



COMETA | Care Operators Mobility through ECVET

EVOLUTION

The COMETA tools are ready

Partnership

COMETA evolution partnership gathers 8 committed organisations from 4 EU Countries.

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The main aim of COMETA Project is to promote care and social workers mobility from a sector into another one (i.e. from child-care to care of older persons), within a group of European Countries through the transferability and recognition of the following transversal learning outcomes achieved in different learning contexts (formal, non-formal and informal):

- Capability to promote rights, choice, privacy, dignity; to understand the need to promote the following values at all times: individuality, rights, choice, privacy, independence, dignity, respect and partnership
- Knowledge of history and context; capability to understand the importance of finding out the history, preferences, wishes, needs and abilities of the supported individual(s)
- Capability to work in team and cooperate; capability to understand the value and importance of working in partnership with unpaid carers /advocates/significant others for the client
- Capability to understand the basic forms of verbal/nonverbal communication and active listening and how to use these in work
- Understanding of the importance of rules and procedures, understand why it is important to follow policies and procedures, policies and the aims of the organization of belonging
- Capability to constantly monitor activities and to apply critically assessment tools/methodologies such as internal and/or external supervision.

In order to achieve this goal, two innovative tools will be used that are presented in these documents and they are the following: (1) BESCL0 standard based questions and (2) Case scenarios.

The first tool is a set of questions developed on the basis of the outcomes a previous EU project named ECC (<http://www.eccertificate.eu/>) that aimed to assess the acquisition of the Basic European Social Care Learning Outcomes -BESCL0 for working in the care-social sector. In the framework of COMETA we will use 16 multiple choice questions covering the 6 COMETA competence areas.

The second tool, originally developed for COMETA, is based on case scenarios: they are real situations that can happen in the social care sector. Each scenario has two possible solutions (both solutions are ethically admissible but only one is right) and is associated to one of the 6 common transversal competences. In correspondence of each competence areas three case scenarios has been elaborated to cover the three professional profiles sectors: children care, elderly care (at home and in nursing homes) and social inclusion. The total scenarios proposed are 18.

Testing of tools started in October 2013 – soon the tools will be fine-tuned and released in a final version.



News from the testing phase

The COMETA project activities are proceeding very fast! The project has in fact developed tools to identify and validate soft skills of workers from the care sector and has carried out a pre-testing. The objectives of this pre-testing phase have been to gather comments and proposals from experts and stakeholders to be able to fine-tune the tools. And in fact, the results from the pre-testing have been analysed and implemented within the validation tools to improve them before they are employed by users within the actual experimentation phase. In particular, the pre-testing phase has brought to the revision of all those scenarios that did not score sufficiently; at the same time, the items based on Besclo were modified with the aim of improving their functioning and providing a measurement of soft skills which could be used as an actual criteria for the COMETA tools' validation. Partners are now preparing for the pilot testing of tools. News concerning the results of the testing will be sent around very soon!

ECVET in the European policies

What is ECVET?

At the 4th EQAVET Annual Forum (14–15 March 2013)¹, Alison Crabb, European Commission, noted that the guiding principle for an increasing growth of employment in the EU is creating education and training systems which can deliver the skills needed by the labour market. VET is a key element in this strategy. The strategy identifies six priorities for Member States one of which is excellence in VET.

The discussions at the Annual Forum encouraged synergies between the validation/transparency tools especially EQF and ECVET. The participants agreed on the fact that while the network should develop instruments and guidelines, there is now a need to focus on the use of these instruments in the different contexts (national, socio-economical etc.) in order to develop a genuine culture of

QA. There is a need 'to use the instruments in a context, for a purpose'. Two methods have been identified to address this: to work in partnership by engaging with SMEs through NRPs and by sharing knowledge between NRPs in relation to concrete issues and to adapt the instruments in order to fit the different contexts.

Recently we also assisted at the creation "Vocational training and adult education; Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig" unit of the DG Education and Culture which is coordinating two of the major European instruments to improve qualifications recognition: EQAVET and ECVET. This underlines the European Commission strong support to the ECVET system.

A major instrument to support European VET policy objectives through cooperation in this field should be proposed in 2014 as part of the new integrated program for education, training, youth and sport: **Erasmus+**².

Looking further ahead, the Commission will report to the European Parliament and the Council on ECVET implementation, therefore an evidence based reflection is essential.

In fact, when the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18th of June 2009 on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training was adopted, the political and technical conditions needed to use ECVET system were expected to be in place by 2012.

