation from a recent publication that "*ECVET is not something which sells itself. ECVET-based mobility elements require general conditions to be in place which are aligned towards avoiding duplication of work and making existing ECVET approaches available for subsequent use by companies, schools or educational providers*".

In the parallel workshop led by Mr Alain Bultot from Agency Education Formation-Europe, Belgium – BE, the experience from the OPIR[4] project was presented. This project aimed to introduce more flexibility and improve the quality of VET in Belgium/Wallonia. This project had focused on designing units and appropriate assessment approaches that could be implemented on a larger scale.

---

(2) Behind the NetECVET project is a group of 14 National Agencies for the Lifelong Learning Programme, coordinated by the German National Agency. It aims at supporting practitioners of transnational mobility who are beginning to work with ECVET
(3) AFT-IFTIM is a VET provider and a professional association for employers' and employees' organisations.
(4) Le projet OPIR (Outils Pratiques Interrégionaux pour ECVET).

Session 2: Toward an ECVET community of practice

Mr Soren Nielsen from Denmark, former ETF - Torino, Ms Isabelle Le Mouillour and Mr Didier Gelibert introduced the session. They presented the concept of a Community of Practice and outlined what could be involved in an ECVET Community of Practice.

Five parallel workshops considered the question: 'what could be the ECVET Community of Practice in order to move forward on the implementation of ECVET?' Each workshop aimed to develop a common understanding of the ECVET community of practice and considered four issues: sharing (such as the good practices), solving (e.g. common problems), committing (members should have an active participation) and making visible (CoP could also be used as a tool for promoting ECVET). In addition participants reflected on how to use the ECVET community of practice to optimise and increase the efficiency of current cooperation as well as using it as a mean to support their own ECVET activities. They were also asked to develop proposals for organising and strengthening cooperation which could be transferred to a national, regional or local context.

Conclusions

Mr João Delgado, Head of Unit – DG EAC Vocational training; Leonardo Da Vinci, European Commission called on all key participants to strongly commit to implementing ECVET and *"to take the exercise further by:*
- *Members States ensuring that the institutional and political conditions to support the ECVET implementation are in place;*
- *the Commission strengthening this work and developing further supportive instruments like templates and tools;*
- *stakeholders using the project results with a view to mainstreaming them."*

He also summarized the main outputs of the workshops, namely that there was a need to:
- *"share the existing instruments, methodologies and project outcomes with a view to extending ECVET partnerships involving competent institutions;*
- *solve the problem of recognising what has been learned so that the individual can build on these credits while progressing to further learning."*

Mr Joao Delgado thanked the participants for the valuable discussions and asked them to be involved in converting the projects' work and networks into a long-lasting Community of Practice that would support the implementation of ECVET. ◻

What do communities of practice look like?

Communities develop their practice through a variety of activities.
The following table provides a few typical examples:

Problem solving	"Can we work on this design and brainstorm some ideas; I'm stuck."
Requests for information	"Where can I find the code to connect to the server?"
Seeking experience	"Has anyone dealt with a customer in this situation?"
Reusing assets	"I have a proposal for a local area network I wrote for a client last year. I can send it to you and you can easily tweak it for this new client."
Coordination and synergy	"Can we combine our purchases of solvent to achieve bulk discounts?"
Discussing developments	"What do you think of the new CAD system? Does it really help?"
Documentation projects	"We have faced this problem five times now. Let us write it down once and for all."
Visits	"Can we come and see your after-school programm? We need to establish one in our city."
Mapping knowledge and identifying gaps	"Who knows what, and what are we missing? What other groups should we connect with?"

Source: *Communities of Practice: A Brief Introduction* - Etienne Wenger - June, 2006
http://www.ewenger.com/theory/

Mr Soren Nielsen, from Denmark, former ETF (Torino) and Martine Levreux, ECVET team

An ECVET Community of Practice: what does it mean?

Mr Soren Nielsen

At the end of the annual ECVET forum, Mr Joao Delgado thanked everyone for participating in the discussions and invited them to use the work from the projects and networks to create a long-lasting Community of Practice that could offer more support.

The second day of the annual forum focused on defining the ECVET community of practice. During the discussion, participants exchanged views and explored how a Community of Practice could work.

