



ECVET ASSET

AUTOMOBILE SERVICE SECTOR ECVET TESTING

Intermediate Report

Public Party

Information concerning the project

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Summary :

This ECVET project – ASSET (AUTOMOBILE SERVICE SECTOR ECVET TESTING) - is to run over three years, from January 2009 to December 2011 and this intermediate report provides an update on the work done on the project throughout the first 18 months. ASSET aims to test ECVET in the automobile service sector through periods of mobility for a public following a training course and whose objectives are to acquire competences in the electrical and electronic automotive field. This experiment concerns four countries (France – FINLAND – HUNGARY – ROMANIA) and involves 11 partners belonging to the following three groups :

- ◆ Training centres all having a large experience in mobility
- ◆ Competent authorities each having prior experience and knowledge of ECVET through their participation in other European projects (ex. ECVET Connexion)
- ◆ Representatives of the Economic World

The objective of the ASSET project is to develop how periods of mobility are organised between institutions. Mobility programmes are most frequently organised “classically” centred on objectives concerning discovering of professional situations and are often considered by those concerned as a break in their training programme. ASSET aims to show that it is possible to evolve towards a new generation of mobility and to use ECVET as an opportunity to have their competences acquired during a period abroad recognised. In order to do that, the ASSET project has been divided into two parts:

- ◆ A first phase, allowing all the partners to become familiar with ECVET and the construction of tools for the future experiments.
- ◆ A second phase, seeing mobility being implemented between training providers involved in the project and allowing the tools created during the first half of the project to be tested.

This intermediate report aims to give an update on the work done during the first part of the project where we have :

- ◆ identified the units of learning outcomes regarding the job profile concerned by the ASSET project, that may be integrated into a mobility programme
- ◆ produced four units written to ECVET specifications (Knowledge, Skills, Competences)
- ◆ created assessment grids for each unit and determined the assessment criteria

During the second part of the project, the tools are to be tested and conclusions drawn following the experiments.

For more information on ASSET : www.ecvetasset.eu

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1. Objectives

Context :

After several years of mobility projects within the automobile service branch, it became apparent to the actors concerned (training centres – competent institutions – professional organisations) that there was a lack of recognition for these mobility projects, often leading to frustration by those concerned. It is for this reason that ECVET was immediately perceived as leverage allowing more elaborate mobility projects to be considered with better integration into the training process and centred on objectives concerning the acquisition of competences.

In other words, ECVET is an opportunity to envisage a transition from a “**classic and loosely organised mobility period**” to a “**recognised and structurally integrated mobility period**” within a training course. This recognition is a real added value to mobility and ECVET allows learners to embark on a professional learning pathway with the same possibilities as students in higher education.

It is with this in mind that the partnership for the ASSET project was established between four countries and involving eleven partners made up of four training centres, four competent authorities and three organisations representing the professional world.

It should not be forgotten that this project is based on the results of different feasibility studies concerning the implementation of European Credits (EC) and more particularly, ECVET Connexion. These studies allowed different types of professional training systems in Europe with different levels of compatibility for the implementation of ECVET to be identified.

The choice of countries involved in this project was not limited to countries whose training centres already presented the most favourable conditions for implementing ECVET. In fact, it was quite the opposite. It was decided to take into account the diversity of existing systems in order to fully appreciate the feasibility of implementing ECVET in the most varied situations.

Objectives :

The ASSET project’s main objective is to take into account ECVET technical specifications in order to undergo a mobility test aimed at young people on an electro-mechanical training course.

