

VESTA-GIS Endorsement

Deliverable no. D 8.3 Version 2.0

Title:	VESTA-GIS Endorsement
Creator:	GISIG and LabSITA
Date:	20/10/2010
Subject:	Competence certification aimed to mutual recognition and transferability
Type	Document
Description	Endorsement of skills acquired through VESTA-GIS Curricula
Contributor(s)	All partners
Source (if any)	
Rights (if any)	
Language	English
Status	Final

Content

1. Introduction.....	3
2. The European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)	4
3. VESTA-GIS endorsement methodology	7
4. VESTA-GIS endorsement.....	9
5. Bibliography.....	10
Annex I - Example of form of Learning path VESTA-GIS endorsement.....	11
Annex II - Example of form of Certification of attendance to a VESTA-GIS endorsed learning path	12

1. Introduction

According to the VESTA-GIS project description of work, the objective of this document is to define process and criteria for the “VESTA-GIS endorsement”.

The VESTA-GIS endorsement will recognise the quality of a learning path that comply with principles established on this deliverable.

The previously mentioned principles are compliant with ECVET (European Credit Vocational Education and Training) system.

This document explains the process to achieve the endorsement in relation to content of the VESTA-GIS Training Framework.

2. The European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)

ECVET is a European instrument that support lifelong learning, the mobility of European learners and flexibility of learning pathways to achieve qualifications. It was adopted by the European Parliament and by the Council last 18 June 2009 and is currently in a phase of progressive implementation.

ECVET aims to facilitate the transfer, recognition and accumulation of assessed learning outcomes of individuals who are aiming to achieve a qualification.

It is based on the definitions, principles and technical specifications, set out in Annex I and II of the Legal text “Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council”¹. Furthermore, it should be based on common principles for quality assurance in Vocational Education and Training.

“ECVET is applicable for all learning outcomes which should in principle be achievable through a variety of education and learning paths at all levels of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF), and then be transferred and recognised. This Recommendation therefore contributes to the wider objectives of promoting lifelong learning and increasing the employability, openness to mobility and social inclusion of workers and learners. It particularly facilitates the development of flexible and individualised pathways and also the recognition of those learning outcomes which are acquired through non-formal and informal learning”¹.

All National and European stakeholders, such as institutions and authorities responsible for qualifications and diplomas, vocational education and training providers, social partners, companies, are encouraged to engage in ECVET testing through projects and networks.

ECVET is a technical framework, flexible yet structured in a clear way, based on concepts and processes which are used in a systematic way to establish a common language in order to stimulate exchanges and mutual trust among VET providers and competent institutions across Europe.

ECVET methodology

The ECVET methodology is substantially based on the description of qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes with associated points. The transfer and accumulation process employs complementary documents such as learning agreements and transcripts of records and follows ECVET guidelines. As in the Annex I of the aforesaid ECVET Recommendation:

‘Unit of learning outcomes’ (unit) means a component of a qualification, consisting of a coherent set of knowledge, skills and competence, that can be assessed and validated

and

‘ECVET points’ means a numerical representation of the overall weight of learning outcomes in a qualification and of the relative weight of units in relation to the qualification.

It is very important highlighting that ECVET points are not to be confused with credit. ECVET allocates points to qualification and not to education and training programmes.

¹ See paragraph 5 of this document.

‘Qualification’ means a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process that is obtained when a competent institution determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

A qualification comprises in principle several units and is made up of the whole set of units. Thus, a learner can achieve a qualification by accumulating the required units, achieved in different countries and different contexts.

Implementation phase

The adoption of the Recommendation by the European Parliament and the Council in 2009 creates the conditions for the implementation of ECVET. By 2012 ECVET will be tested and piloted in different contexts and systems: European, national and sectoral. In 2012 Member States are expected to have created the necessary conditions and measures for the gradual implementation of ECVET. In 2014 the European Parliament and the Council will review and evaluate the first stage of ECVET implementation and, if required, they will readjust the text of the Recommendation.

The quality of ECVET testing initiatives is crucial. All stakeholders, such as awarding bodies, providers, social partners, companies, are encouraged to engage in ECVET testing through projects and networks, in particular under the Lifelong Learning Programme.

In this context, VESTA- GIS network may be involved in the implementation phase and be part of test and pilot, representing the test case for GI sector vocational and education training, thus providing the possibility of interesting outlook, future perspective and sustainability for VESTA-GIS project.

