

Vademecum of the ECVET Management System (Deliverable nr. 10.1)



ECVET system for No borders in tourism hospitality **European Training and Work**

*147788-LLP-1-2008-1-IT-ECVET
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INDEX

Introduction - The Project	7
Specific Objectives	7
Project target groups.....	9
The main characteristics and products	10
The Partnership	11
Foreword – Structure and Purpose of the Vademecum.....	22
1. ECVET	24
1.1. What is ECVET	24
1.2. ECVET in Europe	31
1.3. ECVET in the relevant partner countries.....	32
<i>FRANCE</i>	32
<i>SLOVENIA</i>	34
<i>PORTUGAL</i>	36
<i>ITALY</i>	39
2. Designing the pathway for implementing an ECVET experimentation: Step by Step	43
2.1. System conditions and elements.....	45
2.2. Actors.....	54
2.3. Project Management and Phases.....	57
2.4. Methodologies and Tools	61
2.5. Expected results and impacts	72
3. A case study: the proposals of the Network project	75
3.1. Rationale and background.....	77
3.2. Methodological approach.....	81
3.3. Procedures for the implementation of ECVET.....	86
3.4. Operational Tools.....	94
3.5. Areas and conditions of application of the proposed methodologies and tools.....	97
3.6. Sustainability of results achieved by the NET Work project.....	102
4. Conclusions	106
5. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND WEB RESOURCES	109
6. ATTACHMENTS: Tools of the NET Work Project	113



Introduction - The Project

The project "N.E.T.WORK - ECVET System for No borders in tourism' hospitality European Training and WORK" is one of eleven European ECVET pilot projects funded within the LLP Programme - Call for Proposals: "*Projects to test and develop the credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET) 2008 (EACEA/14/08)*"; with a project duration of 36 months, it had the following general objectives:

- to constitute and consolidate a partnership among organisations able to create and share a common operational framework for the development and testing of the ECVET system;
- to carry out experimental interventions within the ECVET system with reference to the specific target of beneficiaries of vocational training pathways and eventual mobility projects, in the sector of tourism and hospitality management with a particular focus on the reception areas in hotel and alternative lodging structures;
- to define and implement specific ECVET techniques and produce methodologies, specifications, guidelines and a handbook;
- to empower systems mainstreaming interventions in order to contribute to strengthening the results of the general ECVET system in a wider EU context.

Specific Objectives

In this general framework, the specific objectives pursued by the ECVET system and the N.E.T.WORK project are:

- to create the necessary conditions and, if necessary, to adopt measures so that as of 2012, in conformity with national legislation and accepted practice and in light of the experimentation and tests, the ECVET system can be gradually applied to the qualifications of vocational education and training at all EQF levels and used to transfer, recognize and accumulate the results of learning acquired by a person in formal contexts and, if the case, non-formal and informal ones;
- to promote the development of national and European networks and partnerships, in which the authorities and institutions responsible for qualifications and diplomas, the subjects providing professional education and training, the trade unions and employers' associations and other interested parties participate, and with the purpose of testing, applying and promoting the ECVET system;

- to propose an approach where the learning outcomes acquired abroad can be considered for the awarding of a qualification in the student's country of origin ;
- to define, validate and recognise – within the specific diversified characteristics of the training pathways that can effectively be identified in the chosen area of the qualification - congruent and measurable "modules" (learning outcome units), valid for all the partners' countries;
- to stipulate agreements/conventions to allow the competent organisations which are part of the partnership validity and continuity with the recognition/certification defined through the ECVET methods, and to amplify as much as possible the area of applicability;
- to create and test common tools for the definition, implementation, validation and recognition of modular training paths, already existing in the partner countries, under the ECVET system (including the processes of support, validation and recognition of the LLL & LWL training experiences) with the double objective of facilitating mobility in various training phases and situations and of allowing the "accumulation" of potentially recognizable credits, for employment purposes, throughout the European Community;
- to create a tool for suppliers, professionals and competent bodies, to allow them to more easily compare the learning outcomes acquired in the various countries, and to validate and recognize these;
- to define a device to respond to the needs of the final user and therefore a way to allow persons to follow their own training pathway by building on the learning outcomes when they move from one learning context to another, in particular in the framework of mobility;
- to create a methodological framework, agreements and common principles to reinforce dialogue among training providers;
- to propose tools to develop partnerships among the actors involved (competent bodies, training suppliers, etc.).
- to apply the ECVET system and instruments, according to national legislation and usage on the topic of vocational education and training;
- to promote and participate with the stakeholders and competent national institutions with the objective of disseminating and supporting ECVET among the project partners and of establishing a sustainable platform for the exchange of information and experiences among the partners.

Project target groups

The project was directed to short-term target groups, represented by:

- a) **Users of the training paths and of mobility in the area in which the testing should take place.** These were meant to benefit from the model of ECVET prepared experimentally especially for the tourism sector and from the products intended to foster the use of instruments in support of the transparency and certification of the competences currently available.
- b) **The project partners as active subjects in the professional training systems and of interface between labour supply and demand.** The partners involved represented important organisations in the area of national training supply and trans-national mobility programmes; moreover the promoter also participates in the definition and realisations of a university curriculum dedicated to the tourism sector, the members of the partnership have worked for years on certification systems and offer similar services, but this project provides them with the opportunity of setting in motion a trans-national system.

Long term target groups of the project were defined as:

- a) **Potential users of the final product:** subjects active in the definition of national and community training policies, training agencies and bodies, as well as the trade unions and employers' associations since they are involved in the strategy for the construction and activation of systems of credit transfer, in fact the output of this proposal will be useful instruments in the planning and programming of training initiatives.
- b) **users, real or potential, of training activities for the tourism industry and sector workers:** they will benefit from the ECVET model tested specially for the tourism industry and from the products aimed at fostering the use of instruments in support of the transparency and certification of the competences currently available.

The main characteristics and products

The N.E.T.WORK project intended to coordinate, redirect and integrate within the ECVET framework those processes, procedures and tools which, in the current situation of the partners countries, have been recognised as effectively testable and which can be attributed to that system. The partnership has been able to bring about:

- a systemic, shared and coordinated reference framework for the development and testing of ECVET;
- the definition, validation and recognition – within the diversified specific characterisations of training paths (formal and informal) effectively existing in the chosen areas of qualification – of congruent and measurable “modules” (learning outcomes and units), valid for all the partners countries
- the congruence of certifications related to the ECVET system and their recognition within the formalised systems.

The core of the project, which has centered on a methodological and operational prospective based on the systemic integration into ECVET of experiences matured or underway in the partner countries, was therefore the **design of specific operative tools able to facilitate, within the ECVET system, the common definition, delivery, recognition and validation of modular training pathways**. These have been tested in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses in supporting credit transfer and accumulation as well as mobility and employability.

In this prospective, the project has realized this set of products:

- **Guidelines for the verification and evaluation of Learning Outcomes**
- **Descriptive outline of credit points for the analysed qualifications and the related units;**
- **Formal agreements;**
- **N.E.T.WORK experimentation plan;**
- **Guidelines for the application of ECVET.**

The Partnership

In the framework of boundaries and limits defined in general terms in the Call for proposals EACEA/14-08 under which the N.E.T.WORK project has been funded, priority has been assigned to the “experimental dimension” of the proposed intervention, positioned from its onset within the structural scheme defined for the ECVET system, both in its political-strategic and technical-operational dimensions.

Therefore the partnership was composed preliminarily through the recognition and analysis, within the various national contexts, both of the specific differentiated needs and conditioning which can be found within them, and of the situations – already underway or being planned/tested – that could be susceptible to operational convergence with the ECVET system.

The four partnership nations (FRANCE ,ITALY, PORTUGAL,SLOVENIA) have all participated in the discussions begun in 2006 on the problems and perspectives of implementing ECVET, which pointed out not only an evident multiplicity of attitudes in the adhesion or in reaction to the strategic proposal debated, and a highly varied collocation in the specific process of activating the policies and instruments that can be associated (if not directly connected) with ECVET, but also an evident convergence in considering the need and urgency of dealing with the problem in terms of the coordination of processes and of the validation/mutual recognition of the results.

France and Slovenia presented a rather advanced situation in terms of the fine-tuning of structures that could be concretely attributed to an ECVET system, even if from different positions (more critical in France and more convergent in Slovenia); while Italy and Portugal presented a situation that was not yet well-defined in terms of actuation, but that was strongly orientated toward the development of experimental elements - that could be recognised therein - in terms of “systems’ guidelines”.

Particularly, the preliminary elaboration method used of common accord by the partners to measure the conditions of functionality and feasibility in relation to the constraints and objectives of the AC has revealed that:

- in all the countries involved there was an explicit awareness of the fact that mobility, both in training and in employment opportunities, was a fundamental challenge for the development of the information and communications society;
- in the countries involved, in any case, either institutional system frameworks, or effectively developed experiments in harmony with the qualifying characteristics of the ECVET system already existed, although not at the same level of coherence and

specificity everywhere;

- in the countries involved there was a particular interest, and a particularly advanced preliminary elaboration, in certain professional areas specifically, which could be defined generally as tourism, and identified more precisely as tourist welcoming. Consolidated traditions of trans-national training and work mobility characterised the industry, even in the absence of adequate structures for the recognition of training results and the competences acquired through these.

All the partners had – albeit in different proportions – a proven capacity for planning, actuation, validation and recognition of training paths in VET which have direct or in direct reference to the systemic framework connected to ECVET.

The most interesting elements have been, on the one hand, a similar capacity to intervene in the area indicated above with a deeply rooted know-how in relation to that systemic framework, and on the other the possibility of interaction of the various positions that the partners covered within the VET systems involved. This has allowed the partnership either to start up the project with a common and already shared set of values, references and experiences, or to implement it with the contribution of the different positions and functions covered by the partners, especially in connection with the definition of effectiveness and lasting agreements formed to strengthen the impact and dissemination of the recognition/certification procedures.

In particular:

The French partner **France –Europea** is a network of vocational training centers connected to the General Direction of training and education of the French Ministry of Agriculture in order to promote public agrarian education (specifically, in the area of rural tourism); it joins together numerous French Institutions for agriculture experiencing the introduction of modular training methods, the promotion of mobility and connections with the public system of VAE (Valutation des Acquis d'Epérience)

The Italian partner **CST**, as the central structure for training in the tourism industry in Italy, has already produced numerous researches and interventions of national and community dimensions in the field of the supply of training services for tourism, acquiring broad competence especially in the analysis and trans-national testing of competences and qualifications in the sector (collaboration with CEDEFOP, LdV projects "Naturae" and New Hospitality, etc.)

Moreover another Italian partner, **Province of Perugia**, was selected because it represented the public institution that organizes and manages IFTS activities for the Region of Umbria, with



particular regard to the validation and formalization of evaluation and certification, in compliance with national and regional laws.

Federalberghi, was selected as strategic partner representing the labour market dimension of the specific area selected for the ECVET experimentation foreseen in the project.

Last, the other Italian partner **SV&CO**, also as an associate of the CONFAO, a national Consortium of vocational institutions, has been developing the planning, actuation and evaluation of national projects for the extension of compulsory education in the Italian school system which aimed at the construction of modular paths of learning by competences, at their testing within the approximately eighty associated schools and training structures, at the definition of the elements for the recognition and institutional certification of learning outcomes.

The Portuguese partner **Consultis** was involved in the development of many research and vocational training and Lifelong Learning interventions with the associated partner ISESP – INSTITUTO SUPERIOR DE ESPINHO – for the definition of the elements for the recognition and institutional certification of learning outcomes.

Last but not least, the Slovenian partner **CPI** as the national institution for VET had developed and was implementing, as part of its institutional activities, the generalisation in the national context of processes of training validation in the light of European indications on school training, non formal and informal learning, LLL and LWL. Of particular importance was the introduction in the 2007 National Professional Qualification Act of regulatory indications for modular credit assessment in explicit agreement with community indications (ECTS, ECVET, EQF, Europass, etc.). This institutional situation connected with the advanced elaboration of generalised interventions allowed them to guarantee an essential contribution to the development and dissemination of the experimentation proposed by the project.

For a more detailed description of the partners, we report here for each of them a summary of their profile.

Applicant organisation:
"Centro Italiano di Studi Superiori sul Turismo e sulla Promozione Turistica"

The Italian Centre for Advanced Studies in Tourism and Tourism Promotion (CST), founded in 1982, is one of the best established tourism management schools in Italy and offers services including training, up-dating technical assistance, research to all the public and private entities operating in the industry.

Together with the Faculty of Economics of the University of Perugia, CST has promoted the institution of the degree programme in Economics of Tourism, one of the first such experiences realised in Italy, contributing over the years to its development .

It operates in the field of professional and managerial training, on the undergraduate and post-graduate level, aimed at students and tourism operators, as well as in research, consulting and technical assistance on the main topics regarding the tourism industry. It produces marketing plans, development and promotion plans for communities that intend to invest in tourism as a driving force of the development of territories.

CST edits the most comprehensive series of "Studies and Research in Tourism" available today in Italy, published by FrancoAngeli of Milan, and produces multimedia educational materials on the principal topics of marketing and management of interest to tourism businesses and the public functions of the industry. CST has had its own quality system, certified ISO 9001 by the RINA certification agency, since 2001.

Ordinary members of the centre are: City of Assisi, Italian University for Foreigners of Perugia.

Among other contributing members there are: Region of Umbria, Province of Perugia, Federazione delle Associazioni Italiane Alberghi e Turismo (Federalberghi), Unioncamere Umbria.

The activities carried out by CST are mainly:

➤ **Training**

CST offers special-order and catalogue training services aimed both at pre-experience and post-experience training.

The Centre intervenes in:

- **planning**: including the creation and preparation of course structures, targeted training paths and educational modules related to the specific needs of the client/users; catalogue courses for pizza chefs, barmen, cooks and Italian kitchen.

- **realisation:** CST trainers and external professionals operate with educational methods and on highly operational contents, based on a rigorous educational and scientific approach. Training consultancy includes an analysis of training needs, the implementation of the project concept, continuous training actions, tutoring and technical-scientific assistance to students participating in work placements.

➤ **Consulting and technical assistance**

Technical assistance is directed at the public and private organisations operating in the tourism industry. In particular, CST makes available its know-how in the areas of marketing, IT management, revenue management, distribution, management controls, quality management, legislation. CST flanks local agencies, businesses and consortia in drawing up local tourism development plans based on new tourism and territorial marketing strategies.

➤ **Research**

Research activity is innate to the educational and consulting activity carried out by CST and represents a permanent accumulation of know-how made available to the clients of CST's services. The research activity is directed in many areas including the identification of training and professional needs; the realisation of community projects on the topics of the transparency of qualifications and competencies and on accessible tourism; the fine-tuning of thematic observatories for the analysis of the tourism system on a territorial level and in areas of particular importance. Privileged topics of analysis include new forms of tourism use of the territory, the most advanced business management techniques, such as revenue management, and models for destination management.

➤ **Production of educational material**

As integration and support of its activity and with the aim of spreading a managerial culture in tourism businesses, CST edits the broadest series of "Studies and Research in Tourism", available today in Italy, published by FrancoAngeli. The Centre is also active in the planning, realisation and testing of educational material for self-learning and at-a-distance training

Provincia di Perugia, Italy

The Province of Perugia is a Local Authority with statutory, normative, organisational,

administrative and financial autonomy; it's the larger of the two provinces of the Umbrian Region and is an intermediate organisation between the Region and fifty-nine Municipalities. At present the Province has about 1.200 employees. It has a complex organization divided in six areas coordinated by a General Direction. The areas are concerned with: building trade; road conditions; environment; economics, social and cultural activities; human resources, communication and financial services; employment, training and education. This last area has very important competences: organisation and management of public services for employment, planning the training and educational policies for unemployed, employed, young people, adults, with private and public resources obtained especially from the European Social Fund transferred from the Umbrian Region, managing Authority of the ESF. Within the present project, the Province of Perugia assumes a central and strategic role as the organisation which tests, in accordance with a new regional law, innovative practices and tools for the acknowledgment of education and training credits.

