



QualiMoVET

Quality signet for modular VET for disadvantaged young people

Final Report

Public Part

Project information

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Executive Summary

QualiMoVET (Quality signet for modular VET for disadvantaged young people) was a project carried out by nine organisations from Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Austria and Spain. All partner organisations have large expertise in the field of VET, socially disadvantaged young people and quality assurance systems. They are training providers, universities, and consulting organisations.

The objective of the project was to find and support high-quality ways of improving the integration of socially disadvantaged young people into educational systems and the labour market. The consortium was elaborating recommendations of action on how to set up a quality signet. The quality signet should be awarded to providers of training courses that offer VET courses that are suitable for disadvantaged young people in the partner countries.

The major product of the project is the matrix of quality standards showing different quality dimensions and quality indicators. It is part of the recommendations of action. The recommendations also include strategies for a sustainable implementation of the developed quality standards on an institutional, a national and an EU level.

The approach of QualiMoVET comprises the elaboration of two national studies in each country about the situation of the target group and good practice projects in the partner countries. The studies have been carried out in the course of the project and served as a basis for the development of the recommendations of action, especially it served as a basis for the development of the QualiMoVET quality standards. A matrix with quality dimensions and quality indicators has been developed and revised.

Furthermore, in each country two national workshops were organised by the project partners to discuss the interim results with experts and important stakeholders in the particular countries.

The partner organisations came together to four project meetings to analyse the results and develop a common approach. In addition, the partners were in regular contact via monthly Skype conferences.

Among others, results of the project are overall recommendations for action that are available on the website www.qualimovet.eu. Moreover, national networks were built up by involving decision-makers and other experts (national workshops). These networks were provided with information on the project regularly (a newsletter that was published regularly).

It is planned that the recommendations for action should be implemented in a follow up project. Plans for this were discussed among the partners.

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1. Project Objectives

The project's objective was to find and support high-quality ways of improving the integration of socially disadvantaged young people into educational systems and the labour market. The experience of the project partners as well as scientific studies/ data show, that the high rate of unemployment among socially disadvantaged young people remain an urgent problem in most EU Member States. According to EUROSTAT the average unemployment rate amongst the group of young people (EU 27 / age group 15-24) was 19,7% in 2009 which was an increase of more than 4 % in the last two years.

Socially disadvantaged young people form a heterogeneous group. Economic, social, ideological factors often have an influence on success or failure in the field of integration into VET and the labour market. In the majority of the EU Member States, the group of socially disadvantaged and unemployed is characterised by having low formal VET qualification or being even without a completed VET qualification.

In many Member States, there is a wide range of approaches aimed at integrating the target group. For example differently structured training courses, particular learning programmes (forms of work-oriented learning and concepts of linking work and learning) and intensive support and individual promotion are present, however these are often not known beyond regional or national borders.

Furthermore, approaches for modularisation or models that take into account a validation of competences acquired outside formal education settings can play an important role to motivate the target group to enter or to carry on their VET. Recognition of such non-formally or informally acquired competences is also discussed in the development of the European Qualification Framework and National Qualification Frameworks.

Whereas it is already customary to apply quality standards and corresponding measuring instruments even transnational, there are still no overall comparable standards in the field of training of the disadvantaged. Nonetheless, there is a growing need for common standards and measuring tools in the process of intensification of efforts to include socially disadvantaged young people in EU programmes in the future. This is especially the case with regard to transnational mobility projects. Common standards also facilitate the transfer and exchange of European good practices.

QualiMoVET determined usable knowledge about quality standards of vocational training programmes for disadvantaged young people in the EU Member States Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Austria and Spain. The Project Partners gathered good practice and developed common quality standards. The quality standards are shown in the QualiMoVET Matrix. In addition to the development of the Matrix, an approach on how to use the quality standards has been developed and elaborated, too. Common recommendations for action were formulated on how a quality signet for modular VET for disadvantaged young people provide high quality training courses for the target group can be implemented. All these major products are explained in the QualiMoVET guideline.

2. Project Approach

At the very beginning of the QualiMoVET project, all partners were asked to compile a preparatory study according to a study matrix prepared by the project management team. In this study the partners gave basic facts about their national educational systems. Besides, these studies comprise a definition on how the target group of disadvantaged young people is defined in the particular country and how the VET system is dealing with them. Finally, the partners were asked to describe relevant methods and systems of quality assurance in VET. All partners compiled the preparatory studies before the kick-off meeting in March 2009 and presented them there.