This article summarizes[1] Mr Soren Nielsen's (from Denmark and formerly from ETF, Torino) presentation on using Communities of Practice as this set the scene for discussions in the ECVET workshops on the second day of the annual forum. His presentation was based on the experience of the European Training Foundation (ETF) which has used Communities of Practice for the LEARN project (2007-2009)[2] and the Teacher Training project in Montenegro (2010-2011). These projects tested the use of Communities of Practice. Finally Mr Nielsen presented the possible barriers for developing a Community of Practice and offered some thoughts to the ECVET network if they were thinking about developing into a Community of Practice.

Presentation

Having set out the context of the Western Balkan countries, Mr Nielsen emphazised how a Community of Practice could be beneficial in terms of the ability to solve problems and share knowledge in a cheaper and more efficient way. He highlighted the critical success factors for successfully implementing a Community of Practice which included a commonly defined domain of work, logistical support, coordination, communication and promotion of the work.

Using examples from the former Yugoslavia, Albania and Turkey, he set out how the Community of Practice had developed from well established network once the relevant stakeholders

had been identified. These stakeholders were then fully involved in defining, various elements of the Community of Practice including the domain in which it would operate and the practice it would promote or support. He also outlined the main challenge facing the development of a Community of Practice which included giving free space and responsibility to individuals who will experiment with new ideas and share practice and their own experiences among their peers. It was also necessary to define the area of cooperation, provide opportunities to participants and remove obstacle to becoming involved. However the overriding need was to secure the motivation and commitment of stakeholders.

To help to guide the process of establishing a Community of Practice for ECVET, there are a number of questions to consider:

• Why have a Community of Practice?

In the VET teachers' network in the Western Balkan countries, the main reason was to cope with the challenges of working with transition countries that faced language and cultural barriers. "ETF developed a policy learning approach (CoP) aiming at developing resourceful human beings in a more open context of learning than in usual working groups."

• What is a Community of Practice?

The concept of a Community of Practice

as developed by Etienne Wenger was based on helping to understand how organisations learn. *"It emphazised the need to be concerned about content rather than form and to create the right conditions for learning: a Community of Practice is action oriented, knowledge-based and uninhibited by organisational structures. The Communities of Practice approach recreates an old form of mutual/horizontal learning with potential for relevant and just-in-time shared knowledge for effective problem-solving among experts. It is much more efficient and cheaper than traditional learning."*

" A Community of Practice is action oriented, knowledge-based and uninhibited by organisational structures "

According to Etienne Wenger 's definition[3], a Community of Practice is a group of individuals who share a specific practice who are interested in learning from each other – and together, with an ambition to share ideas, papers, models etc. The three elements of a Community of Practice are the *"domain" (the definition of the area of shared inquiry and of the key issues), the "community" (the relationships among members and the sense of belonging) and the "practice" (the body of knowledge, methods, stories, cases, tools, documents, etc.)* These three elements must be underpinned by support, coaching, logistical assistance and by an adequate ICT infrastructure without undue emphasis on expensive and highly technical technology.

From his experience Mr Nielsen outlined the critical success factors: a domain that energises a core group of individuals, an efficient coordinator, involvement of experts, gives attention to the details of the practice, ensures the right rhythm and mix of activities and gives opportunities for communication.

• Could the ECVET Network be a Community of Practice?
Based on his experience, Mr Nielsen asked if the ECVET network is a group sharing a specific practice, a group interested in learning from each other – and together. A group with the ambition to share ideas, papers, models, etc. – in a

specific area. His conclusion was "yes". The unanswered question was related to identifying the areas of interest. There must be more than one area as participants and users will come from very different backgrounds.

In addition there are some practical questions for ECVET in setting up a Community of Practice e.g. what would you call the domain? What practice do you have in common? What rules must be decided for the community in order for it to function well? What are the opportunities and what obstacles can be foreseen? ⬤

Community of Practice
The elements

⬤ **Domain**
The definition of the area of shared inquiry and of the key issues

⬤ **Community**
The relationships among members and the sense of belonging

⬤ **Practice**
The body of knowledge, methods, stories, cases, tools, documents, etc.