Sviluppo & Competenze, SV&CO S.r.l, Italy
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Sviluppo & Competenze, SV&CO S.r.l. is an organization which operates in different sectors of the Research, Consultancy, Planning and Programming fields, in particular focusing its attention on VET systems problems. Its area of intervention is centred on the EU strategies for the development of a "Learning Society", and, in this context on the problems related to the creation of a Lifelong Learning System.

SV&CO plays an important role of counselling, planning and research for public and private educational and vocational training schools and institutions granting high-quality standards thanks to the contribution of experts and permanent co-operation with a staff of qualified renowned researchers with a long experience in various scientific and productive sectors, as well as in the fields of Education, Training and European Community Initiatives and Structural Programmes.

Its wide objective is developed along these prevailing lines and actions:

- "system innovation" for which SV&CO is contributing through the elaboration of new adequate methodological and content-related solutions for the construction of a Lifelong Learning System;
- Development of planning and counselling actions for public and private institutions aiming at the elaboration and realization of projects for EU structural funds, Programmes and Initiatives.



- Elaboration of research methodologies and tools for the realization of feasibility and case studies on specific interventions and definition of innovative tools and models for training project monitoring and evaluation
- Realisation of research actions in the field of VET systems innovation.

FEDERALBERGHI - Federazione delle Associazioni Italiane Alberghi e Turismo, Italy

For over a hundred years, Federalberghi has been the national organisation that is most representative of Italian hoteliers.

Federalberghi represents the needs and proposals of hotel businesses with institutions and political, economic and trade union organisations.

Federalberghi proposes to valorise the economic and social interests of tourism entrepreneurs and to foster the recognition of their social role, the success of the tourism economy, the promotion of the national hospitality offer

Federalberghi stipulates national labour contracts, conducts and sponsors scientific activity for the analysis of the sector, promotes the entrepreneurial training of its members, assists & coordinates the organisational system on a territorial and regional level in the activities in defence of businesses.

Association France-Europa, France

The association France Europa includes fifty-two vocational training and technology institutions in the field of agriculture and agricultural tourism. It was created on 2 February 2000 as an "association structure" which operates as a network with logistical support from the Ministry of Agriculture.

The objectives of the association are:

- Involve institutions or networks of institutions in European projects
- Share experiences and practices
- Promote exchanges and internships for students and apprentices
- Promote the development of trans-national training and experimentation
- Join the association EUROPEA INTERNATIONAL gathering agricultural establishments in each member country of Europe

Each institute validates training courses for young people in initial training, apprenticeships and adults in lifelong education, by issuing diplomas and / or securities, following all the procedures for certification, as presented in the following articles (code rural):

- Article L 811-1_ (Act No. 99-574 of 9 July 1999 art. 121 Official Journal of 10 July 1999) _ (Act No. 2005-157 of 23 February 2005 art. 205, art. 211 Official Journal of 24 February 2005)
- Article L 811-2_ (Act No. 99-574 of 9 July 1999 art. 122 Official Journal of 10 July 1999)

About mobility, in 2007/2008 the association focused on three projects proposing to award 165 grants for the mobility of young people and adults in training in the member institutions, under project SETER (2008) of 28 institutes for 117 grants. This synergy can offer many opportunities for mobility in Europe. These fellowships for the realisation of Internships in Europe serve as a support to mobility within the project ECVET, and encourage experimentation in the transfer of competences.

CPI - Center Republike Slovenije za poklicno izobraževanje, Slovenia

National Institute for Vocational Education and Training is a public institution founded in 1995 by the Government and co-founded by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the Chamber of Craft of Slovenia. The Centre performs research, developmental and advisory activities and is the focal point where interests of the state and social partners in vocational and technical education converge, coordinate and connect.

The Centre studies developmental trends in labour markets and prepares profiles of occupations and competence-based vocational standards (occupational standards) that form the basis for the preparation of educational programmes of vocational and technical education and for certification of national vocational qualifications. The Centre develops methodologies and prepares modern module-based educational programmes of short-term, secondary as well as post-secondary vocational education. Other basic activities include the monitoring and introduction of educational programmes, evaluation of school-leaving exams and the vocational *matura* as well as the development of new methodical and didactic concepts of knowledge, learning and teaching. Important tasks of the Centre include the permanent education and training of teachers, professionals and mentors in vocational and technical education and the provision of technical support and guidance to providers of vocational and technical education. The Centre encourages and coordinates different developmental and innovative projects in vocational and technical schools, proposes projects for the equipment of



schools, and in cooperation with publishers, develops modern didactic material and learning technology. The Centre is also the National Reference Point for national vocational qualifications. Thus the Centre gives an insight into the national qualification framework and in accordance with the recommendations of the EU provides information vital for the transparency of vocational qualifications. The Centre cooperates with EU organisations and is also a reference point for the CEDEFOP TT-net – the European network for teacher and trainer training.

Consultis - Consultoria empresarial, unipessoal, lda, Portugal

Consultis is a private limited company which works in the field of entrepreneurship consultancy, innovation and specialised research, especially within education and training areas. In the educational and vocational training field, its aim is to provide a wide range of services in the entire value chain of the formative process: diagnosis, planning, conceiving, organisation, development, follow-up, evaluation and certification (including RVCC). Initial and continuing training of trainers, teachers, vocational guiders and counsellors, as well as the production of pedagogical materials and training programmes (including apprenticeship and mobility projects), have been a priority. In order to develop this activity, Consultis works among the educational agents – schools, training centres, polytechnics, universities – and within enterprises and the sectorial organisations [such as AEP – Associação de Escolas Privadas (Association of Private Schools), ANESPO – Associação Nacional do Ensino Profissional (National Association of Vocational Training and Education), AMPEP – Associação dos Médios e Pequenos Empresários Portugueses (Association of the Medium and Small Sized Enterprises)], with which it has established cooperation and partnership agreements. The project will naturally benefit from this involvement and cooperation.

**Associated Partner:
CONFAO – Consorzio Nazionale per la Formazione, l'Aggiornamento e l'Orientamento,
Italy**

CONFAO is a National Consortium for Vocational Training, Up-grading, Training and Vocational Guidance networking many different higher secondary education institutions and vocational training centres. CONFAO, instituted (in 2006) with the objective of developing the quality of training in the tourism sector, has subsequently expanded its objective towards the entire Italian VET system and the debates on new reforms. Despite its recent origins, CONFAO collects a significantly representative sample of the Italian galaxy of VET system and is



developing strong support for the associated institutions in line with the changing context of higher education and in order to help them manage the difficult innovation and reform processes.

Confao offered its national cooperative network of schools and training centres as an actor bearer of key-subjects beneficiaries of the ECVET experimental model in order to support both dissemination and testing activities in the national territory. The associated VET structures, in fact, should be considered a sufficiently representative sample in the Italian VET panorama, both in reference to the territorial distribution (south and isles, centre and north) and for the different addresses of study and areas represented. Besides this the associated VET structures are subjects strongly oriented to innovation and committed to following the guidelines and directives according to the recommendations of the EU reform, and the recent reforms introduced in the political guidelines of the Italian Ministry, in an optic of constant enhancement of their VET supply.

In fact, beyond initiatives directed to provide incentives for university and tertiary training pathways, coherent with both post-compulsory vocational training and qualitative requirements of the entrepreneurial world, CONFAO has a wider objective aiming to support the associated institutions in their commitment to raise the quality of human resources in order to face the challenge of lifelong learning. For this purpose, the Consortium is currently working for the development and implementation of complex projects aimed at:

- the experimentation, within the associated public schools, of the extension of compulsory education up to 16 years of age, as indicated in the recent reforms of the Ministry of Education;
- the experimentation of three-year pathways of specialisation (for the fulfilment of "compulsory vocational training", and thus directed at education and training beyond compulsory education) integrated between education and vocational training, which has provided funding from the Region Sicily to many vocational schools associated to the Consortium.

CONFAO currently aggregates 136 institutions (public secondary high schools and private vocational training centres) at national level, including 37 Vocational or technical secondary schools for tourism (hospitality and food & beverage), 8 Vocational or technical secondary schools for agriculture and environment, 17 Vocational or technical secondary schools for economics and commerce, which are all disciplines with a direct and cross-sectional relation to this project proposal. So, in connection with the aims and objectives of this project proposal, such features offered the opportunity for broadening both the survey context, and that of dissemination and experimentation in the national territory.

Associated Partner: ISESP – ISTITUTO SUPERIOR DE ESPINHO, Portugal

The Higher Secondary Institute of Espinho is an institution of Cooperative and Private higher education, officially created by the LAW n° 89/99, of 19 March 1999, after some years of implementation of this project in the provincial and local community.

Since its creation, the management aimed at defining strategies in order to fit the structure in a wider educational policy context destined to endow the Bologna Process and in the surrounding region with a vertical structure of education capable of corresponding to the expectations of a high number of students of general secondary education as well as in technical and vocational education and training.

So the ISESP inserts itself in a strategy of EU and regional development, with specific services to the pertaining communities, which are mainly:

- the development of Culture as instrument of integral achievement of the communities;
- the promotion of Research activities and of the Politécnico higher education;
- the deontological, technical, and scientific preparation of executives for the society;
- the Lifelong Learning of graduates;
- the promotion of cultural approaches and activities

Among its VET supply ISEP has:

- Business communication
- Accounting and data processing
- Hotel Management

ISESP will offer its structure as a key-subject beneficiary of the ECVET experimental model in order to support both dissemination and testing activities in the regional and national territory. The institute is, in fact, perfectly coherent in the areas of studies and the sector represented (tourism and hotel management) as well as entrusted by national laws as a certification centre. Besides ISESP is strongly oriented to innovation and committed to following guidelines and directives according to the recommendations of the EU reform.

So, in connection with the aims and objectives of this project proposal, such features offered the opportunity for broadening both the survey context, and that of dissemination and experimentation

Foreword – Structure and Purpose of the Vademecum

As foreseen in the planning phase, the partnership of the N.E.T.WORK Project conducted joint work aimed at developing methods for the application of the ECVET principles within already existing pathways and practices in the partner nations as requested by the European Commission. As an outcome of the results of the testing the partnership carried out “corrective actions ” on the products and prepared this Vademecum of the ECVET management system. The Vademecum, besides a detailed description of the procedures and methodological models of the ECVET system tested, is meant to report the procedure followed by the partnership for the development of the operational instruments of the ECVET N.E.T.WORK management system: from the way of constructing training pathways to tools & instruments for the evaluation and certification (and registration) of credits as well as the models of the network agreements for the mutual recognition of credits.

Since the partnership shared a need to make constant reference to the guidelines and instruments provided by the EU Commission under the ECVET system, the final structure for this product has been set up as follows:

- *a first section (Chapter 1 ECVET) introducing the general reference framework of ECVET*
- *a second section (Chapter 2 - Designing the pathway for implementing an ECVET experimentation: Step by Step) presenting a sort of “road-map” which designs an “ideal scenario” for each element and step of the process of implementing an ECVET experimentation, based on general considerations and constant references to EU guidelines and achievements, but presented also in the light of the experience gained in the project development and therefore structured as an annotated and experienced presentation;*
- *a third section (Chapter 3 – a CASE STUDY: THE PROPOSALS OF THE Network project) following a narrative and operative structure, taking in consideration the “life” of the N.E.T.WORK project as the main example and analysing critically the different steps according to a problem-setting/problem-solving approach.*



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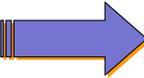
Education and Training



Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme



QUESTIONS & THEMES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Who? ❖ What? ❖ When? ❖ Which? ❖ Where? ❖ Why? ❖ How? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Typology of partners/actors to be involved ❖ Professional profile to be selected ❖ Typology and level of learning pathway to be selected ❖ Identification of learning outcomes and units for the experimentation ❖ Typology of mobility (transnational, inter-regional, sector-related, inter-systems etc...) ❖ Typology of training/professional/mobility needs of the final target of beneficiaries ❖ Typology of tools to be used
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I47788-LLP-I-2008-I-IT-ECVET N.E.T.WORK



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RECALL: PROJECT STEPS

- **Description and Selection of the professional profiles to be tested**
- **Sharing & validation of the description modalities for the LOs and units**
- **Description of the professional profiles by LOs and units**
- **Quantification and attribution of credits points**
- **Definition of Learning Outcomes verification systems**
- **Constitution of partners' agreements for the implementation of the experimentation**
- **Fine tuning the Experimentation Plan**
- **Experimentation**
- **Evaluation, validation and certification**

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1. ECVET

1.1. What is ECVET

ECVET is a European system of accumulation (capitalisation) and transfer of credits designed for vocational education and training in Europe. It enables the attesting and recording of the learning achievement/learning outcomes of an individual engaged in a learning pathway leading to a qualification, a vocational diploma or certificate.

It enables the documentation, validation and recognition of achieved learning outcomes acquired abroad, in both formal VET or in non-formal contexts. It is centred on the individual, based on the validation and the accumulation of his/her learning outcomes, defined in terms of the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for achieving a qualification. ECVET is a system designed to operate at the European level, interfacing with national systems and arrangements for credit accumulation and transfer¹.

Therefore, the *European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training* (ECVET) aims to facilitate the accumulation, transfer and recognition of knowledge, skills and competences gained by individuals who intend to achieve a qualification.

ECVET IN BRIEF

ECVET: an instrument for Mobility and recognition

ECVET's purpose is to enable recognition of learners' achievements during periods of mobility by creating a structure, using a common language, and stimulating exchanges and mutual trust among VET providers and competent institutions across Europe. In the context of international mobility, but also mobility within countries, ECVET aims to support recognition of learning outcomes without extending learners' education and training pathways.

ECVET for valorising mobility

ECVET contributes to making recognised mobility an integrated part of individuals' learning pathways. It makes it easier for employers to understand qualifications achieved abroad. It also improves the credibility of international education and training experience by identifying and documenting what the learner has achieved.

ECVET for lifelong learning

ECVET supports flexibility of programmes and pathways to achieve qualifications, enhancing the opportunities for lifelong learning. It makes it easier to recognise the learning achievements that young people or adults have gained in other contexts - be it countries, institutions or systems (for example initial or continuous training) but also formal, non-formal, or informal ways of learning.

¹ Brussel, 28/06/2005, EAC/A3/MAR, EUROPEAN CREDIT SYSTEM FOR VET (ECVET): TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS. REPORT OF THE CREDIT TRANSFER TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP, 1.3

ECVET for attractiveness of VET

By giving learners the possibility to undertake parts of their training abroad, VET providers can enrich the training provision, raise the attractiveness of training programmes and enhance their pan-European reputation. The improved possibilities for lifelong learning created by ECVET facilitate cooperation between VET providers and companies. This means that ECVET can strengthen the link between education and training and the labour market.

Source: *European Commission – DG Education and Training - ECVET Flyer*

ECVET PROVIDES BENEFITS FOR...

INDIVIDUALS

- To support lifelong learning processes
- Recognition of Learning Outcomes
- Transparency in Certification

EMPLOYERS

- Mobility
- Clearer training supply
- Flexibility in the development of qualifications

TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION PROVIDERS

- To raise the attractiveness of training programme
- To increase cooperation between VET Providers
- Link between Education and Labour Market

ECVET was developed by Member States together with the European Commission's Directorate General of Education and Training. Recently the ECVET regulatory framework was adopted by the European Parliament and Council on 18 June 2009 through Recommendation 2009/C 155/02.