The nine partners from six countries come from different professional backgrounds (two universities, four VET providers, one business consultancy and two institutions experienced in setting up and implementing VET programmes for the target group). All partners have proved experience in the field of VET as well as dealing with target group.

In the course of the first meeting the experts drafted a study matrix that served as a base for further studies.

In summer 2009, all partners elaborated national studies on two or three good practice examples for high quality VET programmes for disadvantaged young people. On the basis of the matrix several quality dimensions were investigated. These were for instance:

- Entrance conditions to the VET programme
- Learning support system and infrastructure
- Process and support of validation of competences
- Methods and tools for encouraging learning
- Employability
- Pedagogical personnel

Within these case studies, the partners evaluated other studies, carried out expert interviews, analyzed programme guidelines and journals.

Towards the end of their studies they organized national workshops in their countries to present and discuss the results of this research and included the results in their studies.

At the partner meeting in Budapest in September/October 2009 the results of the studies were discussed and the matrix was revised in group sessions. It was essential carrying out the studies beforehand in order to be able to make the revisions of the Matrix. The VET systems and traditions in the partner countries vary broadly. The process of revising the Matrix was very time consuming. However the development process of the Matrix was the most important task in the whole project. The Matrix forms the essential part for the recommendations for action. It includes six quality dimensions and several quality indicators VET providers have to meet, if they want to be certified with the QualiMoVET quality signet in VET for disadvantaged young people.

To proof the practicability of the matrix and in order to gather feedback from VET practitioners another testing phase has been applied at VET providers. This testing phase

was carried out in spring 2010. Each partner institution was testing the matrix together with at least two VET providers.

In the frame of the project meeting in Vienna in May 2010 the results of the testing phase has been discussed. It was necessary to carry out major reworks of the matrix.

From June to September 2010 each country realised a second national workshop. As many experts as possible from different fields (VET, disadvantaged young people, quality, accreditation experts, scientists) were involved in these workshops. The reworked quality matrix has been presented and strategies for a sustainable implementation of the quality signet were drafted.

During the whole course of the project the partners were asked to involve further national experts into the project. The partners informed stakeholders not only at the national workshops, but also inform them constantly on activities within the project. This all contributes to a broad dissemination to ensure a certain level of sustainability of the project.

In October 2010 the final conference for the QualiMoVET project was carried out in Brussels. The major target of the final conference was the presentation of the project products as well as the presentation of the development process of the product. It was intended to show the importance of an introduction of quality standards in VET for socially disadvantaged young people. The Project Partner invited important national stakeholders to Brussels to participate on the final conference. In addition to this the EU representatives of the Partner States were invited as well as some EU wide operating institutions.

Four partner meetings (one kick-off meeting, two partner meetings and one final conference) have taken place in the course of the project. To ensure the progress of the project regular Skype conferences were held and the partners communicate for example by using the partner section of the website www.qualimovet.eu.

3. Project Outcomes & Results

Basics:

Firstly, the project generates comprehensive knowledge about existing quality standards in the field of VET for socially disadvantaged young people in Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Austria and Spain. Therefore preparatory studies have been elaborated. The results of the preparatory studies can be found on www.qualimovet.eu.

A synopsis of the most important results of the six studies has been compiled, too.

Process:

A study matrix was drafted and tested in national studies of all partner countries. This formed the basis for the recommendations for action of the project. This study matrix has been revised several times in the course of the project. The process of revising the Matrix was very time consuming. However the development process of the Matrix was the most important task in the whole project.

Main studies of the six partner countries have been elaborated. In these studies two/three examples of good practice in the participating countries have been described according to the study matrix. These studies can also be found on the website.

In each partner country two national workshops were carried out. The first workshop took place in 2009, the second one in 2010. These workshops were important in order to discuss interim results and to involve national stakeholders and decision making bodies into the project work.

A website informs about the project activities, but also contains the partner studies as well as data on the project itself.

A newsletter was published regularly, informing the public about the progress, interesting news as well as dates and an introduction of one or two project partners in each issue. The newsletter was published the website. It was also circulated by partners in their networks.

