

NEWSLETTER

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Editorial

Welcome to the 5th QALLL newsletter

Dear Reader,

With the beginning of 2012 QALLL has entered the final year of its three-year life cycle. In the past two years QALLL has accomplished fundamental milestones such as the project identification, analysis and mapping. Nonetheless busy months lie ahead: The beginning of the year will see a series of national expert panels in all partner countries and the finalisation of the qualitative QALLL report. By midyear the QALLL recommendations will be publicised and the second half of 2012 will mainly be dominated by dissemination activities.

Though to start with in this newsletter edition let us take a brief look back. Isabelle Bonnaire from the German National Agency/BiBB reports on the second QALLL conference that took place in late November 2011 in Berlin.

Next, read through the thought-provoking interview we conducted with Christian Kloyber from the Austrian Competence Centre for Adult Education.

In this edition's column 'Project in the Spotlight' Tim Scholze presents the Grundtvig project "VILMA", which aims at developing a comprehensive approach as well as a consistent set of instruments to assess and evidence the impact of mobility learning on the competence development of the individual learner.

QALLL expert Maria Gutknecht-Gmeiner gives a glimpse of the new QALLL synthesis report on the first and second project mapping.

Find out about the aims and objectives of the cluster of knowledge on "Modernising VET system – improving performance, quality and attractiveness of VET" that has been initiated by

ERI SEE, the Education Reform Initiative of South-Eastern Europe.

This edition of the QALLL newsletter also informs about what is on the agenda of the European thematic network CITY-M, which deals with creative, innovative and transferable methods in the training of teachers and training staff.

Towards the end of this issue QALLL project partners Margret Johannsdottir from Iceland and Dagmar Augustinská from Slovakia report on their national QALLL dissemination activities.

Finally don't forget to note down the date of the 3rd and final QALLL conference, which you will find at the end of this newsletter.

Wishing you an informative read!

Barbara Höller

QALLL project manager

barbara.hoeller@oead.at

| www.lebenslanges-lernen.at

| www.qalll.net

2nd QALLL Conference

REACHING MUTUAL TRUST -
Quality assurance that works,
November 28th, 2011, Berlin,
Germany



Which are the key points at which quality assurance progress? How to realise feedback

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culture concerning trainers? Do quality standards contribute to professionalisation of staff? How to include staff of VET institutions in learning at the workplace? Which instruments support the integration of disadvantaged people and help to avoid drop-outs in practice learning? Which quality assurance in the outcome orientation? What can we learn from quality assurance in mobility? How to secure quality measuring competences in formal and non-formal learning?



66 professionals and experts, policy-makers, national authorities and social partner representatives from 17 countries actively participated in eight working groups during the one-day event in Berlin, hosted by the German LLP National Agency at the BIBB, and tried to answer these questions in the area of VET and AE. The overall recommendations and detailed reports of the eight working groups are available on the [QALLL website](#).

The issues were based on one hand on the challenges against the background of EQAVET processes and on the other hand on the results of 39 best practice projects from the programmes Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig that had been selected from European experts as best practices.

The conference was introduced by Klaus Fahle from the German National Agency, who reminded the participants of the role of quality in increasing the transparency of education and vocational training across Europe. The first keynote speaker, Prof. Dr. Georg Spöttl from the University of Bremen, pointed out the added value of quality assurance. The second keynote speaker, Dr.

Maria Gutknecht-Gmeiner of Impulse, explored what seems to work in quality assurance and advocated using multiple approaches based on the EQAVET quality criteria & cycle.

Another highlight of the conference were the animated sessions of the 14 project promoters presenting their results to the participants and discussing them together.

The conference discussed in the panel discussion chaired by Ernst Gesslbauer of the OeAD, the Austrian National Agency, some of the issues raised during the working groups and underlined the role of the Quality Assurance National Reference Points as essential "bridges" to span the current gaps between EU goals for VET and adult education and national provider practice.

Find the detailed documentation of the conference on the [conference website](#).

Isabelle Bonnaire

Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa beim BIBB
bonnaire@bibb.de | www.na-bibb.de

Interview with ...
... Adult Education Expert
Christian Kloyber

Mr Kloyber, you are the head of the department for educational development at the Austrian Competence Centre for Adult Education. Moreover, you collaborated in and are a member of many international networks for adult learning. We would like to know what you consider as the three most important achievements in adult education in Europe over the past 10 years.