Today, while the DG work on this is already well underway, Member States and stakeholders still need time to establish the full conditions needed for its successful implementation.

Hopefully, with the Cedefop's external Monitoring of EQAVET currently being finalized, the Commission will shortly publish its report to the European Parliament and to the Council on EQAVET implementation³.

¹See full report at:
http://www.eqavet.eu/Libraries/Annual_Forum_2013/Secretariat_Report_EQAVET_Annual_Forum_2013-final.sflb.ashx

²For more information see the Erasmus+ Leaflet at:
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/promo/erasmus-plus/pub/view/erasmus-plus-leaflet_en.pdf

³Read here the version of June 2009:



This is in line with the objective, recently highlighted in the Commission's policy document on [Rethinking Education, the European Area of Skills and Qualifications](#). The document encourages a greater convergence and coherence of the tools of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), EQAVET, Europass and ECVET as well as ECTS. Follow up of the recent evaluations of EQF, EQAVET and Europass and the updating of the ECTS users' guide will certainly feed into this reflection process.

The NetECVET thematic network

The NetECVET thematic network consists of 14 National Agencies of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP). It promotes ECVET in the context of transnational mobility and supports the implementation process in the member states through a bottom-up approach. It addresses VET practitioners and supports and guides them in the application of ECVET. The [NetECVET network of LLP National Agencies](#), provides an online tool to support ECVET mobility.

Projects ECVET 2011 to 2014: in total 8 pilot projects

The Council and the European Parliament have placed a strong emphasis on the necessity to experiment and test ECVET, through, among others initiatives, the establishment of pilot projects.

Here an overview of 8 pilot initiatives approved between 2011 and 2014.

2get1care:

The aim of the '2get1care' project is to test the European credit system for vocational education and training in health care professions in the German Region of North Rhine-Westphalia. A European partnership is set to

develop an approach for making qualification components transferable across national borders and across professions. In the long term, the project aims to support the implementation of ECVET in health care professions. The operative framework for the test will be provided by: a scientifically evaluated adaptation of the training curricula of four health care professions (occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and geriatric care) to ECVET standards; the development of a common core curriculum; and a further training concept based on ECVET principles for teaching staff, i.e. with a focus on learning outcomes.

CO.L.O.R

The CO.L.O.R. (Competency and Learning Outcomes Recognition for migrants) project aims at satisfying specific labour market requirements related to competency valorisation and learning outcome recognition for migrants. Failure to recognize migrants' work experience and learning outcomes not only makes it difficult for employers to appreciate what migrants can offer, but also leads to a unused potential of work force and the de-valorisation of competences. The project will help to develop a framework for the effective valorisation and implementation of follow-up activities, secure the availability of tools, document results in technical journals, etc. The project will also support institutions (competent bodies) to adopt and apply the ECVET specifications within their systems. Furthermore, the project will help to create innovative and concrete opportunities of Learning Outcome recognition. It aims at transferring the developed approach to other sectors/context/levels, while at the same time ensuring coherence with the overall system. The commitment of the competent ECVET institutions involved in the project will maximise its impact at regional and national level.

CPU-Europe

The principal objective of the CPU-Europe project is to support the experimental implementation of ECVET. In particular, the objectives of the CPU project are:



- To combat failure and repetition of years at school by proposing a structure for vocational training founded on the culture of 'recognition of learning' rather than on the culture of 'punishment of failure';
- To attract more young people to vocational training by offering them concrete training pathways they can commit to; enhancing motivation and foster the process of taking control of their own learning pathway;
- To propose a qualification structure compatible with education objectives and lifelong learning, notably the implementation of the EQF and ECVET.

[EASY Metal](#)

EASYMetal aims at fostering mobility between training schemes and sub-schemes at the interface between preparation for vocational training and dual vocational training in the German vocational training system by creating transparency and recognition of partial qualifications. The project suggests different models, describing procedures to implement ECVET at the interface between prevocational and vocational system. The models range from schemes with high standardized features to schemes with low standardized features.

[ESyCQ](#)

The aim of the project is to develop a complete ECVET system for a selected area of vocational training and all forms of learning (Formal, non-formal, informal). Six professions/qualifications are selected in a way that overlaps in training content will entail credit transfer procedures.