(3) *"Situated Learning: Legitimate peripheral participation"* - Lave, J and E. Wenger - 1991 New York - Cambridge University Press

Alexandra Costa Artur, IMANOVATION agency, Portugal

A step by step sectoral approach – ECVET in the shipbuilding industry

The shipbuilding and repair industry has a strategic importance in Europe. With approximately 150 shipyards in Europe, they produce 10 per cent of the world's output and provide employment for over 300,000 highly skilled and specialist staff. They are important organisations at both the regional and the national level.

Qualifications are key component in maintaining and improving the competitiveness of the sector. The shipbuilding and repair industry operates in a world market and European organisations have to compete against competitors in South Korea, China, Japan and Brazil. The 2011-13 Leonardo da Vinci project "PRO@" looked at new opportunities to manage and support the workforce in the sector. The project, promoted by UNINAVE- Union Española de Constructores Navales in Spain involved seven partners from four other countries - Finland, France, Lithuania and Portugal. Using ECVET, supported by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the project looked at how new qualifications could be developed for the shipbuilding sector. This sectoral approach sought to strengthen transnational cooperation between vocational training and the labour market, through the participation of stakeholders such as employer associations, professional bodies, individual companies and training providers.

Mr. Victor Dias, Director for Vocational Training in CENFIM, Portugal – the Vocational Training Centre for the Metal Industry - uses his experience of the project to discuss how it worked.

How ECVET supports the sectoral approach?

Victor Dias - The shipbuilding and repair sector in the EU is facing a crisis including operating in a complex and uncertain context where the demand for qualified professionals cannot easily be met. Important priorities for the sector are the need to make employment more attractive, to improve the image of the sector and to clarity the possible career paths for those in the sector. All of which will help to make the sector more attractive to young workers and retain talented individuals.

The sector has used the ECVET, EQF and the Europass transparency instruments as they support mobility. Mobility is important for the sector because of the complexity and quick turn around when a shipyard wins a tender. Shipbuilders need to start planning two or three years in advance of starting the work. The entire workforce needs to be in place in order for the contract specifications to be met. Normally, at the start of a contract, shipbuilders do not have all the workers in place. They

need to look for workers from another shipyard in the same country or from across Europe - mobility is the reality in this sector. The basic idea for the project was to acknowledge that there is a significant mobility issue for the sector so it is crucial to recognise the abilities of the workforce.

Recognising the knowledge, skills and competences of the workforce is essential to meet this challenge of mobility within a European labour market as well as encouraging people to enter and stay in the industry. This can be done by promoting and improving the assessment, validation, transfer, recognition and accumulation of individuals' learning in formal, not formal and informal contexts.

> **" The basic idea for the project was to acknowledge that there is a significant mobility issue for the sector so it is crucial to recognise the abilities of the workforce "**

Which approach was used in the project?

Victor Dias - In 2006 UNINAVE began work on another Leonardo da Vinci project, Metalcert - Transnational device to certify key competences in the metal sector. This aimed to improve the trans-

parency of qualifications through transnational cooperation and social dialogue. Using the results from this project, the PRO@ partners agreed that the first step to implementation would involve three groups of staff in the shipbuilding industry: welders, pipe fitters, and boilermakers. As a second step, the PRO@ partnership identified EQF Level 4 qualifications as the basis for a common approach. Three qualifications were selected on the basis of criteria agreed by the PRO@ partnership namely mobility, added value, the availability of professionals and their sensitiveness to emerging trends.

" This is a "bottom up" approach, based on the needs of companies and workers, to design qualifications in terms of learning outcomes "

The Pro@ project built on the work of Metalcert. After comparing the three qualifications, two partners were assigned to work on each qualification. Each group of two partners identified the learning outcomes from the associated professional profiles. This will enable the qualification to be redesigned in line with the ECVET technical specifications and a set of the learning outcomes for each unit to be recognised.

Once the learning outcomes were identified, the Pro@ team tested the results through a pilot initiative in each participating country. These pilots involved at least one company from the sector, a team of two to five employees, and an expert to monitor and evaluate the learning to judge whether it is in line with the ECVET-based PRO@ qualifications.

If the evaluation is positive, the partners will agree to include the qualifications in the industry's on-line data base which will enable them to be recognised as European shipbuilding qualifications for each of the three professions. The qualifications will also be included in participating countries' National Qualification Systems.

What are the outcomes from the project?