From an outpost of Austrian adult education I have observed a decisive impulse given and received in the last decade. But first of all let me explain why I use the terminus "outpost" for our Federal Institute for Adult Education: One of our aims is to promote innovation and quality in the

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field of adult education – and we focus on the quality (professionalisation) of the staff – the adult educator and his/her various and diverse activities. But to answer your question, in my opinion I would like to mention these achievements for the European as well as for the Austrian adult education: The Memorandum of Lifelong Learning strengthened for the first time a common understanding of adult education in Europe and at the same time gave an impulse for the Austrian strategy for lifelong learning 2020. Another achievement is the focus on quality: the quality of staff (competences of the adult educator), quality of programme (learner-centred and oriented towards its competences) and last but not least the quality of the institutions of adult education. As a third achievement I would like to mention the financing of adult education projects leading to a coherent and strategic programme (LLL, ESF, GRUNDTVIG for example).



Christian Kloyber, bifeb

There is of course a lot to do in AE in the different member states. Maïke Koops stated in a former interview for the QALLL newsletter "The nature of adult learning as

a deregulated, fragmented part of the Lifelong Learning System leads to challenges in all member states in terms of legislation; governance; funding; structures; priorities; providers; provision; staffing; learning outcomes; qualifications and quality assurance measures." In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges for adult education in the future?

Allow me to "counterpoint" the argument of Maïke Koops. The nature of adult learning (and adult education) is its diversity and pluralism as a reflection of our society and nature of our democratic and humanistic understanding. The biggest challenges for adult education now and in the near future are to assure active citizenship, intelligent development of our society, taking into consideration the ecological responsibility for the next generation, and to understand Europe in its richness of diversity, full of possibilities for each of us.

What do you expect from the adult education unit/Grundtvig programme in these developments?

The richness and the diversity of different projects has been the "trademark" of Grundtvig; it is of crucial importance not to restrict solely to a focus on "employability" (vocational education) but to an agenda of general adult education. Solutions to our main problems may not be found exclusively in the promotion of competences, key competences and skills but in more common, general and principle-based values of our society. The Grundtvig programme stands for this focus, and it is a pity that these programmes will disappear for a new line of funding "Erasmus for all".

Which are the most important tasks for the GRUNDTVIG programme or adult education in general when it comes to quality assurance?

In a nutshell: simple and transparent application formats, projects based on a transparent "need and interest analysis", "smart" monitoring and process-orientated evaluation (responsive evaluation). (smart = specific, measurable, acceptable, realistic and terminated).

Non-formal learning is a key element in AE. What are your suggestions to ensure quality in the measurement of competences acquired in a non-formal learning environment?

Isn't there a misunderstanding of "non-formal" learning? Because the common definition "non-formal learning" says a "non-formal setting means a learning context that is often planned and organised but not part of the formal education and training system". Various existing instruments of quality control and development are implemented in Austria, the latest developments are the "Weiterbildungsakademie" (WBA, certification of the quality of the personnel of adult education), "Ö-CERT" (quality of the institutions and programmes of AE), and the monitoring (benchmarks) listed in the actual LLL Strategy Austria 2020.

In my opinion the challenge is to tackle the "informal learning" and to make the acquired competences visible!

What is your advice then when it comes to ensuring quality in the measurement of competences acquired in an informal learning setting?

To insure the quality of measurement of competences acquired in an informal way I think that the concept of "measurement" has to be seen with critical eyes but there are valid instruments to make informal learning visible and comparable, for example the instruments of the learning portfolio. In the field of self-directed learning (SDL) many instruments have been presented, for example the self-directed readiness scale.

Finally we would like to know what you expect from the thematic network QALLL?

Share and discuss European experiences, views and reflections. But not to forget a critical focus based on theory, expertise and reflection.

Thank you very much for the interview!

Christian Kloyber

Austrian Federal Institute for Adult Education (Bundesinstitut für Erwachsenenbildung – bifeb)
christian.kloyber@bifeb.at | www.bifeb.at

QALLL project in the spotlight
VILMA - Improving Quality by Validation of Informal Learning in Mobility Actions

In recent years mobility has become a key issue in the European Union. Being mobile is of high value, individually as well as politically, fostering the European cohesion and contributing to the competitiveness of the European Union. Thus frameworks and objectives of initiatives to promote mobility have a wide range.