In order to do this, the intermediate objectives of the ASSET project were defined as follows :

- ◆ Starting from a job profile clearly identified by each one of the partners participating in the project (electro mechanic profile), identify the units which are the most suitable to the organisation of a mobility test

- ◆ Finalise the writing of these units, respecting ECVET technical specifications and create different tools to be used during the implementation of these units (entry conditions – assessment grid – validation criteria – assessment guidelines).
- ◆ Identify where these units are placed within each of the qualifications concerned and propose a method for the allocation of credit points.
- ◆ Build the necessary tools allowing for the implementation of the transfer process for the units of learning outcomes acquired in a different training context (partnership agreements and learning agreements)
- ◆ Establish conditions allowing the necessary mutual trust to be built between the different partners involved in the ASSET project by organising two classical bilateral mobility programmes (Finland – Hungary and France – Romania) before the ECVET mobility test.
- ◆ Organise two ECVET tests allowing the pertinence of the tools built to be validated, learning important lessons from the mobility, identifying the difficulties encountered and finding solutions which could be implemented to overcome them.

« **ECVET- From Principles To Reality** » : this expression clearly reflects the determination of all of the partners involved in the ASSET project to test ECVET starting from a concept with a certain number of technical specifications and finishing by a period of mobility adapted to a particular context within the automobile service sector in Europe

2. Approach

Using ECVET as its basis, ASSET was designed to give additional structure and legitimacy to mobility throughout Europe for learners on training courses within the automobile service sector.

As indicated in the previous chapter concerning the objectives of this project, the partners involved in the ASSET project wanted to work together in order to produce units of learning outcomes written according to ECVET specifications and then to test them on learners during a period of mobility, implementing all of the tools and procedures built, and following it through until the finalisation of the transfer and recognition process of competences acquired in a different learning contexts.

The first phase of this project, which is the object of this intermediate report, was based on the identification and writing of units of learning outcomes that may be used during the second phase of this project as the structure for the mobility test. In order to characterise the approach chosen for this first phase of the ASSET project, three points need to be underlined :

1. An approach where the entry chosen for starting the work was based on points of convergence and on what we had in common rather than working from what we saw to be different.

It was therefore identified that the automobile service sector had characteristics that were more favourable to an ECVET experimentation than in many other sectors :

- ◆ A limited number of automobile manufacturers with a distribution network running through all of Europe and having standard organisation procedures.
- ◆ Workshops using identical equipment.
- ◆ Vehicles which, regardless of the manufacturer, integrate identical technology and offers similar levels of equipment.
- ◆ Similar job profiles requiring similar competences.

Following these conclusions, the first step of our work together was to define precisely which job profile would be used for this experimentation (electro – mechanic). The characteristics of the sector described previously led us to think that a job of this type using homogenous competences, would allow us to identify sufficient points of convergence to write common units.

The ASSET project has thus privileged an entry by job rather than an approach which would give priority to the comparison of training programmes based on different logic and methods.

2. A bottom-up approach. There is reality two ways of approaching ECVET. Either by a **top-down** approach, meaning that the initiative is given to competent authorities who work on the writing of qualifications before passing them on to the training providers experimenting ECVET, or by a **bottom-up** approach.

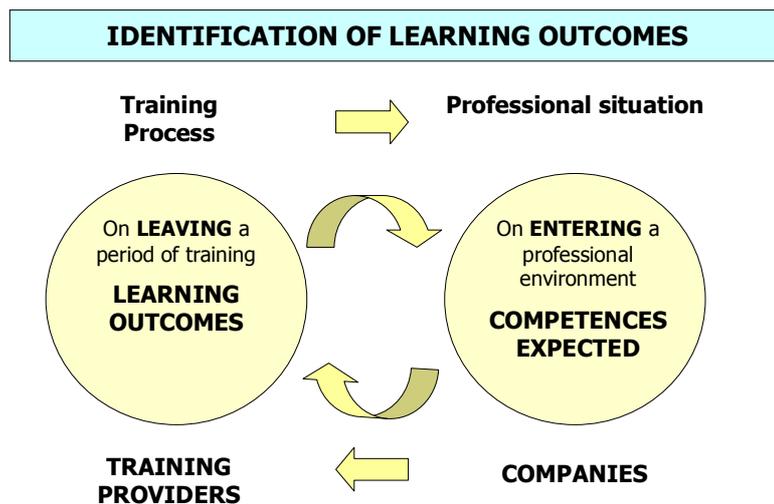
A top-down approach privileges an **institutional entry** which was not chosen for this project.