Following this adoption by the European Parliament and by the Council, ECVET is now in its progressive implementation. The foreseen steps are defined by the Commission as follows:

- by 2012, ECVET will be tested and piloted in different contexts and systems: European, national and sector-related;
- 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 adjust the text of the Recommendation.

ECVET is based on concepts and processes and it is complementarily linked to other European devices in order to establish a common and user-friendly language for transparency, transfer and recognition of Learning Outcomes, meant as the relevant parts composing a qualification: the only ones that can be used for comparability among and across systems and sectors, and therefore the only ones that can be used in the different referring contexts able to achieve the ECVET objectives.

In order to fully understand the ECVET device, it is therefore necessary to commonly share the **concepts, processes and other EU devices which ECVET is based on.**

These concepts and processes are:

- **UNITS:** Units are elements of a qualification which should contain learning outcomes that are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences (KSC)². Units should be described in legible and understandable terms by referring to KSC, and should be constructed in a way that enables discrete assessment and validation of the learning outcomes contained in the unit. Units may be specific to a single qualification or common to several qualifications, and sometimes they may have a limited validity in time. A unit is not to be confused with a component of a VET programme or with a curriculum. They should be defined by the ECVET competent institutions according to some shared standard specifications which should include:
 - Generic title of the unit
 - Learning outcomes contained in the unit
 - ECVET credit points associated with the unit
 - Procedures and criteria for assessment of the learning outcomes

- **LEARNING OUTCOMES:** these are statements of knowledge, skills and competences that can be achieved in a variety of learning contexts, or in other terms they state what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process. Learning outcomes can be used for various purposes such as to establish descriptors of qualifications frameworks, define qualifications, design curricula, assessment, etc. and they are set out in various levels of detail depending on their purpose and context. Learning outcomes are developed in the process of designing qualifications. There are different approaches to identifying and describing learning outcomes depending on the qualifications system. Learning outcomes may be acquired through a variety of learning pathways, modes of

² The definition adopted as part of the EQF Recommendation of these three important concepts are:
KNOWLEDGE: The outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that are related to a field of work or study.
SKILLS: The ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems.
COMPETENCE: The proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities in work or study situations and in professional and personal development.

delivery (school-based, in-company, etc.), in different learning contexts (formal, non-formal and informal) or settings (i.e. country, education and training system ...). Usually, qualifications frameworks indicate the overall level of learning outcomes in a qualification. For ECVET purposes the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) - which is one of the EU devices complementarily linked to ECVET, as introduced before - is used as a reference for levels. Learning Outcomes are important because they have different qualities: first of all **they shift focus from input to what a person knows and is able to do**; secondly **they offer a better match between the needs of the labour market and what is provided by education and training**; thirdly **they facilitate transfer and use of qualifications** across different countries and education and training systems and last but not least **they facilitate validation of non-formal and informal learning**;

- **ECVET POINTS**: these are the numerical representation of the overall weight of learning outcomes in a qualification and of the relative weight of units in relation to the qualification concerned. Therefore, ECVET points provide complementary information about qualifications and units in a numerical form. Allocation of ECVET points proceeds by steps: firstly allocating points to the qualification, then to its units. Allocation of points to units is based on their relative weight within the qualification and is usually based on conventions. For example: if in formal learning 60 points are allocated to learning outcomes expected to be achieved in one year of formal full time VET, then, on the basis of this formal learning context, the total number of points is allocated to the full qualification. The relative weight of a unit of learning outcomes, with regard to the qualification, should be established according to the following criteria or a combination of these criteria:
- the relative importance of the learning outcomes which constitute the unit for labour market participation, for progression to other qualification levels and for the needs of society,
 - the complexity, the scope and the volume of learning outcomes in the unit,
 - the effort necessary for a learner to acquire the KSC required for the unit.

Allocation is made by the ECVET competent institutions. The relative weight of any given unit may vary from one qualification to another. The successful achievement of a unit triggers the award of ECVET points to a learner, independent of the actual time required to achieve it.

- **MUTUAL TRUST AND PARTNERSHIP AMONG PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**. Credit transfer is facilitated by establishing partnerships between **competent institutions that are empowered to award qualifications or give credit for achieved learning outcomes for transfer and validation**. The necessary mutual trust enables the partners to design specific a Learning Agreement for credit transfer for learners. On the other hand,

the establishment of a partnership aims to provide a framework of cooperation between the partners set out in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) through which a climate of mutual trust is established;

- **COMPETENT INSTITUTIONS**: are defined by the ECVET Recommendation as institutions which are responsible for designing and awarding qualifications or recognising units or other functions linked to ECVET, such as the allocation of ECVET points to qualifications and units, assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes under the rules and practices of participating countries.

- **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoU)**: is an agreement between competent institutions which sets the framework for credit transfer and accumulation. It formalises the ECVET partnership by stating the mutual acceptance of the status and procedures of competent institutions involved. It also establishes partnerships' procedures for cooperation. It can be stated that MoU should have these characteristic features:
 - accept each others' status as competent institution;
 - accept each others' quality assurance, assessment, validation and recognition criteria and procedures;
 - agree on the comparability of qualifications concerned for the purpose of credit transfer using EQF to establish the reference level.

- **LEARNING AGREEMENT**: this is an individualised document which sets out the conditions for a specific mobility period. It specifies, for a particular learner, what learning outcomes s/he should achieve and how they will be assessed, validated and recognised. It can be stated that a Learning Agreement should have these characteristic features:
 - distinguish between "home" and "hosting" competent institution;
 - 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.

As said before, the testing and implementation of ECVET has important relationships with other EU instruments. There are five other EU devices on which ECVET is complementarily based:

- **EQF – European Qualification Framework**: is a common European reference framework which links countries' qualifications systems together, acting as a translation device to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different countries and systems in Europe. It has two principal aims: to promote citizens' mobility between countries and to

facilitate their lifelong learning. EQF and ECVET therefore share the same approach towards learning outcomes. EQF levels, on the other hand, provide a reference for ECVET. The complementarities between ECVET and EQF are focused on these issues:

- they are based on learning outcomes,
- they are centred on qualifications,
- they put emphasis on Lifelong Learning,
- they are focused on Mobility,
- they are transparency-oriented.

➤ **EUROPASS CERTIFICATE SUPPLEMENT AND EUROPASS MOBILITY**: the first is a document describing the knowledge and skills acquired by holders of vocational training certificates. It is meant for any person who holds a vocational education and training certificate. Most countries have set up National inventories of Certificate Supplements, or have National Contact Points to provide the Certificate Supplement, in any case it is meant neither as a substitute for the original certificate nor as an automatic system that guarantees recognition. For example, it provides additional information to that already included in an official certificate and/or transcript, making it more easily understood, especially by employers or institutions abroad. The second – Europass Mobility – is a document to record knowledge and skills acquired in another European country. It is meant for any person moving to a European country to learn or acquire a work experience, whatever their age or level of education. It is completed by two partner organisations involved in a mobility project, one in the country of origin and the other in the host country, and these organisations may be universities, schools, training centres, companies, NGOs, etc. These documents will integrate ECVET concepts to describe the qualifications and achieved credit of each single learner.

➤ **EQARF – European Quality Assurance Reference Framework**: this is a reference tool for policy-makers based on a four-stage quality cycle that includes goal setting and planning, implementation, evaluation and review. It respects the autonomy of national governments and is a voluntary system to be used by public authorities and other bodies involved in quality assurance. This device is relevant since it underpins the implementation of ECVET. It is a framework which facilitates the establishment of mutual trust, which is one of the key elements and processes for ECVET fulfilment.

➤ **ECTS – European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System** - this is an EU device devoted to making teaching and learning in higher education more transparent across Europe and to facilitating the recognition of all studies. The system allows for the transfer of

learning experiences between different institutions, greater student mobility and more flexible routes to gain degrees. It also aids curriculum design and quality assurance. In this sense ECTS and ECVET express a strong complementarity.

- **European Principles for validation of non-formal and informal learning** will benefit from the introduction of ECVET as it will facilitate the validation of non-formal and informal learning in view of achieving qualifications.

ECVET-RELEVANT FEATURES

- The application of the ECVET system is optional/voluntary.
- ECVET is the methodological tool for the recognition of qualifications by means of **credits** assigned to **units of Learning Outcomes**, to which **credit points** are attributed in order to allow the **transfer** and **accumulation** of credits.
- ECVET envisages the establishment of **Memorandums of Understanding** between institutions/systems (and/or structures for the recognition of non-formal learning experiences) for the **evaluation, validation and capitalisation** of the **units of learning outcomes**.
- ECVET is not meant, nor requires, to harmonize the related qualifications or education systems. It aims to enhance the **comparability** and **compatibility**.

Source: *The context of the NET-WORK Project: The ECVET system implementation in Italy – Power Point presentation for final conference of the NET-WORK Project*

1.2. ECVET in Europe

ECVET and any other EU device implying standardisation and credit systems (EQF, EQARF, ECTS, etc...) have to be fine-tuned to qualifications systems and, in broader terms, to the understandings and values linked to education and training in societies. ECVET has technical features but also societal, institutional and volitional aspects which mean that its implementation requires a specific environment.

Although implementing ECVET presents considerable challenges, the EU is building on a significant amount of experience assembled over many years and several Members States are already making preparations. For example, Spain, France, Finland and Sweden have been using credits or units in education and training for many years. The new qualifications and credit frameworks for England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Maltese qualifications framework strengthen the role of credit transfer. Belgium (Wallonia), Latvia and Luxembourg, are also updating national regulations to accommodate credit transfer and accumulation.

Work to prepare for ECVET is examining the use of credit transfer both for transnational mobility and national 'permeability', namely making it easier to move between different parts of the formal education and vocational training systems, for example, between academic and vocational courses.

FINECVET, from Finland, is an example of using ECVET for transnational mobility in selected sectors for cross-border transfer, 'enabling students to learn something they do not normally learn studying at home'. It aims to increase mobility in initial training.

FINECVET makes comparison of learning outcomes acquired at home and in other countries easier, treating learning experiences abroad as a normal part of training. It focuses on ECVET process, documentation and quality assurance and aims to make ECVET understandable, in particular for teachers.

Generally for transnational mobility arrangements under ECVET, occupational and educational standards are included in the mobility or learning agreement between the providers and the learner. This makes it possible to identify the learning outcomes forming the core of the mobility project.

During the period abroad, assessment standards from both the home and the host country are used to validate what has been learned. These standards provide important and already existing reference points to ensure confidence and trust in assessing and recognising credits.

Germany, through DECVET, is using ECVET to promote domestic reforms. The German initial VET dual system provides high quality, relevant training for the labour market, but suffers from a lack of permeability and weaknesses in validating and recognising learning

achievements from other parts of the training system. For Germany, the importance of flexibility between different parts of the education and training system is emphasised by demographic changes and the economic crisis. Currently, enterprises recruit fewer apprentices to the VET dual system and fewer school leavers look to enter the dual system. Recruitment in school-based VET and preparatory classes, on the other hand, remains high.

However, there are few links between these largely separate systems. Learners wanting to progress to the VET dual system often have to start their apprenticeship from the beginning, independent of previous achievements. Similarly, those who drop out of one type of learning and later integrate into another system receive no formal recognition for prior learning achievements.

1.3. ECVET in the relevant partner countries

The countries involved in the NET-WORK Project represent a variety of qualifications systems and are at different stages regarding the coordination of their systems with ECVET.

We provide here an outlook of the system conditions in the four partners countries (France Italy, Portugal and Slovenia) postponing considerations about their influence on project development to chapter 3, where the experience of the N.E.T.WORK project will be presented and discussed as a case study.

FRANCE

From the planning phase of the project proposal, France already represented an advanced situation where units of learning outcomes were already in use.

In France a classification of qualifications was introduced in 1969 and, since 2002, this and the National Register of Qualifications together form **the National Qualifications Frameworks. These frameworks together cover all qualifications giving access to a profession and satisfying certain criteria** (such as being accessible through validation of non-formal and informal learning - NFIL). ECTS was introduced in 2002 (though some universities used it even before then) by legislation which also requires the structure of programmes in terms of semesters and modules (*unités d'enseignement*). It covers all tertiary qualifications (including VET). There is no credit points convention in secondary VET. However the system of VET qualifications of the national education ministry can be described as a credit system (without points) where units can be accumulated and some mechanisms for transfer of credit are also in

place.

Providers also have some autonomy to recognise learners' credit by a practice called *positionnement* which enables them to exempt the learners from part of the training pathway.

Credit arrangements based on recognition of non-formal and informal learning are a national policy and an individual right. It covers tertiary education and training, including certain VET qualifications.

In France vocational qualifications that fall under the different Ministries in charge of qualifications, are created or revised by vocational consultative commissions (CPC). They differ slightly from one Ministry to another, but always bring together: representatives of the Ministry, employers, employees and special experts. These are the main stages through which learning outcomes are formulated:

- ☞ **Needs analysis** - A needs analysis which can be requested by any of the stakeholders takes into account: the evolution of the branch, recruitment patterns of the industry involved, the prospects which the qualification offers, the different modes of learning best suited to it, and the relevance of the request in relation to existing diplomas;
- ☞ **Occupational standards** - This stage involves the 'construction of the identity of the qualification'. These standards are defined according to the competences required to exercise the profession and involve substantial input from the professionals.
- ☞ **Standards of competence** -This stage involves interpreting professional activities into competences to be acquired (knowledge and skills). The role of teachers is essential here.
- ☞ **Assessment standards** -This phase is under the responsibility of the competent Ministry. The examination regulations (contents, length, weighting of the subjects), any prerequisites for the qualification, and the number of teaching hours are defined.³

French vocational diplomas are structured in units. Each unit consists of a coherent set of competences with associated knowledge. The content of each unit is closely linked to the activities and tasks in the working life. French VET qualifications under the **Ministry of Education** are described through:

- Competences; and
- Associated (technical) knowledge

Competences and associated knowledge are grouped into larger sets. Units are composed of one or several sets of competences. To understand the qualification descriptions, it is

³ Source: Cedefop (2009): The shift to learning outcomes. P.76

important to bear in mind that the set of knowledge does not necessarily correspond to a single set of competences, but one set of knowledge may contribute to several sets of competences. Validation and recognition processes also involves other competent institutions such as validation juries.

The French qualifications framework was designed to provide up-to-date information on professional qualifications (i.e. those recognised by, and that give access to, the labour market) across the country. It also incorporates qualifications awarded by social partners and other qualifications awarded by private providers, chambers of commerce and industry, chambers of craft, and others. The chambers are a relatively important provider of education and training in France, offering training preparing for qualifications of the Ministry of Education (through a contract) but also awarding their own qualifications. To be in the register, these qualifications are examined by a jury using documentation provided by the awarding institution (including figures on labour market entry of graduates).

For the providers, gaining national recognition for their qualifications has two main advantages. First, they can be eligible for public funding, through the funds for continuing training of employees, for example, though the link between public funding and the register is not yet systematic. Also, they can guarantee their students that their qualifications are recognised by the public authorities.

SLOVENIA

From the planning phase of the project proposal, Slovenia represented, together with France, an advanced situation where units of learning outcomes were, if not already in use, under systemic implementation. The national debate about the need to establish a Slovenian Qualification Framework (SQF) started in 2005, highlighting a necessary adaptation process to the EQF levels, since the levels and descriptions set out in it were too broad and did not meet the specifics of the Slovenian education and qualification system. The result was an agreement in 2006 among different involved ministries and social partners on the establishment of the SQF in Slovenia.

Since 2006 all upper-secondary VET and also National vocational qualifications in Slovenia are achieved through continuing VET or following recognition of non-formal and informal learning. They are described using a common credit points convention⁴. The credit system for upper-

⁴ Both VET and HE use the same credit points convention: 1 credit point = 25 notional learning time (VET)/workload (HE)

secondary VET qualifications is based on units that can be accumulated progressively. Recognition of credit is the providers' responsibility and supported by government policy (possibility of appeal for learners). Credit arrangements through validation of non formal and informal learning are supported by national policy.