Mobility-related learning in European adult education in its multiple forms plays an increasingly important role at local, regional and European levels.

But what exactly is to be gained through mobility for the individual and how can the impact and the quality of mobility learning be supported?

The aim of the project VILMA: Validation of Informal Learning in Mobility Actions" is to set up a holistic approach to assess and evidence competences acquired in mobility learning since they are the ultimate indicators for good quality in mobility projects.

As research, expert discussions and real cases in the VILMA stock-taking phase show, there is a lack and a strong need for a comprehensive approach and a consistent set of instruments to

assess and evidence the impact of informal mobility learning on the competence development of the individual learner based on a comparable reference system and a common methodology.

VILMA seeks to support the improvement of those rather informalised learning offers by providing instruments for a competence-based learning and validation.

It makes use of a well-proven approach – LEVEL5 – to validate especially personal and social competences.

Since 2005 this system has been developed and tested in five LLP-funded projects – ACT, ACT-NET, VIP, VILMA and VITA – as comprehensive methodology for assessing and validating competences acquired in informal and non-formal learning settings.

LEVEL5 describes competence developments on the basis of learning outcomes and classifies them on three dimensions (cognitive, active and affective) and five levels.

A standard assessment procedure and a software for 3-D visualisation with a built-in certification instrument are parts of the LEVEL5 assessment and evidencing system.

By 2011 the system has been successfully applied in more than 60 informal and non-formal learning projects, ranging from self-organised grass-root learning activities, vocational trainings, extracurricular school projects, EU-funded education projects to mobility projects.

LEVEL5 is based on a few basic assumptions: The methodology is based on the fundamental idea that a competence is the ability to apply a synthesis of

- knowledge,
- skills and
- attitudes

in a particular situation (context) and in a particular quality (level).

Consequently the LEVEL5 developers assumed that learning outcomes can be displayed with the help of three components or dimensions:

- the knowledge component

- the activity component
- the affective component

This third dimension is often neglected in the evaluation of learning outcomes. However, in most informal learning projects such as mobility learning, this “affective dimension” is of major importance.

The kernel of the system is a 3-dimensional visualisation system – the LEVEL5 cube:

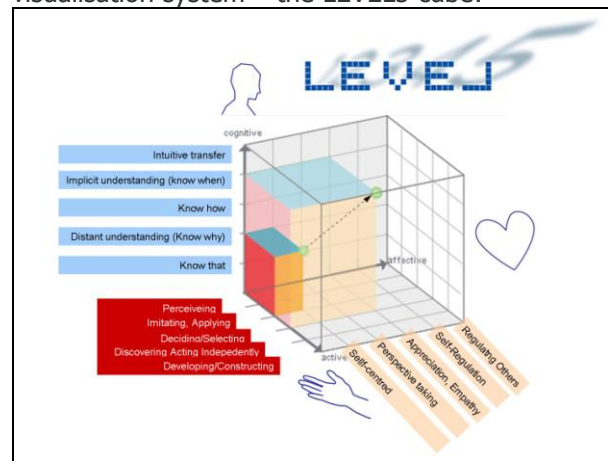


Fig. 1: The LEVEL5 cube

The LEVEL5 approach consists of a sequence of five evaluation steps, starting with a description of the learning project and finishing with the evidencing of learning outcomes and the validation of learners and learning projects.

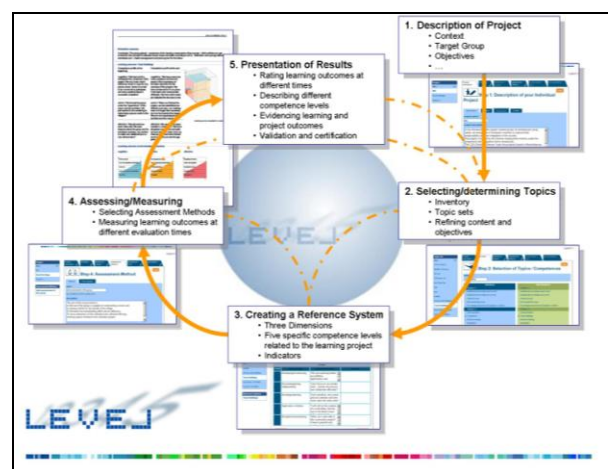


Fig. 2 The cyclic LEVEL5 procedure

The LEVEL5 system approach is based on action theory principles and therefore works as a cyclic procedure. Hence during the evaluation process certain components may be adapted and further developed.