In the ASSET project the opposite was chosen, leaving the initiative to the training centres, as it was considered that the impulsion necessary for implementing a mobility programme is nearly always given by the training centres who have not been imposed upon.

This **bottom-up approach**, which tackles ECVET in an **operational way**, also allows the identification and writing of common units by considering the qualifications concerned as they stand and not as they should be i.e. learning outcomes and organised in units.

However, this approach must not forget that the training centres and competent institutions must work closely together in order to ensure an adhesion between all of the partners at each stage of the project.

3. An approach in which involves, other than the training centres and competent institutions, partners representing the professionals. The definition of learning outcomes must take into consideration the opinions of the representatives of the companies. The following diagram shows a summary of the identification and validation processes of the units of learning outcomes implemented in the ASSET project.



3. Products and Results of Project

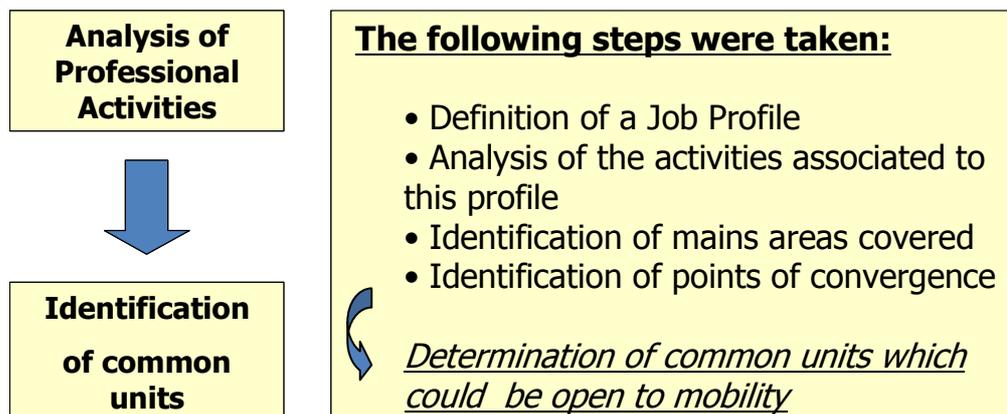
The ASSET project started with a Kick Off meeting organised in March 2009 : Today, after eighteen months of project, the first productions have been finalised or should be in the very near future.

RESULT n°1 : UNITS

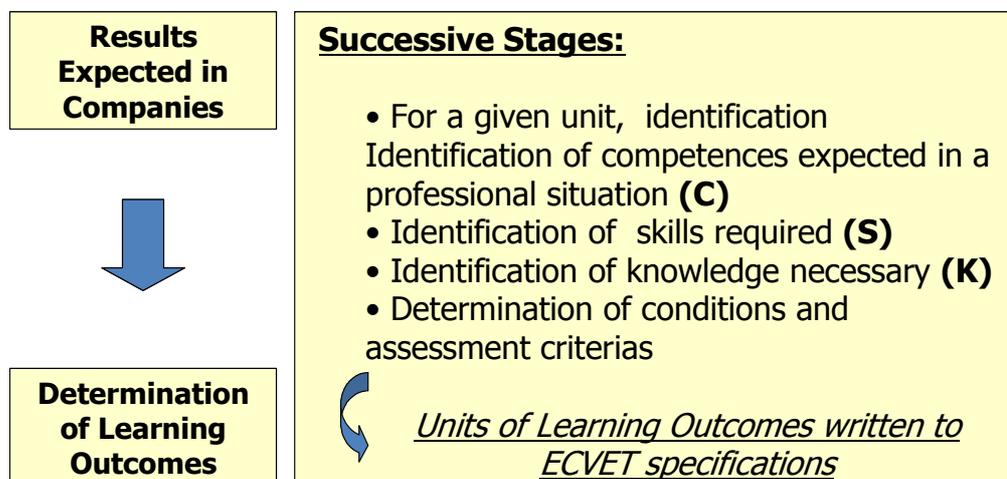
The title of the project – Automobile Service Sector ECVET Testing – clearly shows that the aim of this project is that of an ECVET test. The priority for the first half of this project has been centred on the production of units of learning outcomes which could be used during a period of mobility of two to three weeks.