By means of a project co-funded by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and the European Social Fund, between the years 2009 and 2013, Slovenia was developing a national qualifications framework⁵. The mechanisms of the qualifications framework were already based on the classification structure of eight levels, which is used as a statistical tool according to Klasius system. In addition the NQF was underpinned by national registers of qualifications standards, qualifications catalogues, framework programmes (VET).

In January 2010, the Slovenian government appointed a steering committee to begin preparations for the national qualification framework, representing the highest decision-making body in the development of the SQF.

Following experts' consultation with social partners in March 2011, the steering committee unanimously adopted the proposed SQF. The proposal attempts to take into account the national characteristics of the Slovenian education system and labour market. In accordance with the EQF guidelines, the SQF strives to ensure the transparency of qualification systems in Slovenia, taking into account the national context and the Education and Training Classification System (Klasius). It comprises 10 levels and relies on the concept of educational activities and learning outcomes. The SQF also includes national vocational qualifications that supplement formalised forms of education and training. Thus, the SQF covers all sectors of education and training (general, VET, HE) and all types of qualifications (also those designed by employer representatives and that can be achieved after recognition of non-formal, informal and adult learning), moreover it links the vocational education system with the national vocational qualification system and the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired knowledge.

In Slovenia, 70% of the qualification standard and the related units are defined at national level by sectoral councils supported by the National VET institute and approved by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport.

The remaining 30% of the qualifications standard and associated units are defined directly by the VET providers. They have full autonomy to decide what learning outcomes these 30% will correspond to, as well as how the learning will be organised, assessed and validated. This flexibility was introduced in order to enable providers to adapt their offer to the local and regional skills needs and also to enable them to define more specific graduate profiles.

⁵ The project is operatively managed by the N.E.T.WORK project Slovenian partner CPI

In the light of ECVET implementation, during the before mentioned last reform, all education programmes were assessed using credits in accordance with the Vocational Education Act, the aim is to develop a credit-based assessment of education programmes and of all vocational qualifications. A further step will be the development of tools for the recognition and transparency of credits for international mobility.

PORTUGAL

From the planning phase of the project proposal the situation regarding “ECVET readiness” in Portugal was less clear than in France and Slovenia, although strong emphasis was put on development of experimentations at a higher level of development than in the Italian context.

The Portuguese Vocational Training system is legally framed by Decree-Law No. 396/2007 of 31 December 2007, which establishes the legal framework and regulations of the National Qualifications System (NQS) and defines the structures that ensure its operation.

The NQS adopts the principles set down in the agreement signed with the Social Partners and restructures the professional training covered under the educational system and labour market, making them come together in terms of objectives and instruments.

The main objectives of the NQS are:

- To raise the basic training of the workforce, enabling their educational and professional advancement;
- To ensure that vocational training pathways for young learners provide them with a dual certification: an educational and a vocational one;
- To strengthen and consolidate the process of recognition, validation and certification of competences and skills;
- To promote skills and socio-professional integration of groups with particular difficulties;
- Promote consistency, transparency and comparability of qualifications at national and international level;

The NQS also defines the ways of obtaining qualifications through:

- Training included in the National Catalogue of Qualifications
- Processes of recognition, validation and certification of competences and skills
- Recognition of qualifications obtained in other countries

The NQS realizes its objectives through the following structures :

- New Opportunities Centres
- Training providers
- Sectoral Councils for Qualification

The Vocational Training is organized in:

- **Initial Training**, in the context of certified education and training activities aimed at the acquisition of the indispensable know-how, skills and capacity required for the qualified exercise of one or more professional activities;
- **Continuous Training** related to education and training activities undertaken after leaving the educational system or after re-entering the labour market, to allow individuals to further their professional and relational skills, aimed at the exercise of one or more professional activities, improved adaptation to technological and organisational change and the reinforcement of their employability.

The NQS defines the following as modalities of double certification training:

- Professional courses;
- Apprenticeship courses;
- Education and training courses for young persons;
- Education and training courses for adults;
- Specialised technological courses;
- Certified modular training.

Fundamental tools that support the NQS are:

- ☞ National Qualifications Framework
- ☞ National Catalogue of Qualifications
- ☞ Documents for registration / comparison of qualifications and competences

The **National Catalogue of Qualifications (CNQ)** is an instrument for the strategic management of lower level qualifications. It is an integral part of the National Qualifications System, and at this stage, it actually covers 262 vocational qualifications from 39 educational and training areas. The National Catalogue of Qualifications is organised according to education and training areas, in accordance with the National Classification of Education and Training Areas (Ministerial Order 256/2005 of 16 March). The following references are defined for each

qualification:

- Professional profile;
- Training reference;
- Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences Reference Framework (basic and technological components).

A National Agency for Qualification (ANQ) is also responsible for disseminating the use of this tool for the strategic management of qualifications (except higher education qualifications), integrated into the National System of Qualifications. The Catalogue aims to promote and facilitate access to **double qualification certification for young people and adults through:**

- 1) modularizing the training offer – defining courses organised in units of short-term training (25 and/or 50 hours) and
- 2) providing reference frameworks for Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (RVCC) processes.

The global training reference framework from the CNQ is organised in **Units of Short Term Training (UFCD) basic training component; Units of Short Term Training (UFCD) from the technological training component** and still a **Reference Framework for Vocational RVCC**.

The catalogue is an open tool and is permanently updated. It is established in compliance with the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework and with the National Qualifications Framework.

Skills recognition and certification in Portugal is structured and regulated on the basis of:

- EU Directive 2005/36/EC;
- **National Skills Certification System**, established within the framework of the Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional, in order to certify all competent professionals, irrespective of the manner in which they acquired the skills, i.e. whether through vocational training, work experience or training undertaken in another country, namely a European Union member state. The **Vocational Aptitude Certificate** is proof that an individual has the necessary vocational skills to pursue a specific profession with quality. It is issued by a Certifying Body for a pre-set period of validity (established case by case) and in order to renew it, the candidate must demonstrate that he/she has the updated skills;
- **System for the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences** which enables each adult, over the age of 18, to gain access to the recognition, validation and

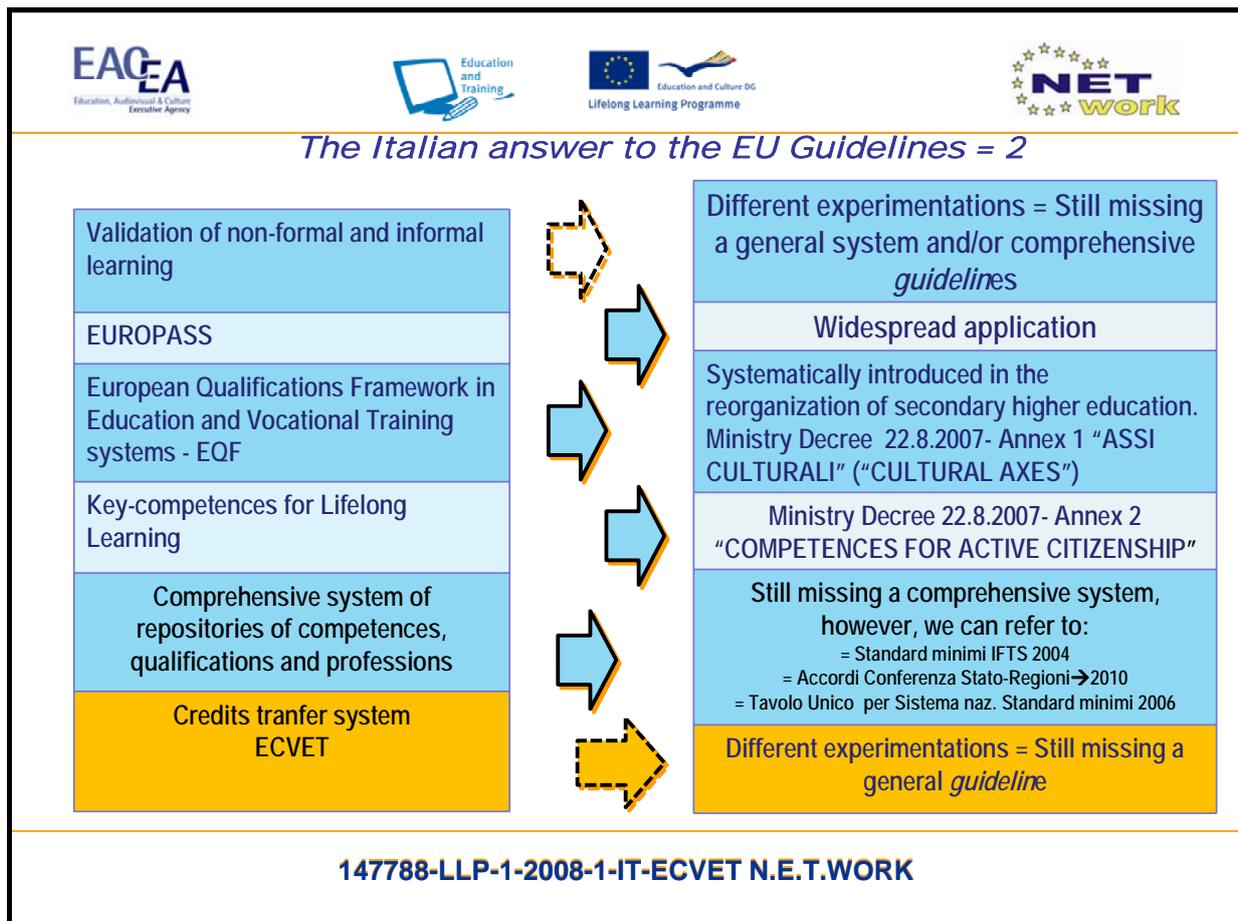
certification of competences (school, professional and others) acquired in different learning contexts (personal, social and professional life) in order to receive a formal, school or professional qualification. The certification granted by this System covers both a school certification of basic level (awarding certification of the 1st, 2nd or 3rd cycle of the basic education and a basic education diploma) or secondary level (awarding a secondary education certificate and diploma) - School RVCC - and/or professional - Professional RVCC. It is carried out in the New Opportunities Centres which operate in basic and secondary education establishments, in Vocational Training Centres of the Employment and Vocational Training Institute and in other public or private accredited training bodies;

- through the Direcção-Geral de Inovação e Desenvolvimento Curricular, the Portuguese Ministry of Education (Ministério da Educação) grants **equivalence or recognition of qualifications, studies and diplomas of foreign education systems to Portuguese qualifications**, studies and diplomas at basic and secondary education level.

ITALY

To the EU guidelines which invited Member States to refocus education and employment policies in the lifelong learning perspective, and in order to integrate resources and capabilities, Italy has responded by addressing the problem of overcoming the existing "gap" in terms of a construction / reconstruction / upgrading of:

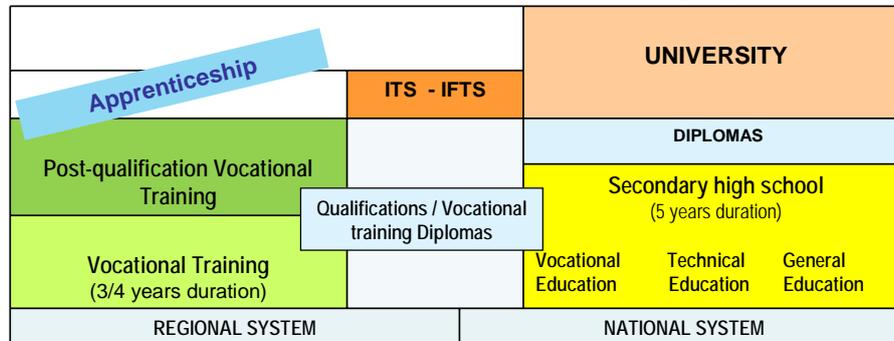
- a National system described by means of competences
- a system of key competences for all citizens
- a National system and repositories of competences, qualifications and professions
- a National system for the certification of competences acquired in any situation/context
- a National system for the promotion and support of the ECVET system dissemination



Many problems remain to be solved to date in the Italian context, which concern mainly:

- what priority problems and social needs of potential users will the ECVET system have to provide an answer to in our country? (eg. mobility, labour market, recognition of experience/learning outcomes, ...)
- what are the categories of users for which access to ECVET may be a priority? (young people in training; employees,)
- how can the social mobility needs of individuals be interpreted through ECVET? (geographical mobility, employment mobility, learning environment mobility, ...)
- in which areas may the potential demand for recognition of competences as a credit be concentrated? (young trainees, employed, workers in mobility/ redundancy;)

The Italian answer to the EU Guidelines = 3
The state-of-art of the Vocational training system - 2011



- Part of the Regional vocational training supply is hard to be entirely read outside regional boundaries
- The apprenticeship struggles to take off for a lack of a formal connection with the qualification system
- Continuous Training struggles to widespread and to have a formal recognition
- Consistent mobilities, to and from Italy, for study and labour purposes, by chance and/or necessity, are ever growing
- As it happens in times of crisis, volunteer experiences, apprenticeship experiences and internships are increasing for young people, and they still cannot find a proper place in the formal curriculum

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From the point of view of VET System operators and actors, the problems proposed by the implementation of the ECVET system in the Italian context can be related to the fact that this system envisages not only the application of a technology for the recognition and use of Learning Outcomes in learning Units, but also cultural and organisational system requirements for the actors/operators involved. An integral part of the system is the articulated process that comprises the implementation of the partnership up to the actual issuing of the credit. In this process, just the partnership itself is seen as a necessary tool for the progressive implementation and dissemination of the system in a networking prospective.

This poses the question of :

- assessing what conditions within the Italian education / vocational training systems are required today to make the ECVET process feasible;
- identifying agencies which could be responsible for coordinating and governing this process;
- recording, coordinating and supporting the experiences and practices of stable partnerships for the validation of units and for the recognition of credits.

One of the fundamental perspectives of ECVET is the validation of learning acquired in informal



contexts and therefore also the ones related to the labour market, through a practice of negotiation concerning contents and learning outcomes which, together with structures of the institutional education systems, involves the actors of the productive systems directly and through the representatives of categories and industries.

Therefore, it will be necessary to:

- identify the best channels to promote active participation in ECVET on the part of the productive system;
- make comparisons and multilateral agreements able to make the ECVET system an economically sustainable process, both for workers and businesses;
- support the enterprise and labour market systems in the recognition of the positive function of ECVET in their organisational learning processes.

2. Designing the pathway for implementing an ECVET experimentation: Step by Step

This chapter is meant as a presentation of a sort of “road-map” which designs “an ideal scenario” for each element and step of the process of implementing an ECVET experimentation. It is based on general considerations and constant references to EU guidelines, past and on-going researches and achievements reached at EU level about ECVET implementation.

The focus is, therefore, on highlighting the conditions under which an ECVET experimentation can be defined, implemented and realised in all its steps and expected outcomes, concretely attaining the benefits expected for the targets, systems and actors involved.

This section is the necessary theoretical basis to fully understand what has happened in the specific N.E.T.WORK Project, and in the experimentation foreseen by the project itself as presented in Chapter 3. In the light of the experience gained in the project development this road-map becomes an annotated and experienced presentation which might be of some help in defining strategies to overcome obstacles to and possible deviations from this ideal scenario, which can be encountered in the process of implementing any kind of ECVET experimentation.

