

# **TransCSR**

## Transparency of CSR skills through ECVET in European tourism

### Work Package 3

#### R7 “Model for the attribution of the ECVET credits”

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#### Responsible for Workpackage and Result

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## 1 ECVET – European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training

According to the European Commission (2015) the aim of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) is to:

- “make it easier for people to get validation and recognition of work-related skills and knowledge acquired in different systems and countries – so that they can count towards vocational qualifications;
- make it more attractive to move between different countries and learning environments;
- increase the compatibility between the different vocational education and training (VET) systems in place across Europe, and the qualifications they offer;
- increase the employability of VET graduates and the confidence of employers that each VET qualification requires specific skills and knowledge.”

Based on the 2009 policy recommendation by the European Parliament and Council ECVET was introduced to Europe. Several pilot projects tested and implemented the system and its related tools.

After a five year testing phase an extensive and independent evaluation was carried out. The results presented in an extensive report (EC 2014) are rather mixed. They state that at the national level ECVET made only limited progress. This is attributed to the nationally differing approaches and systems in VET. Yet the involved stakeholders have a more positive opinion on the (units of) learning outcomes and related documents such as the learning agreement and memorandum of understanding.

ECVET credit points were given “no particular relevance or demand [...] due to their unclear technical specifications” (EC 2014,3).

The approach of assigning a fixed number of credit points to a certain amount of learning time invested has been challenged by the diversity of the different national educational systems. Learning hours may vary from country to country the report found.

## 2 Recommendation for the attribution of ECVET credits

According to the ECVET convention and principles (EP 2009) 60 ECVET credit points are to be allocated to the learning outcome of one year of full time formal VET. The recommendation runs further to appoint credit points to each unit with regard to the related work load. This breaks down to about 25 guided learning hours per one ECVET- credit point.

For the CSR- qualification applying this model would be possible. Yet it is questionable what the larger benefit of this step would be in reaching the overall goals of transparency and comparability. Considering that the CSR- and tourism- related trainings, which were analysed in WP2, range between 3 hours to 7.200 hours, the introduction of credit points would only slightly help in making the offers more transparent and comparable with regard to their quality. Other measures such as making the learning outcomes visible would be of larger help.

Research in this project showed that in each partner country of TransCSR the approach to VET is different. Further the implementation of other relevant European tools such as the EQF are also at different stages from country to country.

Research on CSR-qualifications showed that CSR is a niche topic in tourism-education without a general approach. This applies equally to all partner countries. Across all partner countries only one training, which is provided by a private institution, was identified which focuses on CSR as well as on tourism. But neither this nor all other VET-offers which were analyzed have a reference to the EQF nor do they systematically apply any other tool of ECVET.

There for a general deficit in the application and implementation of ECVET can be attested with regard to the field of CSR in tourism. It is a general aim of this project to make a contribution to improvements in this field. Each ECVET-tool developed and applied in the project TransCSR will aid to this goal. Unfortunately the attribution of credit points has so far proven to be the weakest of tools for several reasons that were described in the first paragraph.

The recommendation there for is to put aside the attribution of ECVET credits for the CSR qualification in tourism and rather focus on the other ECVET-tools, mainly building on learning outcomes.

The introduction of ECVET credit points could be a project of the future when the CSR-qualification and other ECVET-tools are generally more established. It would also be necessary to base such an attribution on more practical experience and practical examples than from just one prototype training. The development of more VET-offers for CSR in tourism will be needed to achieve this. The dissemination of the learning outcome matrix for the CSR- qualification will be a crucial step in order to build a common understanding on CSR in tourism. The developed tools (Learning agreement and Memorandum of understanding) will be of aid in attaining this goal.

These efforts by the TransCSR partners will be grass root initiatives. For a broader success of the overall ECVET-process and thereby for the CSR-qualification in tourism, national top-down decisions e.g. on the EQF will be needed. Forming this sort of framework and basis for other tools will be a crucial success factor since VET is strongly linked to national education systems.

The stakeholders who need to support this issue are quite diverse. For the additional CSR-qualification it will be important to aim at the integration of a CSR-qualification at EQF levels 3 and 4 into regular tourism training curricula, which are mainly part of the formal educational system. The structured and transparent overview of the learning outcome matrix will be of aid to training providers and educational institutions.

The training CSR-manager in tourism could be used as a best practice referencing model for the development of further trainings on EQF-level 5 with the learning outcome matrix as a substructure. These could be provided by different organizations such as private organizations as well as state-related institutions.

All ECVET-tools developed within the TransCSR project will be of great help in this process. The time for the attribution of ECVET-credit points might come at a later stage.

## Literature

**European Commission** (2014): Evaluation of implementation of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) – executive summary  
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