This part was broken down into two phases :

Phase 1: Identification of Units



Phase 2: Writing of units in K – S - C



The implementation of the method described in the two previous diagrams allowed us to build four units responding to three criteria :

- ◆ **Convergence** : points of convergence between the different partners concerned for the choice of units
- ◆ **Size** : the size of the units must be compatible with the duration of mobility (two to three weeks)
- ◆ **Position in programme** : the choice of the units should not be a constraint the training centres and should take into account the planned period for the implementation of the mobility test (first trimester 2011)

The units produced, as well as the tools to go with them,

- ◆ Definition of the entry requirements
- ◆ Conditions for implementation
- ◆ Grid and assessment criteria
- ◆ Assessment guidelines

may be downloaded on the ASSET project's website : www.assetecvet.eu

RESULT n°2 : CREDIT POINTS

The second objective for the first half of the project was to determine the number of credit points to be allocated to each of the units by each partner. It was decided that each competent institution should determine their own criteria for allocating credit points. Therefore there was no debate as to the question of credit points. We simply decided that there should be transparency and clarity for the different actors concerned, most importantly the learners concerned by the ECVET experimentation. It is essential that they understand that, for a same unit, there could be a different number of credit points allocated depending on the country.

It is for this reason that a grid was produced by each country in order to identify the position of each unit within the different national training programmes concerned by the project.

These grids have been finalised and validated : each country now has to provide a short text in order to explain which criteria will be used to determine the ECVET points. As soon as this work is finalised (probably at the beginning of September 2010) the grids will be uploaded onto the ASSET website.

The French partners produced the following table giving a general idea of the position of each unit within the training course concerned and at the bottom of the document, the number of credit points allocated to each of the four units can be found.

France : CREDIT POINTS ALLOCATION

ACTIVITY	TRAINING MODULES	COMPETENCES	VOLUME IN HOURS	Unit1	Unit2	Unit3	Unit4
combustion engines and auxiliary equipment	Petrol Engine Management Level 1	Perform a check-up and maintenance of all ignition and fuel supply by direct and indirect injection	94 H		25 H		7 H
	Petrol Engine Management Level 2	Perform a diagnosis and maintenance of all ignition and fuel supply by direct and indirect injection	83 H		20 H		7 H
	Diesel Engine Management Level 1	Perform a diagnosis and maintenance of mechanical diesel injection systems. Repair the different diesel pollution control systems.	111 H				17 H
	Diesel Engine Management Level 2	Perform a diagnosis and maintenance of electronic diesel injection systems.	52 H				
mechanical assemblies	Diagnosis and intervention on mechanical systems	Perform a diagnosis of the cooling and lubrication circuits. Perform the maintenance on a distribution system. Repairs on the upper part of the engine. Check the internal sealing of the engine. Check and repair a mechanical transmission system. Check and	90 H				
	Diagnosis and intervention on drive trains	Perform a diagnosis and the maintenance of the drive trains	34 H			34 H	
driving, comfort and security	Air Conditioning	Perform a diagnosis and repair the refrigeration system and regulated air conditioning.	27 H				
	Automatic Transmission	Perform a diagnosis and the maintenance of the automatic transmission systems.	47 H				
	Suspension and power-assisted steering	Perform a diagnosis and maintenance of the suspension and power-assisted steering.	39 H				
	Vehicle Stability Management Systems	Perform a diagnosis and the maintenance of the vehicle stability management systems.	42 H	42 H			
Fitting access.	Fitting of accessories level 2	Fit an accessory on a non pre-equipped vehicle.	10 H				
Management Organisation	Management and organisation of the activity level 1	Organise a work station depending on the job to be done.	42 H				
	Customer service level 1	Give advice on the usage or maintenance	35 H				
	Professional environment	Understand their activity in the company and its professional environment.	21 H				
	Professional Folder	Treat information. Structure a professional folder in relation with the activity in hand.	49 H				
			776 H	42	45	34	31
CREDIT POINTS			120	8	4	8	3