With this LEVEL5 works along the principles of **quality management (PDCA cycle)**.

From the extensive use of LEVEL5 it has become apparent that a **multitude of benefits** can be gained from this evaluation process. It is not merely a documentation exercise but rather a dual process that benefits **both the learner and the educator**:

Firstly, the learners' skill and competency levels can be accurately defined and measured before and after a learning experience. The impact of the learning becomes clearly evident through the evaluation of specific parameters which enable the individual's progress to be charted and monitored, thus enabling the learner to recognise the learning outcomes at a cognitive, active and affective level.

Secondly, the practitioners (or educators) can monitor the effectiveness of the learning activity through highlighting specific areas for development or improvement and thus maximising the impact of their work.

The VILMA partnership will make use and transfer the LEVEL5 approach and instruments to the domain of mobility learning, to facilitate the validation of competences acquired during participation in transnational mobility projects.

At the end of year one the project carried out a European-wide survey about demands and competences acquired in all kinds of mobility activities and derived an inventory for competences and related reference systems that will be piloted in the second project year:

Project partners:

- BUPNET GmbH, Göttingen, Germany, coordination
- die Berater®, Vienna, Austria
- Alden Biesen, Bilzen, Belgium
- Belies Consulting S.L, Barcelona, Spain
- INSUP FORMATION, Bordeaux, France

- Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania
- IMOTEC, Vilnius, Lithuania
- XENA, Padova, Italy
- OAF, San Gwann, Malta

VILMA is a part of **REVEAL**, the Research and Evaluation Group for Validating, Evaluating and Assessing Informal and Non-formal Learning.

Currently REVEAL is represented by LEVEL5 experts in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, France, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Slovakia, Switzerland, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Spain and Turkey.

Tim Scholze

REVEAL

tscholze@reveal-eu.org | www.reveal-eu.org | www.vilma-eu.org

Quantitative Report

QALLL Assessment and Mapping of Projects - Synthesis Report

Which European projects have made a contribution to the development of quality assurance in adult education and vocational education and training in the past years? How do they relate to the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQAVET) and what kind of results did they produce?

The QALLL project has carried out a comprehensive stocktaking exercise in its first two years, identifying and analysing 117 projects from the Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig programmes. In a rigorous assessment 56 projects have been found to directly target quality assurance, 39 have been selected for dissemination and transfer as best practices. The report provides an overview of the projects according to different features such as their contribution to the EQAVET, the educational sectors they targeted, the methodology they embraced (self-assessment,

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external assessment, accreditation), and the kinds of products they developed.

Find the report on the QALLL website under DOWNLOADS or click on this [link](#).

Maria Gutknecht-Gmeiner

QALLL external expert

Impulse - Evaluation und Organisationsberatung

Evaluation and Organisational Development

m.gutknecht-gmeiner@impulse.at | www.impulse.at

Cluster of Knowledge

Modernising the VET system – improving performance, quality and attractiveness of VET

Vocational education and training (VET) plays a crucial role in promoting a knowledge-based and competitive society and in responding to the chances and challenges of globalisation. The platform developed under the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) has made a major contribution to fostering regional cooperation and to supporting policy developments in specific VET areas and has led to an increased ownership of relevant VET actors in the region. Current developments underline the ERISSE commitment to the European strategic objectives laid down in the Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European Cooperation in VET, in the strategic framework “Education and Training 2020” and in the key flagship initiatives that embrace education and training (Youth on the Move and The Agenda New Skills and Jobs).

The Senior Official and Expert Workshop on Clusters of Knowledge, organised on December 14th – 15th, 2010 in Sarajevo, confirmed the necessity of an enhanced dialogue among EU member states and South-East European partner countries in the field of education and training. Participants agreed that an introduction of clusters of knowledge on topics of common interest will support the exchange of information on different

policy options and will help the advancement of the reforms of the national VET systems.

The cluster *Modernizing the VET system – improving performance, quality and attractiveness of VET* aims to support the regional cooperation in VET in accordance with the diversified needs of the countries for mutual learning, regional exchange of experience and good practice and for encompassing the specific phases of national reforms in VET.