Results:

The final product is a common recommendation for action for drawing up a "European Signet of Quality" for modularised vocational training of socially disadvantaged young people. The major part of this recommendation is the QualiMoVET Matrix of quality standards. Beside this, a description of the practical application of the Matrix as well as strategies for the national and European introduction of the QualiMoVET signet has been developed. All this has been summarised in the QualiMoVET guidelines. The guideline can be found on www.qualimovet.eu. The guideline is mainly designed for VET providers and national stakeholders. It shows the practical possibilities for the application of the standards in order to improve the educational quality of VET offers or to improve VET systems on a national level. One of the possible improvements is the sustainable introduction of the QualiMoVET signet through accreditation. Principal features of accreditation institutions that award such a signet is also described in the guideline.

As mentioned the QualiMoVET guideline is giving valuable knowledge about the application of the QualiMoVET quality standards on an institutional and national level. The Project Partners also developed recommendations of action for the European level.

Introduction of standards and regulations for a European accreditation system:

In 2009 the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) published the study on “Accreditation and quality assurance in vocational education and training“. The statements regarding European accreditation could function as recommendations of action for the creation of a suitable frame for the introduction of a European quality signet for vocational education and training of socially disadvantaged young people.

“The initiatives for accreditation launched in various European countries and in a growing number of VET sectors may be specific to the countries or sector organisations themselves, but there is a growing tendency towards a common European language.” (CEDEFOP 2009, p. 44)

“There is a need for a set of criteria, standards and rules for the procedures according to which VET providers and programmes should be given accreditation. This should not be an overly complex manual of rules to be followed but consist of a number of basic requirements for how to carry out accreditation; European cooperation could support the streamlining and downsizing of the criteria and rules for accreditation that are currently used in different contexts.

Common European guidelines defining criteria and rules for accreditation could be developed by Member States or a European accreditation council and applied by the national or any other VET accreditation agencies. Based on the insights gained in this study, European guidelines for accreditation procedures could seek:

- a. The existence or establishment of an internal quality management system respecting the CQAF principles in the VET provider organisation asking for accreditation;
- b. The application of a set of commonly agreed indicators focused mainly on the measurement of outputs and outcomes of training programmes;
- c. The participation of independent experts and peers in external assessment of quality.

Whereas in self-assessment there is no obligation to include the learners perspective, European guidelines for accreditation should ask for participation of learners and other stakeholders in the internal processes of quality management.

Common European standards for publication of results of accreditation procedures could also be established and applied by the respective accreditation agencies. This will help improve quality, as VET providers will try to avoid being “named and shamed” for bad quality. With publication of results they will strive to keep to standards and try even more to deliver good quality.

In a medium-term perspective there are a number of additional challenges and options for common accreditation guidelines that could be tackled at European level. To date, accreditation comprises a yes/no decision. An attestation is given that a certain degree of quality is achieved by a programme or a provider but no incentives are given for improvement of quality. Given the ambition to make European education and training systems a world reference, different levels of quality should be defined. If such a

classification system for quality is developed and applied by the European accreditation agencies, this would encourage competition among VET providers and their striving for excellence.

Independent experts and/or peers are involved in most accreditation processes but few profiles describing the necessary competences and skills to fulfil this task have been designed. As VET should seek similar standards in all countries, a competence profile for quality assessors in accreditation processes should be developed at European level.

Given the tendency towards increased accreditation, in the near future a growing number of experts will be needed to carry out appropriate tasks. The development at European level of common training modules for quality assessors in VET would ensure the comparability of accreditation procedures. Assessors, having participated successfully in the respective training programmes could be formally recognised by a European accreditation council for VET.

These suggestions are parts of a European approach to accreditation in VET that could be developed step by step. All activities would contribute to assuring and increasing the quality of training provision in VET. Finally, the creation of European labels for VET quality could be an organic result of this development and a signifier of the success of European VET cooperation.

The first and most important issue for strengthening European cooperation, however, is the accreditation of VET programmes and providers according to commonly agreed criteria, standards and guidelines. This would support common trust in the results of accreditation as well as in the quality of training provision in VET.” (CEDEFOP 2009, p. 46ff)

The transnational Partnership within the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci Innovation Development Project QualiMoVET supports the view expressed by CEDEFOP, since it is our strong believe that supporting a European-level accreditation approach in the area of vocational education towards a system based on common standards and regulations within the European Union would benefit and accelerate the process of implementing the QualiMoVET quality signet.