[I CARE](#)

I CARE project aim at undertaking an experimental application of the ECVET system for the establishment of a recognition model in the field of personal care. The aim is to establish a mutual trust area among partner countries and further develop mutual recognition of training and qualifications. The I CARE project develops a set of objectives which mainly focus on the adaptation of an already existing

regional system of vocational qualifications in the specific sector in coherence with the ECVET framework.

[MEN-ECVET](#)

The project relates to a specific type of vocational qualification, the French "vocational baccalaureate". The aim is to examine in depth the regulatory and organizational provisions in force in relation to the ECVET technical specifications. A comparison of the actual practices following the national rules and the ECVET recommendation will be done. Working groups composed of experts are in charge of examining each qualification chosen for the project in order to develop links to learning outcomes and to identify procedures suitable for assessment, validation and recognition procedures in a national context and in a mobility context. The same approach is pursued regarding a possible system of points. Audits of previous ECVET projects are also foreseen.

[VET-CCS](#)

VET-CCS focuses on the conversion of credit. In particular, this project thus aims to convert 30 VET qualifications/courses from a number of VET institutions and use them to develop and pilot a methodological tool for the conversion of ordinary qualifications to ones described in terms of ECVET in a pilot phase. As a second step, a guiding manual will be developed, based on the experience of the conversion process. This manual targets VET institutions and it is envisaged as a guide for the conversion process of their VET qualifications according to the standards specified for ECVET.

SET CARE Project

"SET CARE: Self-study E-learning Tool for the Social Home-care Sector" is a two year project carried out with the support of the European Commission under the Lifelong Learning Program. To answer the needs of people taking care for elderly people and patients with



dementia the LDV-Transfer of Innovation project SET CARE transfers in Greece and Bulgaria an e-learning training tool called "Aspasia", originally developed in Italy. Partners involved in the SET CARE project are Alzheimer's Disease (Greece), Anziani e non solo (Italy), Balkanplan Ltd (Bulgaria), Pliroforiki (Greece), Municipality Of Korydallos (Greece), Kendro Merimnas Oikoyenias PEDIU (Greece), and National Patient's Organisation (Bulgaria).

The overall aim of the project is to improve the skills of care workers in Greece and Bulgaria by adapting the innovative Aspasia methodology of work qualification and recognition of competencies of the home care professionals. The project specific aims are transfer and adaptation in Greece and Bulgaria of the Italian e-learning tool by translation of all SET CARE products respectively in their language, elaboration of a common tool, accessible in both countries and teaching basically the same contents in order to support the qualification of potential migrants, development of a network of the project countries stakeholders, and involvement of Public Bodies in order to carry out an effective advocacy action.

Accordingly, the main target groups of the project are Bulgarians living in Greece or Bulgaria employed (or looking for a job) as care workers; persons engaged in the field of home care services who want to qualify themselves, and family carers who want to provide better quality of care by receiving information about dementia and other elderly pathologies.

The training program contains 10 didactic units, one of which is introductory, 5 units focus on basic aspects of caring for elderly people and patients with dementia and Alzheimer (communication, assistance, housekeeping, hygiene, diet, pathologies of elderly people), 3 units represent legal and social issues related to the work of professional caregivers (Health and Social system in Greece and Bulgaria, and migration policy in Greece and Bulgaria).

The 'credit tutor'

The 'training credit tutor', is a professional that recognizes your acquired competences with the aim to assign 'credit' for training courses and obtain a qualification.

In order to support with efficacy the COMETA Memorandum of Understanding – MoU⁴ a starting point is the presence of these professionals, as one of the main obstacles to attracting more interest in trans-national mobility and long life learning processes is the difficulty in identifying, validating and recognizing learning outcomes acquired by people in a wide variety of contexts, formal, non-formal and informal.

What is needed, therefore, is a way of enabling people to pursue their learning pathway by building on their learning outcomes when moving from one learning context to another, and from one country to the other.

On the basis, of the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) the Umbria Region identified pivotal professionals dedicated to this aim: the 'credit tutor'.

Starting from the people signature of a learning agreement in order to attend a training course and obtain the recognition of the previous acquired competences, the 'credit tutor' job is 'simple', it is mainly the analysis of a CV and a personal declaration in order to match them with the profile's competences and the training course standard.

The outcome is a document that states which modules "you" must attend.



⁴ The MoU is a formal agreement between project partners, public institutions competent in Vocational Education and Training (VET), health and social care, sectorial social partners and VET providers at national/regional/local level, establishing the European equivalent for assessment, transfer, and accumulation of learning outcomes achieved in formal, informal and non-formal contexts).