Progressive implementation of ECVET

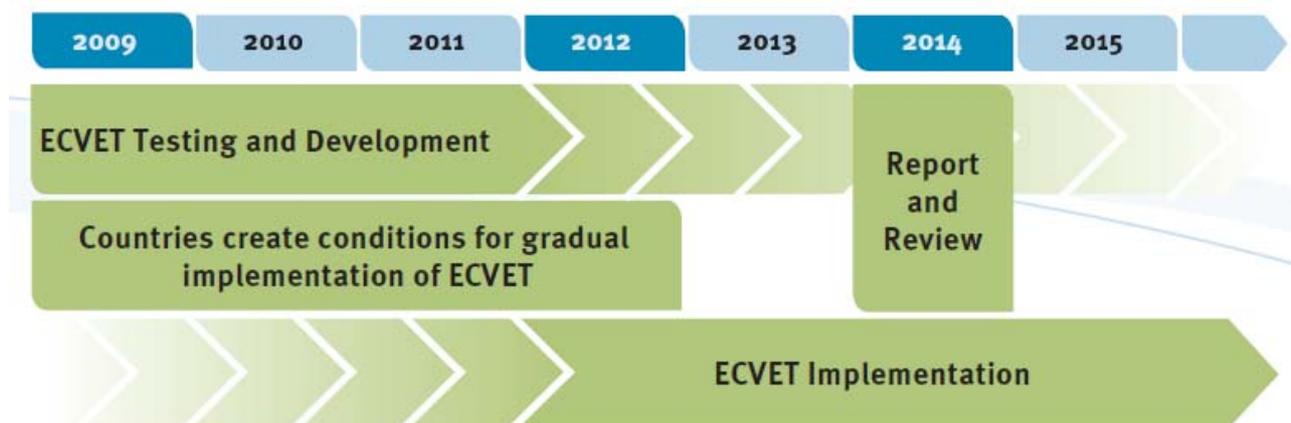


Figura 1- ECVET Implementation (from http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/ecvet/flyer_en.pdf)

Flexibility

In ECVET, individual’s learning outcomes are assessed and validated in order to transfer credits from one qualification system to another, or from one learning "pathway" to another. According to this approach, learners can accumulate the required learning outcomes for a given qualification over time, in different countries or in different situations.

The system also allows the possibility to develop common references for VET qualifications and is fully compatible with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Different kinds of context and learning

ECVET system allows attestation and recording of learning outcomes acquired in various contexts, in different countries and with different ways of learning (through formal, informal or non-formal learning).

In fact, ECVET applies to all outcomes obtained by an individual from various education and training pathways that are then transferred, recognised and accumulated in view of achieving a qualification.

In this way, the traditional definition of learning is broadened, in order to include a variety of education and different learning paths at all levels for lifelong learning.

Informal learning is learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective.

Nonformal learning is learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support). Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view.

ECVET system documents

In the ECVET system two documents are necessary to apply credit transfer: the learning agreement and the personal transcript.

The ECVET learner agreement is subscribed by the two competent institutions involved in the training and validation process and the learner, in the framework of an Memorandum of Understanding. It:

- distinguish between competent 'home' and 'hosting' institutions,
- specify the particular conditions for a period of mobility, such as the identity of the learner, the duration of the mobility period, learning outcomes expected to be achieved and the associated ECVET points.

The ECVET personal transcript specifies the learners' assessed learning outcomes, units and ECVET points awarded.

3. VESTA-GIS endorsement methodology

VESTA-GIS project established a network operating on a comprehensive framework, "a clearing house" devoted to combine access to training courses and mobility opportunities.

This aspect, as the others explained later, is absolutely compliant with ECVET Recommendation document.

VESTA-GIS project realised the Training Framework of which a *Catalogue of GI training courses* is one of the two important component. The *Training Course Catalogue* gathers and makes available all collected courses metadata according to a standard template.

Only validated metadata courses can be in the *Training Course Catalogue*. The validation is carried on the base of the "Quality criteria for the validation of metadata of training material" document (project deliverable D 2.4.1) and it is consistent with the "*Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training*" mentioned in point 7 of the ECVET Recommendation.

In addition, the VESTA-GIS Training Framework indicates and suggests some *learning paths* developed and tuned on specific needs. These *learning paths* have been realised on the base of the real user needs referred to business contexts and developed in consideration of the aforesaid *Training Course Catalogue* and, where appropriate, of VESTA-GIS Mobility Framework.

Principles for endorsement

VESTA-GIS framework has a close correlation with the mentioned principles of ECVET system.