The "Open Method of Coordination" - Impulses at the European level:

The “Open Method of Coordination” might show itself useful for future progress in the implementation of common quality standards for vocational education and training of disadvantaged young people. It refers to a tool of political controlling launched to supervise the development of the different education systems in the Member States of the European Union. While using the subsidiarity of the different systems (and States) as its core principle, the method aims not only at the development of the education systems by common standards but also at more transparency so that the overall outcome will benefit both the mobility and the flexibility of EU citizens.

To achieve its defined goals, the method makes use of the following instruments:

- Support of reciprocative learning,
- Statistical review,

- Recommendations and guidelines publicised by the Council of the European Union (as was suggested by the European Commission),
- Benchmarks.

Within the context of the development of such common standard procedure as the basis for the accreditation of programmes for the disadvantaged youth we believe it would be a wise decision to apply the "Open Method of Coordination" for gaining experience and being able to estimate the overall chances of such process. Therefore we urge the individual Member States to launch a trial period for implementation of the signet, since there is a great chance that this might lead to a more dynamic development of vocational training services in the future.

Implementation of the QualiMoVET signet within the context of the European Social Fund:

The European Social Fund (ESF) is one of the main labour market promotion tools of the European Union. It is mainly used in accordance with the Lisbon Strategy that is highly focused on labour promotion and growth.

Within the frame of the ESF the EU supports its Member States with financial aid to co-finance their domestic (funding) efforts for a wide range of vocational support services and programmes. The funding opportunities range from vocational education and support of access to child care services up to integration programmes for socially and economically underprivileged persons. Again the CEDEFOP study on accreditation of 2009 is proposing the following option:

"Finally, in many EU countries the financial support of the European Social Fund could be used to build up institutional capacity for accreditation and quality assurance as a core part of reform and modernisation of national VET systems. According to Article 3, (d) of the regulation for the new funding period of the European Structural Funds 2007-13, one of the priorities of the ESF is to improve "human capital, in particular by promoting: the design and introduction of reforms in education and training systems" (European Parliament and Council of the European Union, 2006). (CEDEFOP 2009, p.48)

While the QualiMoVET quality signet is targeted especially on underprivileged young people, it holds its exceptional strength in certain points defined by the ESF as its main focus throughout the current period from 2007 to 2013. These are the main key strengths:

- Regarding one of the main goals of the ESF for the current funding period, i.e. enhancing the ability of employees, businesses and other employers to adjust to changing market situations, support by the QualiMoVET quality signet begins right with the start of the first job training and/or education. This strategy aims at raising the total percentage of fully trained personnel from disadvantaged background, eventually leading to more professional and geographical mobility.
- One further goal defined by the ESF for this period implies finding not only practical but also sustainable solutions to enhance the accessibility towards the labour market and labour market participation. These days, an officially recognised educational degree is obligatory for gaining access to most jobs. To further positive development

in this area is also one of the major goals defined by the QualiMoVET quality signet and its standards. Its implementation will contribute a substantial share towards achieving this key point of the current ESF strategy.

- Social exclusion is another huge problem that needs to be dealt with by the Member States of the European Union within the next years. This is not only stated in the strategy of the ESF but also tackled as a major strong point of the QualiMoVET quality standards. Being one of the main goals of the Project, activities designed in accordance with the new standards help young people with disadvantaged backgrounds gain better access towards recognised educational degrees, thus enhancing the social integration of young people who otherwise might become excluded.

For the reasons listed above, the Partnership strongly advises to make compliance with the QualiMoVET quality signet an obligatory precondition for allocating ESF-distributed funds to VET providers for young people with socially disadvantaged background. As a first step, trial programmes should be launched in the six countries (Austria, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Spain) that participated in the QualiMoVET Project. Hence, the European Commission could issue official recommendations to the responsible authorities in the QualiMoVET partner countries. In addition, future progress could benefit from the establishment of an accreditation authority that is responsible throughout the EU. A trial programme focused on the introduction in Europe of the QualiMoVET signet through accreditation funded by the ESF could foster useful experience for the implementation and necessary preconditions for a European accreditation authority in general.