Victor Dias – The first outcome is the implementation of the ECVET approach to three qualifications in the shipyard sector. These qualifications will be based on the industry's profiles which we will name PPP – PRO@ Professional Profile.

PRO@ aimed to develop and use a European electronic instrument to support the validation, recognition and accumulation of learning outcomes by those who work in the "ship building and repairing sector."

With this electronic instrument, a potential new partner can easily compare workers' achievement to a national qualification, match up what has been

achieved and make adjustments to a worker's learning in line with the European qualification. This is a "bottom up" approach, based on the needs of companies and workers, to design qualifications in terms of learning outcomes.

The project strengthened the European Consortium for the Development of Qualifications in the Sector and helped it to achieve:
- a sector wide map of key processes and competences;
- the design of relevant professional qualifications in terms of learning outcomes;
- the use of ECVET technical specifications to award qualifications with an "ECVET quality label";
- a greater understanding of the mobility issues in the sector through working collaboratively;
- the development of an electronic platform which enables qualifications to be better interpreted and understood.

Our future plans include greater networking within the sector, the inclusion of more partners in the network and strengthening learning in the shipbuilding and repair industry. ●

Ms Ágnes Balla and Ms Julianna Lukács, Tempus Kozalapitvany TEMPUS PUBLIC FOUNDATION, Hungary

Hungarian Team of ECVET experts

TEMPUS PUBLIC FOUNDATION
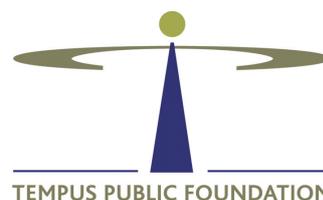
The Hungarian team of ECVET experts is aiming to support the successful implementation of ECVET in Hungary. The work has started.

Other lifelong learning instruments are more developed, though each is at a different stage of implementation - Europass documents are widely used; EQAVET is under development and there are ongoing debates on NQF, which will soon be endorsed. ECVET can both provide and receive energy and support from other lifelong learning initiatives. Consequently the Hungarian team of ECVET experts is trying to identify synergies with other lifelong learning instruments.

The team includes 13 experts who can represent all the relevant stakeholders in VET. The number of experts is large but this helps to reach all the target groups through the use of their own contacts, institutions and networks. The team is increasingly extending publicity for ECVET through other expert networks, which includes representatives from all VET stakeholders such as VET researchers, practitioners, qualification experts, international relations officers, representatives of the National Reference Point and the relevant ministry, and representatives from the world of work.

So far on four Peer Learning Activity workshops the expert team explored opportunities and challenges of ECVET implementation in Hungary using their prior knowledge on other LLL tools. During study visits, the members of the team are monitoring the international environment, procedures and trends to identify best practices that could be adopted and disseminated. The team also contributes to international discussions by sharing our experiences in international workshops.

The team is participating in the thematic network NetECVET and will adopt the results from this project in order to design training materials. (More information on NetECVET is available at www.netecvet.com)

For the implementation of ECVET, the team aims to:
- fine-tune and share common terminology which will help discussions between VET providers and stakeholders;
- exchange examples of existing practice;
- help to solve problems linked to the implementation of ECVET.

The expert team has drawn up a training material for VET providers on ECVET. Three seminars will be held for VET provider institutions starting in November 2012, to help them to be actively involved in testing and understanding ECVET. These seminars will be supported by background papers to help VET providers to design their mobility projects for testing ECVET. This should result in an increased number of ECVET-like mobility projects.

The expert team aims to provide stakeholders with all the relevant information on implementing ECVET. This will also help to promote the European Lifelong Learning Programmes and identify opportunities —mostly in Leonardo da Vinci programmes.

From the year 2013 the focus shifts on informing representatives of the labour market through news articles, presentations, taking advertising space at events organised for employers, and discussions with reporters from the specialised press.

The team seeks to gradually enlarge its network of contacts and increase the professional publicity in order to support the sustainability of ECVET. The gradually enlarging ECVET Community of Practice will reach individual learners ultimately. Reaching the final beneficiaries of ECVET, the learners and employees will come at a later stage, but end-users are indirectly involved through their VET institutions at the meantime.