Keeping in mind the most relevant features of the specific device under analysis, that is to say that ECVET is not meant, nor requires, to harmonize the relevant qualifications or VET systems but it aims to enhance their comparability and compatibility, and starting from the considerations that ECVET is expected to:

- *reinforce flexibility in VET systems by allowing for individualisation and diversification of the learning pathways leading to qualifications;*
- *aid mobility in VET (between countries, institutions, sectors, systems and sub-systems) and access to lifelong learning for young and adult learners;*
- *provide a common methodological framework based on units of learning outcomes;*
- *support accumulation and validation of learning outcomes as parts of qualifications;*
- *facilitate transfer of credits between qualifications and VET systems or sectors.*
- *rely on partnerships and networks involving competent institutions, authorities, social partners, sectors, providers and learners;*

the ideal scenario which we are going to present in this section cannot be presented if not in terms of:

- **SYSTEMS, CONDITIONS AND ELEMENTS** meant as the necessary set of arrangements which enable the training providers and the necessary actors involved to fully integrate the ECVET device;
- **ACTORS**, meant as the necessary and competent institutions and stakeholders which must be involved in a process of ECVET experimentation;
- **PROCESS MANAGEMENT AND PHASES** meant as the necessary process management strategies and steps to be followed for implementing an ECVET experimentation, given the appropriate actors and certain favourable conditions;
- **TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES** meant as the necessary methodologies and the relevant tools to be used for implementing an ECVET experimentation, and expected as results of the different planned development phases;
- **EXPECTED RESULTS** meant as the outcomes expected at the end of a process of implementation of an ECVET experimentation. Results in terms of benefits for learners and other actors involved, and as prospects for the reuse of the fulfilments of the specific experimentation in future application.

Once these essential elements and steps for the implementation of a successful experimentation of the ECVET device have been identified and properly defined, the overall picture derived will be the road map to follow in order to guarantee that learning experiences gathered abroad - or in a generally different learning context - may become integrated parts of the referring qualifications in the country or context of origin.

2.1. System conditions and elements

Many examples of credit systems such as the ECTS (European credit transfer system for higher education) or the NQF (National Qualification Framework) in the UK or the validation system in France have required around 10-20 years to be set up, which shows that credit systems have to be fine-tuned to qualifications systems and, in broader terms, to the understandings and values linked to education and training in societies.

As a credit system itself, ECVET has technical features but also societal, institutional and volitional aspects which imply that its implementation requires a specific environment. This concept of ECVET environment may be defined as a set of conditions, elements and characteristics which should create the background and the necessary arrangements to enable stakeholders, training providers and final beneficiaries to integrate the ECVET mechanism at systems level.

In the 2010 CEDEFOP Working Paper n. 10 about "*The development of ECVET*" this concept of "environment" has been conceptualised as **ECVET readiness**, that is to say a proxy for appreciating the feasibility of ECVET implementation while looking at different aspects of the VET and qualifications systems in the Member States. Most qualifications systems in Europe show a high level of ECVET readiness, and from an institutional viewpoint this is sustained by increasing efforts in terms of documentation, readability and visibility of VET programmes and qualifications for all stakeholders in the European VET area.

Notwithstanding this, there are many different "degrees and levels" of ECVET readiness strongly influencing the impact of ECVET experimentations and the workload to make the mechanism effectively feasible and repeatable. Both 2007 studies ("*ECVET Reflector*" and "*ECVET Connexions*") indicate that no VET or qualifications systems are in a position to immediately and fully implement ECVET. At the same time, implementing ECVET does not require a radical change in the rationales of existing VET and qualifications systems, as all of them can be characterised by a certain level of ECVET readiness.

The elements that ought to be observed to determine the ECVET readiness are:

- if qualifications systems present specific aspects of ECVET such as units and learning outcomes, transfer and accumulation;
- if assessment of units (as parts of qualifications) is a commonly used approach;
- if relevant practices already exist also in terms of transfer of credited units into the home qualifications system for recognition and awarding of qualifications.

The 2007 final report of the "*ECVET Reflector Study*" analysed analogies between ECVET features and practices in VET systems to measure ECVET readiness and derived that if these features are present and actually or frequently put into practice, the degree of ECVET readiness is high.

This is closely related to the possibility of achieving partial assessments and certificates, given the fact that "transfer" means that parts of qualifications gain formal status in a new context (i.e. are validated). Further, the concept of ECVET readiness includes looking at the **flexibility of training pathways**, the **autonomy of training providers** and the **permeability/openness to mobility** but also of the existing transfer and recognition mechanisms⁶.

In fact ECVET is a mechanism meant to facilitate the transfer and accumulation of learning outcomes and to enable a certification description in terms of units of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and competences) that can be transferred and accumulated, and to which credit points should be allocated. This adds to the requirements of a certain type and level of "environment", also technical specifications which are concerned with the scope of certification.

They constitute the first "condition", defined as "**technicality**" which is the capability to adapt to the technical specifications of the ECVET device. This condition is concerned with the necessity of having the same basis for each sub-system and of taking the same approach, i.e. using a "common grammar". The ECVET mechanism requires cooperation between stakeholders in different sub-systems. For an efficient cooperation, common references should be available⁷.

As far as the other three conditions are concerned, the "*ECVET Connexions Final Report*" has defined these as follows:

- **flexibility of training pathways** meant as flexibility in both the design and the organisation of training, is the capability of training providers to propose and manage individualised training pathways. This condition is concerned with the necessity for individualisation in the perspective of mobility in different contexts (long life learning). The device includes the validation of learning outcomes acquired within an external training context. The purpose is to validate learning outcomes including units (minimal and basic component of certification). Subsequently, the training provision should propose an organization allowing individualisation of training pathways (module) and the management of the system inputs/outputs;

⁶ Sources: Gelibert and Maniak, 2007; Fietz et al., 2007; Cedefop, 2008b.

⁷ Sources: 2007 final report of the ECVET Connexions project: "Study on the feasibility of an ECVET system for apprentices (test phase)"

- **autonomy of training providers** is the degree of delegation of power, i.e. the capability of training providers to participate in the process of training from the design stage to the evaluation, to mobilise the necessary resources, to take initiative and conclude agreements. This condition is concerned with the need to assess the impact of ECVET implementation on training providers. In order to implement ECVET a minimum autonomy of training providers is required. The use of ECVET by training providers requires a minimum degree of beneficiary freedom so as to organise the training provision and implement necessary resources (human, technical and financial). The autonomy should include the conclusion of agreements with other partners (degree of freedom allowing alignment with the requirements of the ECVET device, in particular in the area of validation of outcomes);
- **permeability/openness to mobility** is the capacity to recognise the learning outcomes acquired in another system or environment: acknowledgement of prior learning within training and recognition of the assessment carried out. This condition is concerned with the need for openness to mobility and other systems. The mere adoption of the ECVET mechanism only by the competent authorities does not guarantee that the tool will be used. The stakeholders of training sub-systems (particularly competent bodies and training providers) should be permeable and open to other contexts. They should accept the evaluation and the allocation of credit points given by partners and possess the appropriate tools, in particular in the area of quality assurance, thus facilitating the development of mutual trust.

ECVET is not being introduced on its own but is linked to policies on improving international mobility in VET or to changes at national, regional or local levels towards more permeability within and between VET systems or sub-systems.

The further development of ECVET as proposed at European level is dependent on the settings of national or regional education and training systems, for instance on the widespread recognition and validation of learning outcomes.

Each of the above-mentioned conditions is composed and assessed observing certain specific elements, such as those reported in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Elements to assess the conditions at system level

Condition	Elements to measure the condition
TECHNICALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Existence and/or degree of presence of training offer expressed in learning outcomes. > Existence and/or degree of presence of units defined in terms of learning outcomes expressed in knowledge, skills, and competence (KSC). > Existence and/or degree of presence of evaluation / certification based on the main activities related to a given profession and attesting skills and competences. > Existence and/or degree of presence of evaluation based on knowledge. > Availability and/or degree of availability of procedures of the acknowledgement of prior learning used by academic system. > Availability and/or degree of availability of credit transfer system
FLEXIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Availability and/or degree of availability of Curricula defined in units. > Existence and/or degree of presence of training offer organized in modules. > Existence and/or degree of presence of individualized pathways in place or developed. > Existence and/or degree of presence of process of continuous evaluation in training centres rather than final evaluation (central examination system).
AUTONOMY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Existence and/or degree of presence of standards (profile, required competences) defined by awarding body. > defining training content and curricula. > participation and/or degree of participation of training centres in defining standards. > participation and/or degree of participation of training centres in defining content or methods of training. > participation and/or degree of participation of training centres in defining and implementing evaluation. > Availability and/or degree of possibility of generating financial resources by training centres. > Availability and/or degree of availability of resources allocated by regional, national, sectorial structures, etc. > Possibility and/or degree of possibility of concluding agreements on international cooperation by training centres.
PERMEABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Existence and/or degree of presence of initiatives of several bodies in promoting mobility. > Availability and/or degree of availability of stakeholders in the area of mobility. > Availability and/or degree of availability of using placement (periods) abroad. > Existence and/or degree of presence of foreign languages, European Citizenship, intercultural modules included in vocational and education training. > Existence and/or degree of presence of cooperation networks. > Possibilities of validation of learning outcomes acquired abroad. > Availability and/or degree of availability of process of mutual recognition.

Source: Elaboration from ECVET Connexions "Study on the feasibility of an ECVET system for apprentices (test phase) – Final Report" 2007;

Differences in the presence or degrees of implementation of such elements, which contribute to defining the level of conditions of each sub-system, determine the feasibility of the implementation of an ECVET experimentation while looking at different aspects of VET and qualifications systems in the Member States. Evidence for assessing the spread of ECVET in Member States are still scarce: if we consider the ECVET features (learning outcomes and unit-

based approaches) and look at different qualifications systems in Europe, we see the following:

- a) the award of qualifications is based, in some qualifications systems, on the accumulation of units of learning outcomes either associated with credit points (Finland, Sweden, United Kingdom), crediting according to the ECTS model (higher technical VET modules in Spain) or without credit points (France);
- b) credit systems are sometimes developed within a broader qualifications framework (Scottish and Welsh credit and qualifications framework) or designed for specific qualifications (IFTS system in Italy).

Referring to the same kind of classification and clusters of systems can be of some help in defining the possibilities of any ECVET experimentation and may support the foreshadowing of obstacles and workloads for its implementation. The quoted *ECVET Connexion Final Report* produced in 2007 for the EU Commission - DGEAC-, has clustered sub-systems into four types, according to the main characteristics of the following five relevant issues:

- Training needs definition
- Training place
- Training contents and its provision
- Assessment process
- Employability.

The four types derived were defined as follows according to the five issues identified:

1) Type 1: **Sub-systems focused on knowledge** where:

- ☞ Representatives of employers and employees are usually consulted in the **training needs definition**, but they do not lead the process, they only accompany it. The professional profiles are defined generally and the awarding bodies play a determining role at this stage;
- ☞ **Training takes place** mainly in training centres. There are also alternating periods in enterprises (placements), but they are relatively limited in time as compared with the duration of the whole training. Their role is also to simulate the professional environment or illustrate the practical or organisational knowledge. Enterprise is not the essential place where competences are acquired;
- ☞ A major part of the **training content and provision** is academic and therefore “disciplinary”. Practical skills are acquired in laboratory or during a sequence of practical classes. The teaching methods are mainly based on academic standards;

☞ **Assessment** is essentially conducted by trainers or teachers. The assessment tools (exams) are most often theoretical and assess mainly knowledge. The “professional branches” are not involved (or to a limited extent) in the assessment process;

☞ **Employability of the learner** is therefore deferred since after the mostly knowledge-based training period, learners will be confronted with the real complexity of a professional situation: the learners have acquired skills and competences in laboratory, and the employer needs to adapt these to the real situation.

2) Type 2: **Sub-systems focused on immediate employability** where:

☞ **Training needs** are defined jointly by representatives of employers and employees and the awarding bodies. As far as the practical part of the training is concerned, the major role is played by the representatives of employees and employers. The element of “occupation and adaptation to employment” is determinant. There are several professional profiles and they are contextualised. The spectrum of activities is limited;

☞ **Training takes place** mainly in enterprises, which are key stakeholders in the process. It is also a key training place, where the key competences are acquired to perform a given occupation. The training periods in a real professional situation are proportionally long and weighted. Companies guarantee the quality of training;

☞ Theoretical **content** is supposed to support practical content. Placing a learner within a real professional situation constitutes an essential element of the pedagogy which guarantees employability;

☞ **Evaluation** is generally based on the global concept of the ability to perform an occupation. It is carried out by the personnel providing training, depending on the required competences. The professional associations are closely involved in the assessment process. The main criterion of the evaluation is the ability to immediately perform the occupation;

☞ **Immediate employability** of the learner is expected since training is based on the occupation thanks to the close association of professional circles across all stages of the process. Learners should be capable of undertaking work after completing training.

3) Type 3: **Sub-systems focused on adaptability** where:

☞ **Training needs** are defined jointly by representatives of employers and employees, awarding bodies, and training centres. The number of professional profiles is limited by the identification of transversality. The notion of occupation is usually broader than in type 2. The work effectiveness of the learner is targeted, keeping in mind

adaptability to different professional contexts. The awarding body has a determining role. The spectrum of activities is broad;

- ☞ **Training takes place** in a balanced way in both training centres and professional environments. The period spent in a training centre is usually longer. The period in a company is obligatory. During that time professional and social competences are acquired. The training centre and enterprise complement one another;
- ☞ A major part of the **training content and provision** is aimed at achieving a balance between the so-called theoretical teaching content and the professional content. The teaching situations are defined depending on the nature of knowledge and competences to be acquired;
- ☞ **Assessment and evaluation** is essentially conducted by professionals and/or trainers, depending on the subject of assessment. It consists of a set of disciplinary tests and simulations and an assessment of a real and simulated professional situation. Continuous Evaluation exists;
- ☞ **Employability of the learner** is a potential element at this stage since training is focused on adaptation to a variety of professional situations: the concept of occupation is broad⁸. The occupation is considered as learnt after an adaptation period during which the acquired competences are verified in a real professional situation. Such contextualisation will be done during the first employment.

4) Type 4: **Sub-systems focused on the acquisition of a portfolio of competences** where:

- ☞ **Training needs** are defined in a close cooperation between competent bodies, representatives of the world of economy, sectors, employers and employees. The needs are closely connected with a given undertaken occupation. The approach to occupation is analytical, and it is described as a fragmented set of different professional situations;
- ☞ **Training takes place** mainly in training centres but placement periods in companies can be organised, depending on the competences to be acquired. These choices are usually made independently on a local level;
- ☞ A major part of the **training content and provision** is established in terms of objectives to be accomplished by the end of training with reference to standards (national, regional, etc.). Teaching strategies can vary, depending on a given training

⁸ Occupation refers to a generic professional profile, for example: the qualification "shop assistant" without any inclination towards sectoral specificity

centre. Training is always seen as a set of independent modules enabling an individualised training pathway for each apprentice;

- ☞ **Assessment** is adjusted to the rhythm of learning and certifications are implemented unit by unit by qualified evaluators in both the training centre and on the job. Each unit is considered a qualification in itself. The guarantee of certification quality is essentially based on the work placement which can be conducted by bodies exterior to the training process;
- ☞ **Employability of the learner** is constructed progressively by the learner him/herself and allows for “flexible” development of an individual portfolio, since training is focused on progressive and individual acquisition of qualifications. The training pathway is divided into stages/autonomous modules separated by successive validation of the learning outcomes progressively enriching the portfolio of the learner’s competences depending on the circumstances so that they meet the requirements of the employment/position held.