At this point we assume that:

- the *learning path* leads to the achievement of a "qualification";
- the courses and stages which support the *learning path* can be identified as "units". As aforesaid in the previous paragraph of this document, the term is mentioned in the Annex I of the ECVET Recommendation. It is very important highlighting that the validation of metadata courses in the *Training Course Catalogue* accurately reflects the principles and specifications of the Annex II of the ECVET Recommendation, because guarantees the completeness, the exhaustiveness and the consistency of the knowledge, skills and competences contained in them. Therefore each "unit" is documented and the learning outcomes it contains can be assessed and validated through a process of attesting officially achieved results with awarding of qualifications
- the "VESTA-GIS endorsement" is the real validation of *learning path* through a process of confirming that principles defined by VESTA-GIS framework has been applied towards the acquisition of a qualification. The endorsement is referred to a certified path built on quality criteria, not to a learner.
- the "qualification" is a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent institution determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to a *learning path*;
- the VESTA-GIS Network represents both the "competent institution", which is responsible for designing and awarding qualifications, or recognising units, both the "hosting

institution”, the one that delivers training for the learning outcomes concerned and assesses the achieved learning outcomes.

- The “Memorandum of understanding” is an agreement that states the mutual acceptance of the status and procedures of institutions involved in the ECVET system; it is mentioned in the ECVET Recommendation and it is represented by the VESTA-GIS Network partnership, set up according various levels of partnership (core partners or associated partners).