European Youth Strategy 2010 – 2018: Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field for the next decade:

It is the primary purpose of the European framework for the EU Youth Strategy, renewed by the decision of European Council of November 27th 2009, to promote the ability and interest of young European citizens for active participation in the Europe-wide political process and for being an active part of the European society. The comprehensive approach behind this strategy makes clear that all activities undertaken within the framework should tackle all political aspects affected.

In accordance with the “Open Method of Coordination” as the basic principle of decision-making and realisation of activities within the framework, the EU has not defined and realized any activities and programmes on its own accord, since one major reason for prolonging the duration of the strategy was to animate the Member States into reaching commonly understood decisions by themselves, achieving open communication of new ideas, and promoting exchange between the nations.

A target of special interest concerns the group of the disadvantaged young people and activities that help to promote their social integration alongside their transition from school to vocational training and finally their participation in the labour market.

Within this context, the further development of informal and non-formal learning processes is a point of particular interest. It will open and favour further efforts to promote EU-wide quality standards in regard to this special target group, be it within the framework of exemplary

projects aimed at the comparable implementation of quality standards or in the context of so-called peer-learning processes at the level of the Member States.

At the same time, however, the perhaps biggest advantage of such an approach might be one of its biggest weaknesses. The absence of direct impulses coming from the EU means that the Member States themselves will have to initiate new projects in the field.

Therefore the further progression of common quality standards for the promotion of underprivileged persons will depend greatly on the chance of finding good partners that are highly interested in new projects and further development in this sector.

4. Partnerships

The consortium:

QualiMoVET is a consortium comprising nine partners from six European countries that have a wide range of experience in the field of VET as well as disadvantaged young people. The partners share their experiences among each other.

BBJ Servis gmbH (Germany) as the lead partner looks back on more than 20 years of experience in implementing modularised education and employment programmes for socially disadvantaged young people. For about 2 decades BBJ has been commissioned by the German Youth Ministry to support the integration of disadvantaged young people through special youth welfare consultation services. BBJ is the lead partner of QualiMoVET and is responsible for the project management.

The chair of Vocational and Work Pedagogic at the Helmut Schmidt University/Hamburg University (Germany) contributes its extensive expertise in the field of research on informal learning processes as well as experience learning processes for vocational and further education. Together with BBJ, the team of this chair published several studies on quality assurance and VET for disadvantaged young people. The Department of Technical Education, Institute of Applied Pedagogy and Psychology of Budapest University of Technology and Economics (Hungary) has resources for developing and evaluating the project objectives. The department has several decades' training experience in the field of technical instructors', engineer-teachers' (formerly technical teachers) and certified engineer-teachers' training. Within the bounds of the possibilities of its Hungarian and international relations, the department intensively develops its infrastructure serving the purposes of education and research primarily utilizing the vocational education and training development and European Union development programmes. Both Universities support the scientific steering of the QualiMoVET project.

Székesfehérvári Regionális Képző Központ (Hungary) is a regional training centre active in the education and vocational training sector, also in regard of the target group.

BZDZ from Bydgoszcz (Poland), a supra-regional vocational training organisation, also brings in its practical experience as a provider of vocational training courses. EUROED is a training provider and the national representative for European certification systems for vocational competences in Romania.

Prospect a business consultancy in Austria supports the project because it has a wide experience in the field of labour market policy. VHS Meidling from Austria is an adult education centre that provides courses for the target group of socially disadvantaged young people. Finally, the last partner, IMFE, is a regional vocational training institute in Spain.

Apart from the project management, which essentially lay in the hands of the lead partner and the scientific support, all partners contributed to the projects activities to an equal share.

Besides, the partnership of the consortium each partner established/enlarged their national networks. By inviting national stakeholders to national workshops, the partnership dealing with QualiMoVET has been being enlarged beyond the consortium. Furthermore, national decision-making bodies were regularly involved in the project in order to guarantee the sustainability of the project beyond its duration. All QualiMoVET partner invited national

stakeholders to the final conference in Brussels. The majority of the invited stakeholders participated in the conference. This was an important step to disseminate the QualiMoVET Quality standards as well as the idea of the sustainable implementation through accreditation.