The project expects to provide a better understanding of the trends and directions of on-going VET reform in relation to ECVET. The project should also lead to better cooperation between stakeholders in Hungary with an interest in implementing ECVET.

The project is carried out by the Tempus Public Foundation (National Agency in Hungary) with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union. The project lasts from January 2012 to December 2013. More information is available (in Hungarian): http://www.tpf.hu/pages/content/index.php?page_id=1129

" The team seeks to gradually enlarge its network of contacts and increase the professional publicity in order to support the sustainability of ECVET "

Contact persons:

Ms Ágnes Balla, Head of Unit
agnes.balla@tpf.hu

Ms Julianna Lukács,
Programme Coordinator
julianna.lukacs@tpf.hu

Christiane Eberhardt, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training BIBB, Germany

From "trying ECVET" to "putting ECVET into practice": the CREDCHEM example

Context

CREDCHEM started in 2009 with the objective of facilitating the mobility of learners by enabling learning outcomes evidenced abroad to be transferred into the training at home. The main considerations for CREDCHEM were that mobility in the chemical industry can only be consolidated in the medium to long term if:

- learners' achievements can be integrated into national qualifications and training pathways;
- learning takes place within an organisational framework which ensures time spent abroad is within an agreed procedure and in accordance with stipulated standards.

In order to tackle these issues the CRED-CHEM partnership includes institutions representing vocational pedagogy, vocational education and training practice and VET policy advice from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Italy and Germany. The project aimed at creating a "CREDCHEM Mobility Network in Chemistry" which offers units based on learning outcomes which could be used abroad via an internship in partner institutions. This would allow learners to complete units in other European countries which could be considered as an integral component of their training at home. This would allow them to be recognised at home as part of the training. The CREDCHEM experience indicates that integrating a period of mobility into training is easier if:

- the units of learning outcomes to be evidenced abroad correspond to the learning outcomes produced in the domestic contexts in terms of scope, breadth and depth;
- instruments exist which make it easier to plan, organise and execute stays abroad;
- standards have been agreed with regard to how a unit of learning outcomes is offered and assessed.

Sector mobility: the world of work

In CREDCHEM, the units were developed for working in a laboratory. This decision was taken due to the fact that work processes and the work requirements are comparable and transferable across borders regardless of what title is given to an occupation or qualification in the different educational systems. Each CREDCHEM unit has its foundations in a set of typical work tasks, reflecting the complexity of the world of work. The knowledge, skills and competences which are of significance to the completion of a work task form the basic structure for defining the units.

During the projects lifecycle 12 units were developed within the partnership which are based on 68 work tasks. Together these units make up a complete qualification in some countries whereas

THE APPROACH:
FROM WORK TASKS TO UNITS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES
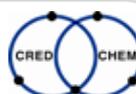
World of Work in a laboratory: work tasks

Analysing KSC of work tasks and clustering them into units
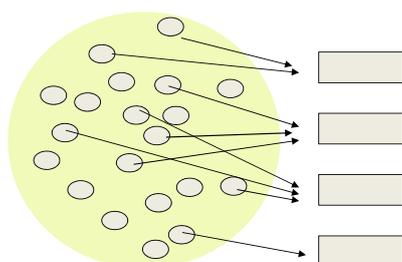
(1) Professional work tasks from the world of work are used as the basis for the designing of units

(2) These units describe the demands which the skilled workers meet in the real world of work. Young persons have to master these demands in whatever system they are trained.

○ = work tasks

Niethammer / Schlegel, TU Dresden (2010)

in other countries they represent parts of an occupational profile or an "additional qualification". Each unit is assigned a different "level of difficulty" in relation to scope, depth and availability of knowledge, skills and competences. The differentiation into "levels of difficulty" enables the mobility to be more closely aligned with national qualifications and the acquisition of an "add-on qualification".

Learning outcomes can only be evidenced in connection with specific professional work tasks. Thus the assessment of a unit abroad takes place by the learner solving a "professional examination task". These tasks are gathered together by the partner organisations throughout the project. In addition each assessment includes a task which looks at professional skills, the learner's problem solving ability, communication skills and the ability to work in a team. Both instruments (examination tasks and assessment tasks) provide evidence that the learning outcomes acquired abroad are comparable irrespective of country and VET system.