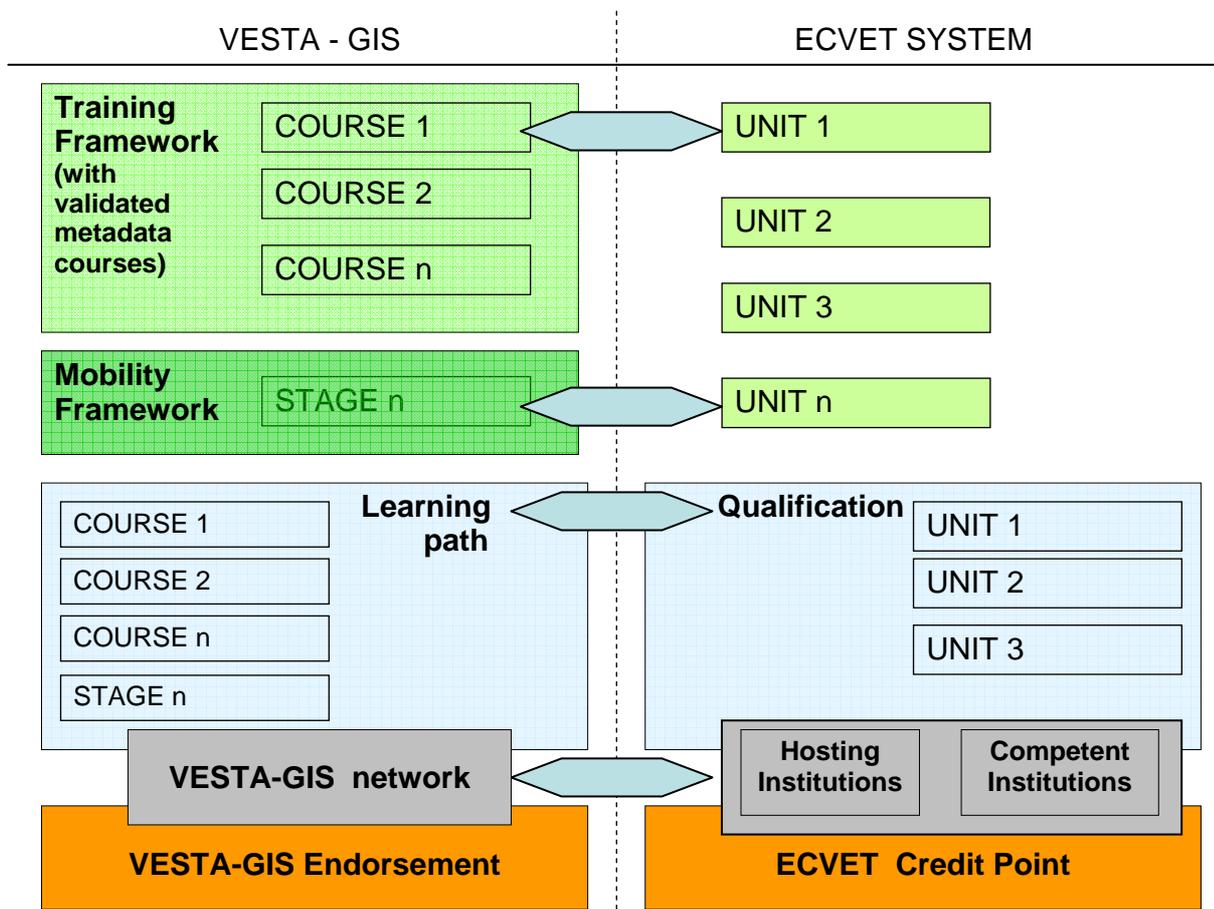


Figure 2- Comparison between VESTA-GIS system and ECVET system

4. VESTA-GIS endorsement

VESTA-GIS endorsement is released on learning paths that follow the principles aforesaid.

The endorsement guarantees to the learner that a certain learning path has a certified quality level.

The endorsement is referred to a certified path built on quality criteria, not to a learner.

VESTA GIS endorsement documents

The process of the endorsement includes two official documents related to two different steps:

- The Learning path VESTA-GIS endorsement (see Annex I)
- the Certification of attendance to a VESTA-GIS endorsed learning path (see Annex II).

The VESTA-GIS endorsed learning path is the document that contains detailed description of a certain learning path, with all the courses included in the path.

It contains those elements:

- Learning path name
- Courses name and description, or details of stages :
 - Name of the course (mandatory)
 - Hosting institution delivering the course (mandatory)
 - Other details of the course (optional)
- VESTA-GIS Network stamp (mandatory)
- Hosting institutions stamp (optional)

The second document is the Certification of attendance to a VESTA-GIS endorsed learning path.

This document, as afore specified, is an endorsement over a certified learning path, that guarantees the quality of a certain learning path.

It recognises that the learning path attended by the learner is endorsed by VESTA-GIS Network.

5. Bibliography

- Legal text “Establishment of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)”. Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council (June 2009): <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:155:0011:0018:EN:PDF>.
- 2008 Recommendation on the European Qualifications Framework – EQF: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:111:0001:0007:EN:PDF>.
- “Quality criteria for the validation of metadata of training material” document (project deliverable D 2.4.1)

Annex I - Example of form of Learning path VESTA-GIS endorsement

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">LEARNING PATH</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">VESTA-GIS ENDORSEMENT</h3>
---	---

<p>LEARNING PATH: (Name of the learning path):</p>												
<p>COURSE 1 (Name of the unit)..... (Hosting Institution)..... (Optional details of the course).....</p>												
<p>COURSE 2</p>												
<p>COURSE 3</p>												
<p>.....</p>												
<p>COURSE n...</p>												
<p>VESTA-GIS framework logo (or HOSTING INSTITUTIONS signatures and logos)</p>												
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; width: 20%;">H.I. n. 1 (logo)</td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 20%;">H.I. n.2 (logo)</td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 20%;">H.I. n.3 (logo)</td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 20%;">H.I. n. 4 (logo)</td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 20%;">.....</td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 20%;">H.I. n. x (logo)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">....</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	H.I. n. 1 (logo)	H.I. n.2 (logo)	H.I. n.3 (logo)	H.I. n. 4 (logo)	H.I. n. x (logo)					
H.I. n. 1 (logo)	H.I. n.2 (logo)	H.I. n.3 (logo)	H.I. n. 4 (logo)	H.I. n. x (logo)							
											

Annex II - Example of form of Certification of attendance to a VESTA-GIS endorsed learning path

	<p>CERTIFICATION OF ATTENDANCE TO A VESTA-GIS ENDORSED LEARNING PATH</p>
---	---

VESTA-GIS Network certifies that:

LEARNER'S PERSONAL INFORMATION

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms
 Name.....
 Surname

Date of birth/...../.....
 Place of birth.....
 Address.....
 Post Code..... City Country.....
 ID/passport.....
 Nationality

attended the following learning path: (Name of the learning path)

.....
 From/...../..... to/...../.....,
 composed of the following courses:

LEARNING PATH COURSES

COURSE 1 (name of the course, hosting institution, etc)
 COURSE 2 (name of the course, hosting institution, etc)
 COURSE 3 (name of the course, hosting institution, etc)

COURSE n. (name of the course, hosting institution, etc)

the learning path of knowledge, skills and competence is recognised based on the procedure developed by the VESTA-GIS endorsement process.

Date and Place