The BBJ advisory board on VET for socially disadvantaged young people that was preparing the idea of QualiMoVET was also part of the enlarged QualiMoVET partnership. Some of its members were involved as regular project partners; others participate at partner meetings usually for one day to discuss the project's progress with the consortium.

5. Plans for the Future

The importance of providing target-group specific VET programmes for socially disadvantaged young people has not diminished since the beginning of the project. Rather the contrary is the case. All QualiMoVET Project Partners agree upon the importance to exploit the project results in the future. The plans of the future depend on the general professional focus of each Partner. All together the plans image the levels indicated in the recommendations of action (institutional, national and EU level). As the QualiMoVET developments are the intellectual products of the QualiMoVET Partners, the partnership should continue and the signet should be further improved by focusing on the institutional, national and EU level introduction and exploitation.

Institutional level:

The gained knowledge about quality standards for VET offers for socially disadvantaged young people will be part of future developments of VET programmes as well as for future consultancy for VET providers. The QualiMoVET Matrix of quality standards can be used either by organisations providing programmes for the target group as an instrument of self assessment and self reflection, which is often the first step in a quality assurance process. The VET providers among the QualiMoVET Partners are eager to implement the developed standards into their programmes on a voluntary base.

The volunteering VET providers could form a network, whose goal is to share best practices, discuss results and potential failures. This network could simultaneously ensure the cohesion and the further-development of the QualiMoVET quality standards as a grass root movement.

National level

The gained knowledge about quality standards for VET offers for socially disadvantaged young people will be part of future consultancy for national VET systems. Therefore the QualiMoVET Matrix will be introduced into the national discussions about measuring the quality of such programmes. The QualiMoVET Matrix will be continuously presented to relevant stakeholders and programme managers on a national level.

One of the QualiMoVET Partners also plans to publish a study on the results of the project in the near future to widely disseminate the results and raise the VET providers' awareness in relation to the quality standards, as we are convinced that the quality standards mark the future direction of vocational education and training. It is also considered important to include the knowledge of the project in the curriculum of vocational and economist teacher training, to provide help (e.g. in the form of consultation) for vocational education and training providers to upgrade their VET programmes so that they could meet the quality standards of the QualiMoVET Matrix.

Once the QualiMoVET Matrix is introduced in some countries on a voluntary basis, it is important to gain evidence on its applicability in the practice. The experiences need to be discussed. The practical, hands-on experience with the use of the QualiMoVET quality standards in different countries will provide the regular basis for sustaining its proactive

character. The utilisation of the Matrix in the involved countries would also admit to compare the national programmes for the target group on an international level. Obviously, the formation and operation of such an international network requires special resources.

European level

After the finalisation of the project, it is planned to look for ways to implement the quality signet for modular VET for disadvantaged young people on a transnational level. The majority of the QualiMoVET Partners witnessed their commitment to be part of a follow up project consortium. The lead partner will look for suitable (European or national) programmes. In the meantime the lead partner will look for additional potential European partners.

It is also planned to pursue the goal of setting an ISO – International Standardisation Organisation norm for VET for socially disadvantaged young people. In 2010 the first ISO norm 29990 for education has been approved. The QualiMoVET Partners will check the options for the development a norm regarding the project aims. The QualiMoVET Partners are aware that this is a mid- or long-term process of highest demand.

General:

The leading partner will follow up activities securing the intellectual property rights for the developed ideas and products of the project consortium.

6. Contribution to EU policies

Youth unemployment is a substantial problem in all EU member countries and affects especially the group of socially disadvantaged young people.

During the past decade the ongoing European unification process has enhanced cooperation among the EU Member States and led to more innovation in the field of Vocational Education and Training (VET). In this sense EU policy of VET is based on a tradition of strengthening the cooperation between Member States with a view to improving the quality and recognition of VET and consequently also the mobility across Europe. Member States therefore have committed themselves to work closely together in order to remove obstacles to occupational and geographic mobility and to improve the access to lifelong learning. This includes taking steps to increase the transparency and recognition of competences and qualifications within vocational education and training systems and to promote closer cooperation with regard to quality in European vocational education and training systems as a sound basis for mutual trust.

The European policy priorities are being implemented through the further development and initiation of common instruments, such as the European Qualification Framework, the European Credit System for VET (ECVET) and the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (EQARF).