The opportunity of reporting the clusters here has been taken in order to draw some examples. In fact if, for example, in an experimentation of a transnational mobility project:

- **the sending (“home”) Member State/context is of a knowledge-based typology** where the training is regarded as a period preceding active professional life, a moment during which the basics are acquired, which will be used later. A system where employability will be built on this base and therefore is deferred. At the end of this knowledge-based training period, the learner will face the complexity of a real professional situation: the learner acquires skills and competences in a laboratory situation, and the employer will adapt himself to real-life situations;
- **the receiving (“host”) Member State/context is of an occupation-based typology** where the training is based on the occupation and therefore the immediate employability of the learner is expected. A mechanism characterized by close association of professional circles across all stages of the process with companies/enterprises as key actors of the process;

much of the work should be done by the relevant partners participating in the ECVET experimentation in terms of:

- **harmonisation of the training/apprentice practices and places**, in terms of equivalencies to be assigned to the different training steps and places where the training takes place (training centres, simulating environments and/or on-the job experiences in companies/enterprises), since the receiving (“host”) system/context will be more inclined to

focus on practical training acquired on the job for the acquisition of competences and skills immediately useful for the occupation/task and/or for part of the occupation/task, while the sending (“home”) system/context is more inclined to stress the knowledge and simulated dimension of the training;

- **harmonisation of learning outcomes**, in terms of the “weights” to be given to the different theoretical and practical elements and of the dimensions of each comparable unit composing the reference qualification. This is due to the fact that the receiving (“host”) system/context will be more inclined to stress practical training for the acquisition of competences and skills, while the sending (“home”) system/context is more inclined to stress the knowledge dimension of the training;
- **harmonization of assessment and evaluation processes**, in terms of equivalencies to be assigned to the different approaches, since the receiving (“host”) system/context will be more inclined to stress an evaluation based on the ability to perform an occupation/task of an occupation, while the sending (“home”) system/context is more inclined to assess mainly knowledge with exam patterns involving only training professionals rather than professional associations representative of the occupational side.

Also, if we consider the above-mentioned general condition of **ECVET readiness** of both the sending and receiving contexts/systems, if in at least one of the two parts involved, the qualifications are not designed in terms of units or they do not allow for the accumulation of units, it is possible to use ECVET for mobility purposes only by adding a further step, that is to say creating units used only for mobility. *“In this case, the unit(s) used for mobility do(es) not structure the qualification. It is a set of learning outcomes, which are part of the qualification the learner is preparing, that the learner will achieve during a mobility period, which will be assessed abroad. The credit achieved for these units can be transferred and the learning outcomes will be validated by exempting the learner from the corresponding part of the education and training pathway in the home institution (meaning s/he will not have to repeat the learning process). However, these learning outcomes will only be recognised when the final assessment, leading to the award of the qualification, is successfully completed by the learner”*⁹.

The more the two systems/context (sending and receiving) “speak the same language” and are therefore close in terms of pertaining to the same clusters and having the most similar degree of ECVET readiness, the smaller the workload of participating partner to effectively implement an ECVET experimentation.

⁹ Source: EUROPEAN COMMISSION – DG EAC: *“The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training - ECVET – GET TO KNOW ECVET BETTER: Questions and Answers”* – Revision of 2011 –

Once the relevant useful conditions at system level between the involved sending and receiving contexts/systems are identified, it is then strategic to identify the relevant actors/stakeholders to be involved in a partnership in order to implement an ECVET experimentation. These should be competent institutions and stakeholders able to express all the relevant interests and necessary roles/authorities for attaining the expected results for the beneficiaries (see below paragraph 2.2. "Actors") in order to determine the initiators and the beneficiaries of the actions proposed in each system and step involved in the mobility.

2.2. Actors

Since ECVET relies on partnerships and networks involving important actors such as training and qualifications providers and stakeholders, employers and labour market stakeholders, individuals (young and adult learners), any experimentation of this device requires "by default" the setting up of **cooperative networks**, if not formal consortia/partnerships, able to express all the interests, sectors and institutional missions necessary for the success of the ECVET mechanism implementation.

This is a strategic point because a successful experimentation must involve:

- **competent institutions** for the design and implementation of the training supply;
- **competent authorities** responsible for the procedures of recognition and validation as well as for managing the procedures of allocation of credit points to the units involved and allow their accumulation;
- **social partners and representatives of sectors/sub-sectors** within which the results of the experimentation can be actually used;
- **training providers and learners** as the main protagonists of the experimentation in order to support the processes of mutual recognition of learning outcomes for their effective use in mobility situations.

Since in every VET system there is a wide range of stakeholders such as: central administration bodies, training centres, professional branches, consular chambers, qualifications awarding institutions, enterprises, labour unions, and trainees themselves, it might seem difficult to come up with an exhaustive list and properly define their roles and influence in the process of training and experimenting ECVET. Also because each system differs in the share of responsibilities given to different stakeholders along the VET chain, consequently, for the purpose of this part of the Vademecum, we must focus on the "key

stakeholders and key-actors” who can have a significant influence on the success of the ECVET mechanism implementation.

Building on a learning outcomes approach, ECVET gives a central role to qualifications, which are therefore the reference for any transfer or accumulation arrangement and agreement among the different actors/stakeholders involved in any kind of ECVET experimentation. Qualifications may vary in size (and therefore have a variety of total number of ECVET points allocated to each qualification) or they may vary in the amount of units they contain.

The diversity of the VET and qualifications systems in Europe, the various stages of development in adapting the systems to the units of learning outcomes approach or in assessment, evaluation, validation and accumulation, and the difficulties of implementing mobility in VET, demand a strong “partnership and cooperative” dimension.

In this respect, these elements should be taken in account in building the proper competent partnership to conduct an ECVET experimentation:

- **actors/stakeholders responsible for the definition of the specific training needs** (of the sector and or system addressed). These might differ from country to country. Most of the EU researches have demonstrated that the relevant and most frequently recurring ones are, in general, labour market actors such as companies, social partners and joint bodies; the latter are often called on to define training needs together with the social partners and training centres before being approved by the competent bodies in order to enter officially as constituting elements of a qualification pathway;
- **actors/stakeholders responsible for the definition of the specific training contents** in connection with both the sector and the system addressed. This category has a greater transnational homogeneity among the various countries. Most of the EU researches have demonstrated that the relevant and most frequently recurring ones are, in general, VET providers such as training centres or schools often called on to define the training units which will be the basic elements of a qualification pathway;
- **actors/stakeholders responsible for the assessment and evaluation of the specific training contents** in connection with both the sector and the system addressed. This category has a greater transnational homogeneity among the various countries. Most of the EU researches have demonstrated that the relevant and most frequently recurring ones are, in general, VET providers such as training centres or schools often called on to define the assessment and evaluation system and tools of the training units which will be the basic elements of a qualification pathway. Sometimes companies might have a role in the validation of practical situations, even though most of the time just as part of the overall assessment and evaluation for which the VET providers (training center or school) have final responsibility;

- **actors/stakeholders responsible for the recognition and awarding of qualifications** in connection with both the sectors and the systems addressed. These may differ greatly from country to country. Most of the EU researches have demonstrated that the relevant and most frequently recurring ones are, in general:
 - institutions with a highly administrative feature such as central, regional and local government, with different levels of autonomy. We usually have to deal with Ministries of Education and/or their peripheral offices, sometimes Ministries of Labour/Employment, other times competencies in awarding qualifications also pertain to other ministries related to specific sectors (Agriculture, Industry, Handcrafts, Health, Etc...)
 - training boards or specific institutes for qualifications,
 - services of vocational and education training within regions/provinces,
 - VET providers, schools, training centers etc...
- **the final beneficiaries** of the ECVET experimentation; this category is generally defined by the ECVET Recommendation as young and/or adult learners/individuals interested by a mobility process, may this be any geographical or intra-European mobility, or a sector mobility or a systems mobility. As a credit system, ECVET is called upon to enable learning outcomes achieved by an individual/learner in different institutions, learning contexts (education and training institution, work, voluntary activities or leisure), systems (vocational or academic education and training) or over a longer period of time (as in the case of acknowledgement of prior learning) to be recognised and validated towards achievement of a qualification. Final beneficiaries should benefit from an ECVET experimentation in terms of gaining transparency and improving the mobility and portability of the achieved qualifications (or part of them) at national level between various sectors of the economy and within the labour market and/or at transnational level within Member States.

Last but not least, **these exemplificative macro categories** of actors/stakeholders and the respective roles they cover **must be taken in consideration both in the sending and the receiving/hosting country or sub-system addressed** by the mobility object of the specific ECVET experimentation, in a way that the whole process is governed within the implementing partnership.

For instance, in an experimentation of a transnational mobility project, a vocational school from one Member State might enter a partnership with a regional ministry from another Member State since each could be in charge of awarding qualifications in their respective countries.

Once the relevant actors/stakeholders to be involved in a partnership in order to implement an ECVET experimentation and able to express all the relevant interests and necessary roles/authorities for attaining the expected results for the beneficiaries are identified, it will then be necessary to indicate the roles and expected tasks of these stakeholders and actors at every stage of the process of an ECVET experimentation (see below paragraph 2.3. "*Project Management and phases*") in order to determine the initiators and the beneficiaries of the actions proposed in each system and step involved in the mobility.

2.3. Project Management and Phases

The actors/stakeholders identified and described in the previous paragraph fulfill different roles and assume different functions in any ECVET implementation.

Given the diversity of qualification systems in Europe and the different possible uses of ECVET concepts and processes, these functions can be summarized as below:

- 1) designing the qualifications in units of learning outcomes,
- 2) allocating ECVET points,
- 3) defining a Memorandum of Understandings among partners,
- 4) defining a Learning Agreement with beneficiaries,
- 5) organising and managing the learning project, the mobility and transfer of credit,
- 6) carrying out assessment of learning outcomes,
- 7) awarding credits,
- 8) validating the learning outcomes and transfer of credits.

Designing the project management and development in phases of an ECVET experimentation, given the reference contexts/systems frameworks and key actors/stakeholders involved in the process of experimentation, implies the definition of two macro processes within which process management strategies must be applied to the single phases in which the two macro processes are divided.

The two macro-processes can be identified in

- 1) **Conception and design of the ECVET elements**
- 2) **Realisation and use of ECVET for accumulation and transfer.**

These two macro-processes can be declined in these further phases:

1) **Conception and design of the ECVET elements:**

- ☞ Contexts/systems analysis and comparison
- ☞ Description and comparison of qualifications in terms of learning outcomes
- ☞ Identification of equivalencies and procedures for the allocation of ECVET points to qualifications and/or units;
- ☞ Identification of equivalencies and procedures for eventual links between units of learning outcomes and formal/non formal/informal programs or learning contexts
- ☞ Identification of equivalencies and procedures for links between assessment/validation processes, the achievement of units of learning outcomes and the awarding of associated ECVET points
- ☞ Identification and agreement about mutual trust/quality assurance both in qualification systems/referring contexts and in actors/stakeholders involved in the specific ECVET experimentation;

2) **Realization and use of ECVET for accumulation and transfer**

- ☞ Establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding
- ☞ Establishment of Learning Agreements with final beneficiaries/learners
- ☞ Carrying out the formal/non-formal/informal training/apprentice/mobility program/experimentation
- ☞ Implementation of the practical use of learning outcomes and credits for the training/apprentice/mobility program/experimentation
- ☞ Assessment of learning outcomes
- ☞ Awarding of corresponding credit
- ☞ Awarding of corresponding ECVET points to the learner
- ☞ Recording of assessed learning outcomes and credit in the relevant document/support (i.e. personal transcript, portfolio of competences, etc...)
- ☞ Validation of learning outcomes and of corresponding credit
- ☞ Recognition of learning outcomes and process for taking credit into account for the award of qualification (i.e. transfer and accumulation)
- ☞ *Eventual transversal support activities to be provided at different levels and for*

different purposes in the relevant sending and receiving contexts/systems, such as information, guidance, documentation and communication, can be agreed by the partnership.

These macro-processes and the phases in which they are composed, are an extensive project management design for developing an ECVET experimentation, and of course it does not provide any indication about the workload they might generate in any specific context and situation in which the ECVET mechanism can be developed.

As stated before, this workload is strictly connected to systems/context elements and conditions of the sending and receiving environments involved in the ECVET experimentation and, of course, it is strictly connected to the representativeness of partners involved in the process, i.e. their explicit ability to express all the relevant interests and necessary roles/authorities for attaining the expected results for the beneficiaries.

In fact if, for example, in an experimentation of a transnational mobility project we have:

- **a sending Member State/context characterised by a knowledge-based sub-system** with an average level of ECVET readiness in which structures of the training in units of learning outcomes exist only for a certain specific pathway, and there is no expression of these in a credit system. And if the partners involved differ with regard to representativeness of all the relevant interests and necessary roles/authorities for attaining the expected results for the beneficiaries;
- **a receiving Member State/context characterised by an occupation-based sub-system** with a high level of ECVET readiness in which all qualification pathways are already structured in units of learning outcomes and credit values. And if the partners involved are few but all representative of all the relevant interests and necessary roles/authorities for attaining the expected results for the beneficiaries;

much of the workload should be done by the relevant partners participating in the ECVET experimentation in the whole macro-process of the conception and design of the ECVET elements in order to:

- **harmonise the training/apprentice practices and places**, in terms of equivalencies to be assigned to the various training steps and places where the training takes place;
- **harmonise the various learning outcomes systems and organization**: in the case of the sending context/system adapting the available example of learning pathways expressed in units of learning outcomes, or, also using the longer and more complex approach of creating specific units used only for mobility. And, since the receiving system/context will be more inclined to stress practical training for the acquisition of competences and skills, while

the sending system/context is more inclined to stress the knowledge dimension of the training, the workload will mainly be focused on harmonising them with the receiving context/system in terms of the “weights” to be given to the different theoretical and practical elements and dimensions of each comparable unit composing the referring qualification;

- **derive a framework for assigning and awarding ECVET credits**, in terms of equivalencies to be agreed upon among participating partners, taking in account that most of the work must be done by the sending (home) institution which has to adapt and adopt a credit system not yet available in its context;
- **harmonise the assessment and evaluation processes**, in terms of equivalencies to be assigned to the different approaches and of agreements to be designed and reached, since the receiving system/context will be more inclined to stress an evaluation based on the ability to perform an occupation/task of an occupation, while the sending system/context is more inclined to assess mainly knowledge with exam patterns involving only training professionals rather than professional associations representative of the occupational side.

But given the proper partnership composed of competent institutions, and once overcome the difficulties and obstacles deriving from any different conditions, elements and degrees of ECVET readiness of the sending and receiving contexts in the first macro process, then the next process related to the realization and use of ECVET for accumulation and transfer is more standardised in terms of workload.

Specific attention must be paid to the “agreement” dimension of this second macro-process, as far as the Memorandum of Understanding is concerned. The more the two systems/contexts (sending and receiving) differ in terms of belonging to the same clusters and of the degree of ECVET readiness, the more complex the MoU will be and, consequently, the greater the workload of participating partners to reach agreement about all the elements and to effectively implement an ECVET experimentation.

Once the relevant macro-processes and phases for project management and implementation of an ECVET experimentation have been identified, it is then strategic to identify the relevant tools and methodologies that will be adapted and produced as outputs of the process in order to implement an ECVET experimentation for attaining the expected results for the beneficiaries (see below paragraph 2.4. “*Tools and Methodologies*”).

2.4. Methodologies and Tools

Project management development and articulation in the phases identified and described in the previous paragraph implies the implementation, use and production of specific methodologies and tools in any ECVET implementation.

In overall terms, the ECVET methodologies must include:

- the description of qualifications in terms of learning outcomes (knowledge, competences and skills) organized in units of LOs which may be transferred, validated and accumulated,
- the existence of a transfer process for learning outcomes including assessment, validation, recognition and accumulation of learning outcomes,
- use of a point system assigned to learning outcomes, qualifications and units.