The cluster's specific objectives are:

- knowledge transfer on the national policies regarding:
 - quality assurance in VET
 - improving VET attractiveness
 - social partnership in VET
 - matching VET supply with labour market demand
- developing mutual policy learning practices and strengthening the exchange of information and good practice among the countries represented in the cluster
- supporting intra-country and inter-country co-operation in VET at regional level
- formulation of recommendations for future ERI SEE support to regional cooperation in VET

The key output of the cluster will be a compendium of good practices in *Improving performance, quality and attractiveness of VET*.

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The cluster is organized by the Romanian Ministry of Education, Science, Youth and Sports (MoERY) and the Romanian National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development (NCTVETD).

Participating countries:

- Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- The former Republic of Macedonia
- The Republic of Moldova
- Montenegro
- Romania (leading country)
- Serbia

Participating organisations:

- European Training Foundation (ETF)
- Kultur Kontakt Austria (KKA) on behalf of the Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital (TFBHC)



The specific objectives and key output are to be achieved through the following activities:

- Kick-off meeting to share national experiences, to agree upon the cluster's objectives, outputs and timeline
- 2 workshops for mutual learning and exchange of good practices
- Development of a compendium of good practices in *Improving performance, quality and attractiveness of VET*

- Final meeting to identify priorities for a further development of a VET policy in the region, adapted to national needs and to draw recommendations for future cooperation

Dana Stroie

National Centre for TVET, Romania
vet@tvet.ro | www.tvet.ro

Creative, Innovative and Transferable Methods in the Training of Teachers and Training Staff (Formal and Non-Formal Education)

The CityM Network



Creative, Innovative and Transferable Methods in the Training of Teachers and Training Staff (Formal and Non-Formal Education)

Have you ever thought about how your life would look like today if you had benefited from a different education and different teachers as a child? Have you ever thought about how much influence the personality, quality and competencies of a teacher can have on your later life and development?

These were the things going through my mind while listening to the presentation of the EU agenda for improving teacher quality, given by Paul Holdsworth (Policy Coordinator, Teacher Education, DG EAC, European Commission) during the kick-off meeting of the CityM project. Hearing about teachers who should be able to teach heterogeneous classes; create a safe and attractive school; teach transversal competences; be reflective practitioners; be autonomous learners; innovate; take part in school development; collaborate with colleagues and parents; etc. I could not prevent myself from

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dreaming about who and where I would have been if I had had such teachers at school.

Recognising the crucial importance of education and the quality of teachers in our lives, **13 National LLP Agencies** from 12 countries (Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Sweden and UK) decided to engage in a project that addresses the need to improve the training of teachers and trainers, as they are “key factors in achieving high quality learning outcomes” (EC Communication, 2007).

Like QALLL the **CityM Network** is one of the five European thematic networks. Its specific objectives are:

- **Identifying and reviewing centralized and decentralized LLP projects** that make a meaningful contribution to the development of creative and transferable methods in the training of teachers and training staff
- **Analysing** the lessons to be learned from these projects and their potential for transferability (mainstreaming or multiplication).
- Selecting a set of creative, innovative methods with a potential for transferability and **compiling a toolkit** to be used by anyone interested in adopting or building upon these methods.
- Gathering conclusions from experts concerning the **integration of project results into educational policies and/or practice** and promoting them at the level of regional, national and EU policymakers.

In order to achieve these objectives the **CityM** network:

- Organised **3 thematic seminars** (in Poland, Sweden and in the United Kingdom), gathering together project coordinators, teachers, educational experts and NA representatives.
- Collected **210 LLP projects** (the projects have been entered in an online questionnaire giving more details about what is to be found in the application) and selected from among those **35 best practice examples**.

- All these projects will be presented in the **CityM toolkit**, to be available in printed form in English, French and German and electronically on our website - www.city-m.eu - in the following languages: Dutch, Greek, Danish, German, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Romanian, Swedish.



The thematic seminar “**Teacher education and teacher training**”, which took place on March 8th – 9th, 2011 in Stockholm, brought together project coordinators, teachers, educational experts and NA representatives and the European Commission. They met to share knowledge and experience, to build partnerships and to develop solutions. During the two-day seminar key questions such as “**how can project results be best exploited and transferability be assured**” or “**how can project results have an influence on policy development**” have been discussed. Moreover the participants have been introduced to the aims and objectives of the thematic network QALLL.