Preconditions for a lively and open network

The units are described in a matrix which forms the starting point for organising the planning and implementation of mobility. The matrix makes clear whether and how the unit relates to the existing occupational profiles in the partner countries and which parts of a qualification may be covered by the unit. In addition, the matrix provides supplementary information which facilitates the planning and execution of mobility measures:

- which institution offers the unit?
- what is the minimum duration?
- how many learners can be accommodated?
- what is the level of difficulty the unit being offered?
- which language is used for the mobility?
- what are the typical work tasks for the unit?

" ECVET-based mobility requires an appropriate infrastructure, organisational, financial and human resources "

This information seems to be necessary in order to initiate further mobility and to attract new partners to the network. During the project's life institutions from Poland, Hungary and Latvia have shown interest in testing the units and sending learners to CREDCHEM institutions - they are going to join the "CREDCHEM network.". By February 28 2012, 55 learners from Italy, Germany, Slovakia, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic have spent time abroad as part of the CREDCHEM project. A further 24 learners passed a CREDCHEM unit at a partner institution after the project officially ended.

Next steps

In September 2012 the "CREDCHEM network" will be officially established as "an open and voluntary association"[1] of European training providers in the chemistry sector. At the core of the network activities will be transnational learning and organising the mobility of learners. Membership is free of charge. The only conditions for joining the network are for members to:

- commit themselves to the mobility standards as agreed by the CREDCHEM project (this includes units, assessment, the Memorandum of Understanding and a Learning Agreement);
- cooperate at a national and European level with the social partners and chemical companies as well as with schools and other institutions (i.e. competent bodies) responsible for VET;
- support schools by offering guidance and preparation for learners in order to attract them to a chemistry-related training and to teachers in order to promote interesting and practice oriented teaching.

"Putting ECVET into practice": General remarks

For all projects, there are options, obstacles and conditions to consider in relation to implementation – and these are dependent on the context. In relation to transnational mobility, ECVET can generate some basic and practical benefits in order to ease support and stabilise time spent abroad on training. But: ECVET is not the answer to everything – it is a starting point. ECVET-based mobility requires an appropriate infrastructure, and organisational, financial and human resources will need to be in place within the institutions in order

to ensure that mobility can be part of the day-to-day life of a school or training provider. New ways of cooperation among training providers, schools and companies have to be found in order to make ECVET based mobility a success in the long run. Nevertheless the experiences and evaluation emerging from the pilot projects e.g. SME master plus, AEROVET and CREDCHEM show and define the "added value" for the purposes of mobility of those elements of ECVET which are aligned towards transparency, learning outcomes and mutual trust[2]. Against this background, focusing on the pedagogical dimension of ECVET and making sure the practical issues mentioned earlier are addressed lead to a better integration of training phases abroad into the training process at home. In this respect ECVET can be used and implemented within partnerships "in accordance with national legislation and practice" as stated in the ECVET recommendation. This may not be the case in all contexts – but this will be shown and evaluated by the "Second Generation" of ECVET projects. ●

---

(2) Eberhardt, Christiane (Eds.): *ECVET as a vehicle for better mobility? Moving from recommendation to practice,* Wissenschaftliche Diskussionspapiere, Heft 132, Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung Bonn 2012, available: http://www.bibb.de/veroeffentlichungen/de/publication/show/id/6889

ECVET calendar
of activities 2012

September	
11	Customized Seminar for UEAPME-European Association of Craft,Small and Medium-sized enterprises (Brussels)
19-20-21	ECVET Seminar for Mobility (Milano)
25-26	Customized Seminar for Nuclear Sector (Brussels)
26	ECVET Steering Committee
October	
1-2	Joint seminar ECVET/EQF/EQAVET
18-19	ECVET Workshop 6 (Rome)
22-23	10th seminar : ECVET pilot projects 2nd generation (Berlin)
November	
19-20-21	ECVET Seminar for Mobility (Nice)
22-23	Customized Seminar for the Nordic-Baltic countries
26	ECVET Users' Group meeting
To be fixed	Seminar ECTS-ECVET
December	
11-12	ECVET Seminar for VET Designers - Paris (to be confirmed)
12-13	Customized Seminar for Switzerland

ecvet

European Credit system for
Vocational Education & Training

www.ecvet-team.eu