Therefore there are some conditions for ECVET to run smoothly and maintaining a winning approach. In fact ECVET's effectiveness in regards to any kind of possible mobility experimentation, relies on mutual trust among the various partners: competent certification authorities, training service providers, etc. Moreover it requires the involved partners to fully understand the technical aspects of ECVET, and asks partners to willingly accept the ECVET principles in qualification design and adaptation and their awarding procedures for recognition of learning outcomes of people benefiting from mobility.

Designing the methodologies and tools to be used throughout the development and implementation of any ECVET experimentation, given the referring contexts/systems frameworks and key actors/stakeholders involved in the process, implies therefore the definition of **procedures, methodological lines and operational tools** by means of which the experimentation can be governed and the expected results can be reached in relation to the reference contexts/systems and target beneficiaries/learners.

Given the various steps of the process for implementing any ECVET experimentation, each step calls for different sets of methodologies and tools or a combination/selection of tools.

A first outline can be summarized in the table below:

MACRO-PROCESS	STEP	METHODOLOGIES AND TOOLS
<p style="text-align: center;">1) Conception and design of the ECVET elements:</p>	Context/system analysis and comparison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk and field analysis of sending and receiving environment; - Identification of compatibilities between sending and receiving contexts/sectors/sub-sectors - Identification of margins of transferability - Comparative matrix
	Description and comparison of qualifications in terms of learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of flexibility of the training supply of the sending and receiving contexts/sectors/sub-sectors - Selection and description of professional profiles or training pathways to be experimented; - Sharing and validation of ways of describing Units in terms of learning outcomes - Identification of compatibilities in the way qualifications are described in terms of Units of learning outcomes - Job profiles - Frameworks of comparable learning outcomes - Comparative matrix
	Identification of equivalencies and procedures for the allocation of ECVET points to qualifications and/or units; and/or Identification of equivalencies and procedures for eventual links between units of learning outcomes and formal/non formal/informal programs or learning contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Description of the relevant training process or qualification or parts of the qualification in common and sharable Units of LOs; - Sharing/agreement on procedures for defining equivalencies in terms of ECVET points - Quantification and attribution of credit points; - Equivalencies matrix - Weighting framework - Grids of units of LOs - Cooperative approach - Units for mobility
	Identification of equivalencies and procedures for link between assessment/validation processes, the achievement of units of learning outcomes and awarding of associated ECVET points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis and comparison of assessment and validation procedures adopted in sending and receiving contexts - Equivalencies matrix on assessment requirements - Definition of learning outcomes verification systems - Sharing/agreement on procedures for defining equivalencies in terms of LO validation systems - Cooperative approach - Assessment framework and set of assessment/evaluation tools
	Identification and agreement about mutual trust/quality assurance both in qualification systems/reference contexts, in actors/stakeholders involved and in the specific ECVET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperative approach - Sharing/agreement on all the procedures and outcomes of previous steps in defining equivalencies in terms of LOs, their translation in credit point system and the validation systems;

MACRO-PROCESS	STEP	METHODOLOGIES AND TOOLS
	experimentation context/system;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability in the implementing partnerships of competent institutions in both sending and receiving contexts
2) <u>Realization and use of ECVET for accumulation and transfer:</u>	Establishment of Memorandum of Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperative approach - Sharing/agreement on the framework of credit transfer - Acknowledgement of partner approach in designing units, assessment, validation, recognition and quality assurance of all other partners - Statement of the mutual acceptance of the status, equivalencies, assessment and validation procedures of competent institutions involved - Definition of the learners' learning outcomes, credits and reference levels - Cooperation framework and partners' tasks - Formalising in a contract/agreement format - MoU
	Establishment of Learning Agreements with final beneficiaries/learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drafting/agreement on the framework of the mobility conditions and credit transfer - Acknowledgement and commitments of partners (both in sending and receiving institutions/contexts) in recognising the learners' achievements - Statement of objective and conditions of the mobility period and expected roles of the three parties involved: learner, hosting institution (receiving partners) and home institution (sending partners) - Definition of the learners' expected learning outcomes, their reference levels and how these will be assessed, recognised and credited, the associated ECVET points, duration of the mobility, identification of the three parties of the agreement: learner, hosting institution (receiving partners) and home institution (sending partners) - Formalising in an agreement format - Learning Agreement
	Carrying out the formal/non-formal/informal training/apprentice/mobility program/experimentation Practical implementation of learning outcomes and credits for the training/apprentice/mobility program/experimentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experimentation plan of the training/apprentice/mobility - Eventual monitoring/recording tools such as: <i>cahier de bord</i>, assessment tools, programs, etc...
	Assessment of learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment and evaluation tools and methodologies - Reference equivalencies matrix

MACRO-PROCESS	STEP	METHODOLOGIES AND TOOLS
	Awarding of corresponding credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quantification, attribution, awarding and recording of credit points; - Validation by competent institutions in the framework of the MoU and the Learning Agreement
	Awarding of corresponding ECVET points to the learner	
	Validation of learning outcomes and of corresponding credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Validation by competent institutions in the framework of the MoU and the Learning Agreement - Personal transcript, - Europass Mobility template - Portfolio of competences, etc...
	Recording of assessed learning outcomes and credit in the relevant document/support	
Recognition of learning outcomes and the process for taking credit into account for the awarding of qualification (i.e. transfer and accumulation)		

The table reports various combinable options of methodologies and tools to be used according to each process implementation step foreseen for the realization of any ECVET experimentation. Of course it is neither exhaustive nor does it claim to be followed in its entirety.

Some examples and reminders can be of help in getting the proper or closest dimension of the process and workloads, therefore below we will deal with some relevant issues in the methodologies and tools to be used in the first macro-process related to the conception and design of the ECVET elements.

Firstly it is important to recall that the objective of ECVET is to facilitate the transfer, recognition and accumulation of assessed learning outcomes of individuals who are aiming to achieve a qualification, and this objective requires the use of units of learning outcomes and agreement on assessment and credit systems. This is possible only when each unit is documented and the learning outcomes it contains are assessed and validated. Hence learners can:

- Progressively (unit-by-unit or set of units by set of units) accumulate learning outcomes in view of achieving a qualification;
- Obtain recognition for the learning outcomes achieved in other contexts without new assessment (i.e. units can be transferred because the learner can provide the receiving

institution with evidence that s/he has been successfully assessed and has achieved the learning outcomes in question).

Other characteristics are foreseen for these units, and where they do not exist in one or both of the systems involved (sending and receiving) further adaptation methodologies and tools must be applied. For example learning outcomes should be constructed and organised in a coherent way with regard to the overall qualification. To group the learning outcomes into units it is necessary to identify those outcomes that relate to each other. There are different criteria according to which learning outcomes can be grouped into units and the choice of which criteria to use depends on the qualifications system. Examples include:

- The fact that the learning outcomes relate to the same set of occupational activities/tasks (for example the learning outcomes in a unit entitled “managing hotel bookings”);
- The fact that they are related to the same product or production technique (such as the learning outcomes in a unit entitled “do the housekeeping in a 5-star hotel”);
- They can also be grouped according to the stages in the production process or in performing a service (for example the learning outcomes in a unit called “informing the client about the nature of maintenance intervention”);
- or they can be grouped in a unit because they relate to the same field of knowledge, skills or competence (for example the competence in foreign language can form a separate unit).

All these elements, alone or combined together, necessarily require different complexity and efforts from the participating partners and the use of different methodologies and tools.

Another complication arises when key competences are distributed differently following a different approach to the design of qualifications. In fact VET qualifications can contain learning outcomes that are clearly linked to the capacity of a person to carry out a specific activity on the workplace, but they often also contain learning outcomes referring to the key competences. It is up to the qualification system, and therefore up to a further work and agreement process in a ECVET implementing partnership, to decide whether the learning outcomes directly related to a specific occupational activity are grouped into units together with the key competences or whether (some of) the learning outcomes related to key competences form separate units.

Finally, as a general rule, the learning outcomes in a qualification should be assessed only once (unless the expected level of the learner’s performance is higher). Therefore the same learning outcome is normally not integrated into several different units. However, in some cases it may be necessary to define some knowledge, skills and competence that are related to all or a group of units. For example, those concerning health and safety; environmental

protection; hygiene; or in some cases key competences. Even if these learning outcomes are common or transversal to the whole qualification, they should be clearly identified in the unit description.

Another important issue is the emphasis given by different experimentations carried on ECVET at EU level about the importance of ***using occupational activities, tasks or processes as the reference for designing units or finding correspondences and equivalences in ECVET experimentation processes***. This is especially useful when the units concern learning outcomes related to specific occupations and professions. The occupational activities, tasks or processes are often defined in the job profiles for which the qualification prepares. In this case, the occupational profile can be taken as the basis for defining units. Moreover, it has some advantages, in fact while qualification descriptions differ very much from system to system and from country to country, the tasks, activities or processes undertaken on the job are often very similar. Ongoing ECVET pilot projects show that identification of transferable parts of qualifications is relatively easy when the partner institutions discuss what activities/tasks/processes the qualification prepares for, while it may become complex if, for example, the taught curricula are the basis of discussion. However, there are qualifications that prepare for several occupations and hence a single occupational profile cannot be identified. In the case of such qualifications it is still possible to refer to activities, tasks or processes though these may be less directly related to a single occupational profile.

Still another important passage is related to the institutional frameworks which define the units and roles of competent institutions in the qualifications system. When using ECVET for transnational mobility, units are sometimes adapted or described in the framework of networks (national or transnational) by the partners involved. This **cooperative approach** ensures that units are suitable for the purpose of credit transfer in the context of geographical mobility among the partner institutions concerned. If units are being defined in this manner, in order to enable that the credit for these units is recognised when the learner returns to his/her home institution, it is important that there is a ***clear framework through which the partner institutions are empowered to develop or describe transferable units for mobility***.

Moreover there are different types of units, and the relationship between the unit and the qualification standards may differ in different systems. For example, depending on the qualifications system or even depending on the qualification, units may also be:

- **compulsory** to achieve the qualification, this means that all holders of the qualification have to have achieved those units;
- **optional** meaning that the learners can choose from a predefined range of units. When designing a qualification, optional units can be used to enable different specialisations (e.g.

qualifications preparing for the occupation of waiter and that of a barman can share a common basis – the compulsory units - and some optional units). Optional units are also commonly used to give learners the choice of foreign language;

- or “**free choice**” meaning that in some qualifications systems, units are fully open to learners’ choice. This means that the learner can choose some units that are not core to the qualification s/he prepares and s/he can choose any unit s/he wants. Free choice units can be used in order to enable learners to discover aspects of a profession/field of study that are not related to the qualification they are preparing.

The use of optional or free choice units can provide more flexibility for learners to design their learning pathways. It can also provide an opportunity to recognise learning outcomes that correspond to innovations when it comes to new technology or processes. While in general their use depends on the qualifications system, it is also possible that within one system, some qualifications use options and free choice units, while others do not. This can depend on the level or type of qualification or the occupational area (it may be appropriate to use a common set of core units and optional units in certain sectors, while not in others).

So given all these examples of factors which may be of some influence in choosing the proper set of methodologies and tools, it is evident that the **concepts of comparability, agreement and equivalence** are predominant.

In order to be able to **transfer credit achieved in different contexts**, the competent institutions agree that the learning outcomes of a unit and the assessment standards in the host setting are comparable to those of a unit in the home setting and some kind of equivalence must be formally defined and agreed.

When it comes to using ECVET for mobility, as experimented in many ECVET pilot projects and experimentations, partnerships have developed several approaches to **identifying comparability of learning outcomes in units across the different countries/systems**.

These approaches can be grouped as follows:

- Identifying comparable units – units that exist in the qualifications systems of the partnership, which are considered comparable and can be transferred.
- Designing units ‘open to mobility’ – units designed specifically for geographical mobility purposes. They do not necessarily correspond to a full unit in the qualifications systems of the partnership (useful in the previously mentioned cases in which not all the qualifications systems concerned use units).
- Creating ‘reference units’ – a reference structure of units to which partners can relate units existing in their qualifications systems following certain rules.

- Designing 'common units' – units that are shared by the competent institutions in the partnership: i.e. the same unit can be found in all qualifications of interest to the partnership. The overall learning outcomes of each unit are the same across the partnership but not necessarily every detail of the unit.

The other delicate passages which require particular attention in terms of comparability, agreement and equivalence are those related to **ECVET points and credits**. Together with units, descriptions of learning outcomes and information about the level of qualifications, ***ECVET points can support the understanding of a qualification***. The number of ECVET points allocated to a qualification, together with other specifications, can indicate for example, that the scope of the qualification is narrow or broad. The number of ECVET points allocated to a unit provides the learner with information concerning the relative weight of what s/he has accumulated already. It also provides the learner with information concerning what remains to be achieved. The successful achievement of a qualification, or of a unit, triggers the award of the associated ECVET points independently of the actual time required to achieve them. Hence when a learner satisfies the criteria for a unit or a qualification, meaning s/he has achieved the expected learning outcomes and these are assessed and validated, s/he is awarded the corresponding ECVET points. These are recorded, together with the learning outcomes and units, in his/her personal transcript.

Allocation of ECVET points to a qualification is based on a convention according to which 60 points are allocated to the learning outcomes expected to be achieved in a year of formal full time VET. For a given qualification, one formal learning context is taken as a reference and on the basis of 60 ECVET points per year of formal full time VET, the total number of ECVET points is assigned to that qualification. In a number of European countries qualifications' descriptions are independent of the education and training programme preparing for these qualifications. Furthermore, it is also possible that the same qualification can be prepared through various programmes. ***Therefore ECVET allocates credit points to qualifications and not to education and training programmes***. However, to decide on the number of ECVET points allocated to a qualification, one formal learning programme is chosen as a point of reference. It is up to the competent institutions in charge of designing qualifications to decide which specific programme will be chosen as a point of reference (e.g. the initial VET or the most common programme). The duration of the selected reference programme together with the ECVET convention on ECVET points, will give the number of ECVET points allocated to the qualification. From the total number of ECVET points allocated to a qualification, each unit is allocated a number of ECVET points based on its relative weight within the qualification.

Another aspect subject to appropriate methodologies and tools for reaching compatibility and equivalence in any ECVET experimentation is the definition and agreement of the relative

weight of a unit and its expression in credits and ECVET points. One or a combination of these approaches can be realized:

- relative importance of LOs;
- or complexity-scope-volume of the LOs in the unit;
- or effort necessary to acquire the KSC for a unit.

But ECVET points are not to be confused with credit. While credit designates the learning outcomes the learner has achieved, ECVET points provide information about the qualification and the units. In other words, while credit is related to a person and his/her personal achievement (credit does not exist on its own without someone having achieved it), ECVET points are linked to the qualification structure and description (independent of whether someone has achieved the qualification or not). Credit can be transferred and accumulated if the competent institution recognises that the credit the learner has achieved is relevant and can be taken into account as part of the qualification the learner is preparing (or seeks recognition for). ECVET points provide information about the credit the learner has transferred and accumulated (e.g. what is the relative weight of units the learner has already achieved).

Credit transfer is the process through which learning outcomes achieved in one context can be taken into account in another context. Credit transfer is based on the processes of assessment, validation and recognition. In order to be transferred, learning outcomes have to be assessed. The outcome of the assessment is recorded in a learner's personal transcript and constitutes credit. On the basis of the assessed outcomes, the credit can be validated and recognised by another competent institution. Two cases of credit transfer exist:

- Transfer in the framework of partnerships, as in the case of most of the EU funded experimental projects;
- Transfer outside partnerships.

This means that when the credit transfer takes place in the framework of organised mobility, underpinned by a learning agreement, if the assessment is positive, credit should be validated and recognised automatically. While outside the framework of partnerships, no learning agreement exists. Therefore the decision on recognition lies fully in the hands of the competent institution in the system in which the learner wants his/her credit recognised. This institution should examine whether the learning outcomes the learner has achieved and which were assessed (as possibly documented in the personal transcript) are comparable to the requirements of their system (e.g. are they comparable to the qualification standards?). If so, the competent institution may decide to validate and recognise learners' credit.