Detailed information about this event as well as about **past and future events**, especially about **the final conference** of the CityM network that will take place in **Bucharest on March 7-8, 2012**, is available on the [CityM website](http://www.city-m.eu).

Laura Popa

CityM project manager
Agentia Nationala pentru Programme Comunitare in Domeniul Educatiei si Formarii Profesionale
laura.popa@anpcdefp.ro | www.anpcdefp.ro

Vera Santner

OeAD – National Agency for Lifelong Learning
vera.santner@oead.at | <http://www.lebenslanges-lernen.at>

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What's happening?

QUALITY IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND ADULT EDUCATION - Conference in Reykjavík, December 9th, 2011

The objective of the conference was to enhance the discussion about quality assurance and to emphasise the links between quality assurance and the European initiatives and instruments promoting lifelong learning. 120 people attended the conference, relevant stakeholders representing the VET sector and adult education. This participation pleasantly exceeded the organisers' expectations and reflects the interest in quality issues within the education sector in the country.



After the conference opening by a representative of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture the first part of the plenary session focused on projects and best practice examples from both the formal and informal system in Iceland. The two Icelandic projects on quality that have been selected and recommended for further dissemination by the QALLL thematic network:

- GEMS - Guidance for Educators Mentors and Students and

- RECALL - Recognition of Quality in Lifelong Learning

have been presented. Both projects have made a valuable impact on their respective sectors.

The second part of the plenary session focused on the European instruments promoting lifelong learning and the role of quality in that context. At the end of the conference participants reflected on the future and next steps to be taken in the field of quality assurance on the national level.

The conference was organised by the Icelandic LLP National Agency as a partner of QALLL. Moreover the Euroguidance Centre as well as the Refer-Net have been promoted in cooperation with the Education and Training Service Centre and The Nordic Network for Adult Learning.

For further information please go to the [conference website](#).

Margrét Jóhannsdóttir

The Icelandic LLP National Agency
marjoh@hi.is | <http://www.hi.is>

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION – State of play in Slovakia, Conference in Zilina, Slovakia, December 1st, 2011

The Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation – NA LLP in Slovakia organised a national conference on Quality Assurance in Education on December 1st, 2011 in Zilina, Slovakia.

The main aim of the conference was to discuss quality assurance and related topics with experts and relevant stakeholders as well as representatives of schools and educational and training institutions in Slovakia.

The conference was divided into three main parts: The first part was devoted to the presentation of

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the QA situation on both the European and national level.

The second part addressed the quality of mobility and included the awarding ceremony "Quality in Leonardo da Vinci Mobility 2011" (results will be published at [Cena kvality v Mobilitách](#)). Two projects, one in the category "Initial Vocational Training", the other in "VET for Professionals" were awarded as best practice projects. Both mobility projects also used their project results for the improvement of their curricula.



The third part of the conference included a panel discussion which allowed all relevant experts, stakeholders and social partners to state their opinion on QA and its situation in Slovakia. The outcomes as well as the recommendations that derived from the panel discussion will be published on the [SAAIC website](#) in the section "Thematic monitoring" where all conference [presentations](#) have already been published.

Dagmar Augustinska

Coordinator of the Leonardo da Vinci Unit, SAAIC, Slovakia
dagmar.augustinska@saaic.sk | <http://www.saaic.sk>

national authorities, social partner representatives and other stakeholders interested in quality assurance in VET and AE will take place on November 5th – 6th, 2012 in Vienna. Don't forget to make a note in your calendar!

More details about the conference will soon be posted on the QALLL website.

Next Issue of the Newsletter

The next issue of the QALLL newsletter will be published in October 2012. If you want to subscribe or unsubscribe to the newsletter, please visit this [weblink](#).

You are very welcome to submit your comments!

Mail to: qalll@oead.at

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oead
 Nationalagentur
 Lebenslanges Lernen
 National Agency for
 Lifelong Learning

**Austrian National Agency
 for Lifelong Learning**

A-1010 Wien | Ebendorferstraße 7
 T +43 1 534 08-692 | F +43 1 534 08-699
www.lebenslanges-lernen.at

Vienna Conference

Final QALLL Conference

The 3rd and final QALLL event for education professionals and experts, project contractors of the European Lifelong Learning Programmes Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig, policymakers,