RESULT n°3 : ECVET « PRE-TEST »

The third result that needs to be mentioned in this intermediate report is the exchange of learners between the training centres of the ASSET project :

- ◆ An exchange between Finland and Hungary organised in January and February 2010
- ◆ An exchange between France and Romania organised in March and April 2010

The objective of these two exchanges was to prepare for the « ECVET TESTS » programmed for the second half of the project :

- ◆ allowing a better knowledge of each of the partners in order to establish the necessary mutual trust to implement an ECVET test.
- ◆ testing the units and tools produced (grids and assessment criteria – assessment guidelines) within a real situation and checking the work done in order to make any necessary adjustments.
- ◆ identifying the conditions necessary for learners to be correctly prepared for these periods of mobility.

These two exchanges concerned a total of around 25 learners and allowed three of the four units produced to be tested. In both cases, we were able to confirm :

- ◆ An efficient collaboration between the staff of the two training centres showing real mutual trust.
- ◆ The pertinence of the choices made concerning the units of learning outcomes in terms of size (adapted to a period of mobility of two weeks), contents and tools.
- ◆ The necessity of a reinforced preparation for the learners participating in the ECVET Test at the beginning of 2011 : linguistic preparation adapted to the country, information on the hosting country and on its training system, information on ECVET..

Concerning this last point, we confirmed the necessity of building specific tools such as a technical glossary for each unit and translated into the four languages of the partnership or information on ECVET and the ASSET project for the learners concerned by mobility abroad

Finally, it is necessary to underline the fact that even though these two exchanges are an integral part of the project structure, their funding was not part of the grant allocated to ASSET and that each partner has had to find the necessary funding for these exchanges thus showing yet again their determination and their implication in this project.

RESULT n°4 : PRESENTATION DOCUMENTS AND THE ASSET PROJECT NEWSLETTER

Since the beginning of this project, all the partners have also been actively involved in the creation of communication and dissemination tools for ASSET.

Due to this collective effort, several documents have been produced :



- ◆ A logo and a slogan :
- ◆ A brochure produced in the four different languages of the partnership in which there is a brief presentation of the partners involved in the ASSET project as well as the project's objectives.
- ◆ Two NEWSLETTERS distributed, either in paper format or electronically, by all the partners involved in the project. Five newsletters in total have been planned throughout the three years of the project. Three other newsletters will be sent out over the next eighteen months.

All of these communication documents (presentation brochure, Newsletter) can be downloaded from the ASSET website.

4. Partnerships

The partnership which involves organisations from four different countries (France – Finland – Romania – Hungary) is without a doubt one of the strengths of the ASSET project and a guarantee allowing the objectives of the project to be reached. This partnership was built with two main objectives in mind :

- ◆ First of all, involving all of the actors concerned in implementing ECVET. For this reason this project includes operational partners (training centres), institutional partners (awarding bodies) but also partners from the economic world (representatives of professional organisations).
- ◆ Secondly, to reunite organisations already heavily involved in transnational cooperation projects :
 - Training centres with a large experience in the implementation of mobility projects and thus naturally finding their place within a project whose objective is to test ECVET through mobility.
 - Institutional partners having already acquired a certain expertise related to ECVET thus bringing to the partnership technical clarification and guidance as to the choice of methods and organisation to be implemented by the training centres.