In order to increase the attractiveness of VET to all target groups it is necessary to ensure non-discriminatory access to and participation in VET. The needs of people or groups at risk of exclusion – in particular early school leavers, low-skilled and disadvantaged people – have to be taken into account.

The project contributes to the Lisbon Key-Competence “Learning to learn” by dealing with learning and training methods, e.g. modular approaches, which are especially accessible for the target group of the disadvantaged. Such forms of education support VET providers by splitting training and lifelong learning offers up to smaller units that are easier to handle. In addition, these new forms recognize aspects of informal learning, which enhances the motivation to learn.

QualiMoVET contributes to the objectives and targets of the new strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (“ET 2020”) adopted by the European Council in May 2009.

It supports in parts all of the four strategic objectives:

- making lifelong learning and mobility a reality:
- improving the quality and efficiency of education and training
- promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship
- enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

Within this political context it has become necessary in the EU to reconsider the causes and attendant risks of problems in the training and employment situation of young people who have not completed their formal education. For years, programmes have been developed and approaches tried, and Member States have come up with a wide range of approaches. Some of these are very good, aiming at the integration of the target group into employment and society. For instance, modularisation approaches or models which take into account a validation of competences acquired outside formal education play an important role here. However, comparable quality standards do not yet exist in the field of vocational education and training of the disadvantaged. There is a growing need for common standards in the process of intensifying efforts to include socially disadvantaged young people.

The results of QualiMoVET will contribute to pave the way for a European quality signet for modular VET for socially disadvantaged young people.

This means firstly that the quality of VET programmes for the target group will be improved. Thus training courses become more efficient. The target group usually excluded by general VET programmes due to different obstacles: entrance barriers, lack of support systems, lack of instruments to recognize prior knowledge, etc. can be integrated into VET programmes. Various quality standards that are suitable for the target group were analyzed and discussed in the course of the project. Finally, indicators were defined that have to be present in VET courses that intend to get the QualiMoVET signet. (Strategic objective 2)

QualiMoVET addressed the target group of socially disadvantaged young people only on the second level.

Socially disadvantaged young people form a heterogeneous group. Economic, social, ideological factors often have an influence on success or failure in the field of integration into VET and the labour market. The QualiMoVET project developments focused on differently structured learning programmes that encourage individual learning paths and link practical learning with theoretical learning. The idea was also to take into account the training and further training of professional personnel working with socially disadvantaged young people.

Thus our project contributes to the strategic objective 3.

Improved quality in VET promotes confidence in VET approaches among the Member States. A quality signet or even the debate on quality standards in the field of disadvantaged young people helps to create a dialogue among different countries. The signet would therefore support mobility not only of experts and knowledge, but entails the mobility of the target group in the future. It will be prevented that young people drop out of the formal education system or are integrated back into it. As a result, they will have better chances in participating in further lifelong learning activities. VET programmes and approaches that take into account the validation of non-formal and informal learning as well as individual guidance are of special interest with regard to the target group. These programmes and approaches are consequently accounted for in the project. (Strategic objective 1)

The QualiMoVET project also contributes to the European benchmarks:

- Early leavers in education and training: as a contribution to ensuring that a maximum number of learners complete their education and training

- Increasing the participation of adults in lifelong learning, particularly that of the low-skilled.

Furthermore, QualiMoVET takes the strategic priorities of the Lifelong Learning Programme 2010 into consideration:

It supports the creation of transparency as well as recognition of competences and qualifications. QualiMoVET also takes into account the latest developments of the European reference instruments EQARF, EQR and also ECVET. The project is working with its own project glossary that is based on the glossaries of these instruments.

It enhances quality and attractiveness of VET systems and practices (see above).

QualiMoVET developments regards labour market needs as important by supporting disadvantaged young people that have difficulties in entering VET and the labour market. Due to the demographic developments in the near future, it is essential to integrate everybody into the labour market.

Finally, another approach for improving quality in VET for the target group is to advance skills and competences of VET teachers, trainers and tutors. It is of course at the same time important to raise the need for qualified personnel. New learning models where teachers are not any longer seen as teachers, but learning *coaches* as well as close co-operations with enterprises (that is to say under real life conditions) are interesting with regard to the target group. Approaches that focus on competence play an important role, too.

