



LEarning Outcome-oriented quality mobility placements to gain transparency and recognition of qualifications within the Tourism and Catering field

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Fifth Project Newsletter

The current stage of ECVET development in relation to National VET Reforms

In its recent fourth ECVET monitoring Report, CEDEFOP has analysed and monitored ECVET developments in national VET reforms since 2010. This includes gathering information from and opinions of national authorities, representatives of social partners, experts that are directly involved in ECVET developments in the EU, EFTA, and candidate countries.

According to the comparative analysis of the responses, as well as country-related information, ECVET is still mainly seen as a toolbox serving different purposes, rather than a system. It is thus unsurprising that respondents expressed the need for more clarity of purpose and streamlining on the basis of what works or does not work in practice; plus acknowledgement that ECVET is not a system containing technical specifications. This streamlining, and increased clarity is perceived as essential in support of national policy-making. For the time being, ECVET has received mixed support in the context of national VET reforms. According to respondents only 13 countries/regions (i.e. EE, HR, HU, PL, BE (FR), EL, IT, LV, LT, MT, RO, SK, FI) out of 38 countries/regions are committed to embedding ECVET in their national VET reforms – and not all of these have actually started developing and applying it. Gradual implementation has started in six countries/regions – Belgium (French-speaking community), Estonia, Hungary, Malta, Poland, and Finland. Romania needs to make its ECVET-compatible credit system operational. In most of these countries, the transfer of learning outcomes was reported to be difficult (e.g. due to structural characteristics of VET systems), thus the role and added value of ECVET was easily acknowledged. ECVET seems not to reach those countries that already have transferrable units/modules or credit transfer systems for VET in place nor those with predominantly apprenticeship-based IVET. In these countries, the main argument why ECVET is on hold is the concern that its technical components and principles require reorganisation of a qualification system and corresponding procedures that already work well.

Welcome!

Welcome to the LEO quali-TC Fifth Newsletter!

The quarterly newsletter is part of the informative material published to disseminate and promote the aims, activities and outputs of the LEO quali-TC project. This fifth issue of the newsletter deepens some content related the ECVET implementation and the progress of the project, which is now in its second year of work. Next Newsletter will contain a particular focus on the testing phase of the LEO quali-TC ECVET Model on workshops/peer learning activities as well as a thematic article on the 4th Meeting of the project partners and the Transnational Dissemination Thematic Seminar with experts, to be held in Frankfurt Oder (DE) on the 12th and 13th January 2015.



The implementation of LEO quali-TC Mobility Project

On the next February and March, within the framework of the Erasmus+ project for VET Learners “LEO quali-TC Mobility”, a number of 60 VET learners attending IPSSAR “Saffi” will take part to a 3-week mobility experience in AT, ES, FR, PT and the UK.

The project is part of the LEO quali-TC objectives aiming at testing the ECVET model for Tourism and Catering in individual mobility programmes. The purpose is to test the practical features of the whole instruments and developed approaches of the project and

receive valuable feedback from all involved organisations and parties on the quality of instruments, feasibility as well as practicality of tools.

Since the ECVET process of mutual recognition and acquisition of competences is based on a multi stakeholder co-operation it is particularly important that different kind of organisations have the chance to test the instruments on the mobility and provide feedback for further adaptation and revision.

ECVET success relies on the participation of VET providers in EU-funded cross-country mobility projects such as “LEO quali-TC Mobility”!

The role of teachers and trainers in implementing ECVET

What does it mean for teachers and trainers when they “use ECVET for LL and make training pathways more flexible”?

- ECVET opens new possibilities for the effective validation and recognition of prior learning for individuals and facilitates learners’ access to education and training;
- ECVET and LL refer to the process of identifying learners’ capabilities in order to define the type of learning, the teaching and assessment processes which help individuals to acquire any missed LO;
- ECVET can be particularly useful for some target groups of learners e.g. adults who leave school early, and people likely to be excluded from school and the labour market (e.g. migrants, prisoners);
- ECVET can support individuals to update their skills: a) people without earlier experience in formal education may not have the motivation to start a course leading to a qualification if they already work in a profession where the qualification is needed; b) adults who gain units of a qualification and need to update their knowledge of their professional field can apply for the validation and recognition of their prior learning through a practical skills demonstration.

LEO quali-TC 2nd year project outcomes

The second year of LEO quali-TC project life started and the following thematic phases are going to be carried out:

1. Test implementation of the ECVET model: mobility. Following the philosophy of agreement, rules and methods for the application of the ECVET system, the ECVET model and tools are going to be shared in individual mobility programmes. Recognition takes the form of award of a full unit or part of a unit which are part of the full qualification. The unit (or part of the unit) is assessed abroad and validated and recognized upon return with the support of the local competent bodies involved as associated partners of the project.

2. Test implementation of the ECVET model: workshops/peer learning activities. A set of two workshops/peer learning activities per partner country are scheduled in order to meet the needs of the stakeholders and VET practitioners involved and then support and guide them through the process of applying ECVET.

3. Blended learning scheme for hosting companies’ mentors. Large parts of vocational training in the Tourism and Catering sector take place within companies and service providers. However, these organisations are not classical training organisations and therefore have no enough experiences with competent application of European instruments for transparency such as EQF, ECVET and Europass. Furthermore, Mentors in receiving companies play a strategic role in the process of organizing, carrying out and evaluating mobility experiences; therefore they are to be seen as key for quality assurance. A blended training scheme is planned to support and guide them through the process of applying ECVET and raise quality in mobility programmes.

23rd Annual EFVET International Conference: Porto (PT), 22-25 October 2014

The EFVET Conference 2014, held in Porto from 22nd till 25th October, has been a great occasion to reach LEO quali-TC target groups, disseminate project results and share good practices on ECVET, NQFs, tools and procedure to facilitate the validation, recognition, accumulation and transfer of units of learning outcomes achieved in formal, informal and non formal learning.

This years' Conference theme has recognised that VET Institutions cannot meet the skills challenges alone. Greater collaboration and engagement with the business community is crucial, combining both theoretical and practical training in the workplace. How many times do we hear that young people are often not well equipped with the right skill set to meet employer requirements? How many times do we hear they lack the transversal (soft) skills necessary to gain employment?

The European Commission and, indeed, many national governments have recognised these issues. They are reflected in many policy documents: for example "New Skills for New jobs" and "Rethinking Education" to name but two and in initiatives such as the promotion of the "European Alliance for Apprenticeships".

There is a recognised need for closer collaboration between Business and Vocational Education and Training Institutes and this years' EFVET Conference looked at this issue in depth.

Key note presentations by Business and VET representatives were complemented by interactive workshops on a variety of related and key priorities facing VET institutions. These offered participants the opportunity to share approaches and methodologies drawn from across Europe and sharing good practice models of engagement through case studies and good examples. Conference workshops included the following topical issues facing VET institutions:

- VET and Business together: driving economic prosperity – models of engagement;
- Skills, what skills? – Supporting Training Needs Analysis;
- How in partnership can business and VET address the issue of youth unemployment: exploring models of good practice;
- Is it all about skills? Whatever happened to active citizenship and social inclusion;
- Leadership and management challenges in VET: the changing face of VET;
- The changing nature of the classroom: the role of coaching and mentoring; the role of advice and guidance; preparing learners to take responsibility for their own learning.

In addition, participants disseminated their European partnership project outcomes and results to a wide audience through the Roundtable sessions and promoted their innovatory development initiatives. LEO quali-TC was one of this European partnership project.



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