In total, the ASSET project involves the participation of 11 partners :

Training Providers :

- ◆ EFMA (Espace Formation de Métiers et de l'Artisanat)- FRANCE
- ◆ VANYAI AMBRUS GYMNAZIUM – HUNGARY
- ◆ GEORGE BIBESCU SCHOOL – ROMANIA
- ◆ OMNIA (Training Centre) – FINLAND



Competent Institutions :

- ◆ NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION - HUNGARY
- ◆ OMNIA (Competent Institution) – FINLAND



◆ NCTVETD – ROMANIA

◆ ANFA - FRANCE



Representatives of the Economic World:

◆ CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF SZOLNOK – HUNGARY



◆ AUTOALAN KESKUSLIITTO (AKL) – FINLAND



◆ GNFA – ROMANIA



5. Future Projects

The ASSET project is clearly divided into two parts : the first phase concerns establishing partnerships and the building of tools and procedures allowing, during a second phase, an actual ECVET test to be done.

On the whole, the first phase coincides with the first half of the project and this work which consisted of writing common units to be used during mobility is finished.

The work planned for the coming eighteen months is as the initial programme.

The schedule of the planned activities is as follows :

◆ From September 2010 to December 2010 :

- Finalisation, validation and signature of **partnership agreements** between competent institutions as well as **learning agreements** between training centres
- Creation of **specific tools for ECVET mobility** :
 - Glossary of technical terms
 - ECVET and ASSET project presentation guide
 - Documents presenting the hosting country and training centre

◆ From January to June 2011 :

- Organisation of **two ECVET tests** :
 - Between Finland and Hungary
 - Between France and Romania

◆ From June to December 20110 :

- Draw conclusions **from the two ECVET tests**

In parallel, all of the partners will continue to promote and valorise the project through a website dedicated to ASSET and through three new newsletters (the next one is to be finished and diffused during the next steering committee planned for November 2010 in Bucharest)

NB : ASSET web site address www.assetecvet.eu

6. Contribution from the political communities

The ECVET project answers –at its level- to 3 of the main objectives related to the strategic framework for education and training:

1- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;

The project aims at favouring the European mobility through a test of ECVET. Despite the fact the project is only in the middle of its completion, 2 mobility actions (Finland-Hungary and Romania-France) have been carried out in the perspective of a “recognized mobility”. Such kind of mobility contributes to supporting structural mobility. By the end of the project, 4 programmes (including formal recognized mobility) will be have been completed. The number of people involved seems low (60) but it will contribute to integrating the European dimension (and mobility) in the training courses concerned (automobile maintenance). A dissemination activity has already provided information to training centres and companies. The project also constitutes the opportunity to promote learning mobility (through the different networks of the partners). One of the objectives stressed by the ASSET project is “to support the realisation of a European area for lifelong learning”. The ECVET system contributes to this objective. Working on the implementation of ECVET is also supporting the realisation of a European area for lifelong learning.

2- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training

3- Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

The ECVET ASSET project is an aid to quality transfer. Through the creation of common units of Learning Outcomes and all the pedagogical engineering developed by all the partners (reminder: for each country this concerns competent institution, training centres and companies) have enriched their practices. It contributes to the efficiency of VET: taking into account companies’ needs, competent institutions’ objectives and providing training meeting with all the objectives.

The ECVET ASSET project is also the opportunity to enhance partnerships between education and training institutions and the broader society. In this way, it contributes to the improvement of VET quality.

The ASSET project, as one of the 10 pilot projects testing the ECVET systems, is using European reference tools. The ECVET tools favour the validation of non-formal and informal learning and the recognition of learning outcomes obtained abroad. In this way, it contributes to quality VET. On the other hand regarding the Lisbon strategy, the peer learning activities are very important. The ASSET project has been until now (and should continue to be) an important platform in order to learn from each other. These activities have been carried out concerning the understanding of learning outcomes, the creation of units and the setting up of the memorandum of understanding.