In the framework of ECVET partnerships, credit transfer is foreseen in the learning agreement. This agreement specifies which learning outcomes are to be achieved during the mobility and how these will be assessed. If the learner has been positively assessed by the hosting institution it implies that the learning outcomes expected for units concerned have been achieved. This is recorded in the learner's personal transcript or any equivalent document. The home institution validates and automatically recognizes the learner's credit, as specified in the learning agreement. In the case of learning outcomes achieved in other settings and contexts and that only correspond to part of the unit in the home system, it is possible to validate and recognise the assessment results as part of the continuing assessment (if it exists). In any case, the learner should be exempted from the part of the program that corresponds to the learning outcomes concerned.

For what concerns the delicate issues of *assessment, validation and transfer of LOs a cooperative approach is necessary to attain the expected final results for beneficiaries/learners*. Usually in a mobility experimentation of ECVET the hosting institution organises the assessment of learning outcomes as specified in the Learning Agreement. The assessment can be done by teachers, trainers, employers, etc. depending on the education and training and assessment arrangements and procedures that are used in the host context.

However, it is important that the hosting and home institutions discuss, prior to the mobility, the assessment methods used and the profile of assessors to make sure that these meet the quality assurance requirements expected by the home institution, which will validate the credit.

It is important to note that this does not mean that the assessment methods and profile of assessors need to be identical in the home and the hosting institution. Indeed, in most cases they are different.

Therefore assessment requirements are object of a profound analysis by the involved relevant partners, in fact, prior to the mobility period, the partners discuss and agree the way(s) in which learning outcomes will be assessed during the mobility period. They also agree on who ensures the quality of this process and in what way. The assessment requirements are described in the learning agreement and may be formalized in the MoU.

Then the next step is **the validation of LOs**. The home institution validates the learning outcomes assessed by the hosting institution. In this process the home institution uses a learner's transcript of record to verify that the learning outcomes defined for the mobility period have indeed been positively assessed in the hosting institution.

The partnership should ensure that learners who are assessed in another context and whose credit is transferred are not disadvantaged compared to other learners in the home system.

If, for example, the home system uses grades for exemption, the partnership should find a way to ensure that the mobile learner will receive grades that correspond to his/her performance.

All the efforts made by the partnership involved in any ECVET experimentation find their natural formalisation in the Memorandum of Understanding, which is an agreement where the full framework for the credit transfer is specifically set out.

Credit transfer is supported by mutual trust among the competent institutions involved. As stated in the ECVET Recommendation, this should be promoted by establishing MoU. In order to recognise credit, the competent institution in charge needs to be confident that the required learning outcomes have been assessed in a reliable and valid manner. It also needs to trust that learners' credit does concern the learning outcomes expected and that these are at the appropriate level.

By setting up a MoU, competent institutions should formally acknowledge their partners' approaches to designing units, assessment, validation, recognition as well as quality assurance. Through this process, they make informed judgments about the conditions under which they can recognize credit achieved in partner systems.

MoU are concluded by competent institutions, each of which is empowered, in their own setting, to award qualifications or units or to give credit for achieved learning outcomes for transfer and validation.

It is important to note that one institution can be competent for more than one function in the qualifications system as well as in ECVET, depending on the set up of the particular qualification system. These may be ministries, qualifications authorities, regional authorities, employers' representatives or chambers, etc.

A MoU contains statements through which the parties concerned:

- ☞ accept each other's status as competent institutions,
- ☞ accept each other's quality assurance, assessment, validation and recognition criteria and procedures as satisfactory for the purposes of credit transfer, this agreement is based on transparency of information concerning the above processes.
- ☞ agree on the conditions for the operation of the partnership, such as objectives, duration and arrangements for review of the MoU, such conditions will depend on the purposes and the context of partnerships.
- ☞ agree on the comparability of the qualifications concerned for the purposes of credit transfer, using the reference levels established by EQF, the level of detail regarding this

point will vary depending on the partnership.

- ☞ identify other actors and competent institutions that may be involved in the process concerned and their functions;
- ☞ define the roles of other competent institutions with regard to functions such as signature of learning agreements, assessment, issuing of learners' personal transcripts, etc.

2.5. Expected results and impacts

The expected results of any ECVET experimentation is contained in its own definition and features. As a European system of accumulation (capitalisation) and transfer of credits designed for vocational education and training, ECVET is expected to

- enable the attesting and recording of the learning achievement/learning outcomes of an individual engaged in a learning pathway leading to a qualification, a vocational diploma or certificate;
- strengthen the documentation, validation and recognition of achieved learning outcomes acquired abroad, in both formal VET or in non-formal contexts;
- be centred on the individual, based on the validation and the accumulation of his/her learning outcomes, defined in terms of the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for achieving a qualification;
- aid European mobility in VET and access to lifelong learning for young and adult learners
- support the learners while building individual learning pathways leading to qualifications
- provide a common methodological framework based on units of learning outcomes, to facilitate transfer of credits between qualifications and VET systems.

There are, therefore, common recurring key-words which can help us identify and define the expected results even beyond the impact on the individual/learner involved or on the competent institutions and reference systems involved in its application. And these key-issues are:

- Mobility
- Recognition
- Assessment

- Transparency
- Transferability and repeatability.

The first expected outcome undoubtedly refers to the beneficiary/learner and the mobility, might be:

- ***between different learning contexts*** such as education and training institution, work, voluntary activities or leisure, therefore between formal and informal/non formal contexts;
- ***between different systems*** such as vocational or academic education and training, labour market and VET, etc.;
- ***between different geographical contexts*** such as inter-regional mobility in a national context, or transnational mobility;
- ***between different sectors*** such as in labour market mobility and workers adaptability to changes,
- or ***mobility of resources acquired by individuals over a longer period of time*** to be recognised and validated towards achievement of a qualification.

The ECVET framework of credit transfer and accumulation system is expected to produce a result in terms of easy and smooth transferability and portability of an individual/learner's learning outcomes acquired in different contexts (abroad or under another system) to the individual/learner's home context for accumulation and/or achievement of a qualification.

One of the key issues identified as critical points in the implementation of the ECVET mechanism during this experimental phase managed by the EU institution by means of funded project, is the question of "high cost of the experimentations" due to: organisational and logistical problems, complex procedures, persisting heterogeneity in the organisation of the VET systems and qualifications frameworks in the participating countries, mutual trust still to be built up among countries and competent institutions and, last but not least, the heavy workload and efforts in the preliminary activities of each experimentation, often leading to modest results concentrated on a single qualification, rather than on parts of it.

Therefore, beyond the single project results or the results on the individuals/learners, much of the work necessary to implement the ECVET mechanism in any single experimentation deserves a much higher impact on institutions involved and, indirectly and in the long term, in the systems, contexts and/or sectors involved, mainly with respect to:

- **repeatability** of the specific experimentation, in the framework of the same given contexts, institutions and conditions;
- **transferability** of the outcomes and results (procedures, methodologies, operational tools,

frameworks, format of MoU and of Learning Agreements, etc...) of the specific experimentation, in similar contexts and/or sectors and in relation to similar qualifications or parts of qualifications, in the framework of similar given contexts, institutions and conditions;

- **adaptability** of the outcomes and results (procedures, methodologies, operational tools, frameworks, format of MoU and of Learning Agreements, etc.) of the specific experimentation, in different contexts and/or sectors and in relation to other qualifications or parts of qualifications, in the framework of different contexts, institutions and conditions.

While we await the outcomes of the EU projects to help reach a higher “systemic dimension”, the only way to support this process of “institutionalisation” of the ECVET mechanism is to try to attain a sort of “portability” of results to improve the impact of the individual experimentations.

3. A case study: the proposals of the Network project

In parallel to the previous chapter and recalling the elements and steps which constituted the “road-map” of the process of implementing an ECVET experimentation, as designed above, we hereby proceed in illustrating a case study built on the ECVET N.E.T.WORK project.

This chapter is structured according to a narrative and operative approach, taking in consideration the “life” of the N.E.T.WORK project as the main example, and critically analysing the different steps and elements which characterised the specific ECVET experimentation of the project.

The objective is, therefore, to highlight the conditions under which the N.E.T.WORK project ECVET experimentation has been defined, implemented and realised in all its steps and expected outcomes, concretely attaining the benefits expected for the targets, the systems and actors involved.

In describing what has happened in the specific N.E.T.WORK Project, this section is meant to provide an example of practical applications and, according to a problem-setting/problem-solving approach, how to deal with them while keeping in mind the previously defined theoretical basis. In the light of the experience gained in the project development these theoretical issues will be critically presented in order to understand how to overcome obstacles and possible deviations from the ideal scenario defined, which can be met along the pathway of implementing any kind of ECVET experimentation.

Keeping in mind that the most relevant features of the specific NETWORK Project are that:

- it proposes the application and development of the ECVET system in the hospitality sector in hotel and alternative lodging structures, both through the translation of the orientations and specific applications already underway into systematic durable practices, and by promoting the coordinated and shared testing of such practices;*
- it orients the application of ECVET toward qualifications in the specific reception area of the tourism-hospitality sector, in order to respond functionally to a real demand of the context – in which mobility is already one of the qualifying factors both of training and of work practice itself - and to ensure its effective application in the partner nations;*
- it proposes the application of ECVET within the general methodology of competences-based learning and – more precisely– in the reference to that methodology of all the operations connected to the preparation, application, validation and recognition of the modular components of the system;*

- *it proposes to facilitate all the ECVET implementation phases beginning with the construction of a shared articulation of the learning outcomes as “performance indicators”, which can be assigned to the unitary competences (Units) constituting the reference professional profile(s);*
- *it proposes, as an element of innovation, the assignment of a measure to the learning outcomes in the form of fractions of points assignable to the reference Unit, element which does not modify but rather strengthens the standard ECVET;*

the annotated critical analysis of the “life” of the N.E.T.WORK project, which we are going to present in this section, has been structured and presented in terms of:

- **RATIONALE AND BACKGROUND** *containing the introduction of the necessary set of systems conditions and arrangements, as well as the typology of institutions and stakeholders which has been involved in the project, in order to enable the training providers and the necessary actors involved to test a possible integration of the specific ECVET experimentation into sector-related training pathways and qualifications. These elements are presented, in parallel with the previous paragraphs 2.1. and 2.2., in the light of the typologies of systems and actors available in the project, providing a concrete example of the strategies implemented to face the eventual obstacles and threats provided by the project implementing framework;*
- **METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**, *which contains the presentation of the methodological framework adopted and followed by the partnership in the N.E.T.WORK project for implementing the foreseen ECVET experimentation;*
- **PROCEDURES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ECVET** *containing the description of the relevant procedures used for implementing the ECVET experimentation foreseen in the project, and the outputs of the different planned development phases. These elements are presented, in parallel with the previous paragraph 2.3. related to project management and phases, in the light of the project experimentation, and thus providing a concrete example of any obstacles and weaknesses met with during project development and the solutions adopted to overcome them within the project implementation framework;*
- **OPERATIONAL TOOLS** *containing the description of the outputs of the projects, and in particular the tools designed and used for implementing the ECVET experimentation foreseen in the project. These elements are presented, in parallel with the previous paragraph 2.4., in particular introducing - against the features defined in the ideal scenario itself - a concrete example of the tools to be adopted in the light of the project experimentation;*

- **AREAS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE PROPOSED METHODOLOGIES AND TOOLS** containing a critical analysis of the outcomes attained at the end of the project implementation;
- **SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS ACHIVED BY THE N.E.T.WORK PROJECT** containing a critical analysis of the sustainability of results and outcomes at the end of the specific ECVET experimentation carried out in the N.E.T.WORK project. Results and outcomes are described in terms of the level of benefits for learners and other actors involved, and as the possibility of reusing the fulfilments of the specific experimentation in future applications. These elements are presented, in parallel with the previous paragraph 2.5., and thus providing, in the light of the project final achievements, a S.W.O.T. analysis based on the concrete example of the project implementing framework.

3.1. Rationale and background

The N.E.T.WORK project aimed at constituting and consolidating a partnership among organisations in four countries - Italy, France, Slovenia and Portugal - which was able to create and share a common framework for the development and testing of the ECVET system in their home countries. In other words, the N.E.T.WORK project concentrated on testing whether the specific training pathways within the qualification systems in the respective home countries of the partners are 'ECVET-ready' - or under what conditions they could become so – as a preparation for the eventual mobility phases of students, which is seen as a long-term goal.

The countries involved in this project represented a variety of qualifications systems and are at different stages regarding the coordination of their systems with ECVET (or in other words "ECVET readiness"):

- France and Slovenia represent advanced situations where units of learning outcomes were already in use or in implementation at the beginning of the project;
- in Italy and Portugal, the situation regarding "ECVET readiness" was less clear at the beginning stage of the project, but strong emphasis was put on development of experimentations.

Considering these characteristics of the systems involved under the framework of the four clusters previously defined in paragraph 2.1., the partnership was in a situation in which

- **FRANCE and SLOVENIA could be classified in the cluster of the occupation-based type** of countries where the training is based on the occupation and therefore the immediate employability of the learner is expected. A mechanism characterised by close association of professional circles across all stages of the process with

companies/enterprises as key actors of the process;

- **ITALY and PORTUGAL could be classified in the cluster of the knowledge-based type** where training is regarded as a period preceding active professional life, a moment during which the basics are acquired, which will be used later. A system where employability will be built on this basis and therefore is deferred. At the end of this knowledge-based training period, the learner will face the complexity of a real professional situation: the learner acquires skills and competences in a laboratory situation, and the employer will need to adapt the him/her to real-life situations.

Therefore much of the work was done by the relevant partners participating in the ECVET experimentation in terms of:

- **Identification of margins of compatibility among the training/apprentice practices, their EQF levels and contents;**
- **Identification of margins of compatibility among learning outcomes;**
- **Identification of margins of compatibility among different assessment and evaluation processes;**
- **Identification of margins of equivalence among the different units identified for the experimentation and their value in credit point and ECVET points.**

The specific professional areas chosen for the project development, which can be defined generally as tourism, and more precisely as tourist welcoming, are strongly characterised in the partner countries by consolidated traditions of trans-national training and work mobility, even in the absence of adequate structures for the recognition of training results and competences acquired through these.

The tourism sector is an international field of work which requires a mobile and multilingual work force. International experience during the training phase is an important prerequisite to equip students with necessary skills, knowledge and competences and to broaden their perspectives. To promote mobility among students in the tourism sector, the N.E.T.WORK project sought a way to utilise the ECVET system for better cross-border comparability of learning outcomes, competences and qualifications.

This project also intended to develop the experimental processes already started up by previous pilot projects aimed at the enhancement of transparency of qualifications in the sector of tourism and hospitality. This experience, together with procedures and tools already in use in the partner countries for the implementation of the ECVET system, was used to support credit transfer and recognition through their scanning and sharing by means of Learning Units and Learning Outcomes.

Systematically building on existing methods and practices - already in use in the partner countries - the project aimed at designing specific operational tools to facilitate the common definition, delivery, recognition and validation of modular training pathways. These were tested within an “observed experimentation” in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses in supporting credit transfer and accumulation, mobility and employability.

As far as the partners involved are concerned, as generally presented in the paragraph “Partnership” of the introduction, the lead partner, the Italian Centre for Advanced Studies in Tourism and Tourism Promotion (CST) in Assisi, brought together partners which play an important role in shaping and organising vocational education and training in the tourism sector. For Italy, this was:

- the Province of Perugia, since Italian ‘provinces’ are important regional stakeholders in the Italian VET system, offering several qualification pathways for the design of which they are also responsible;
- Federalberghi, the federation of Italy’s hotels and tourist accommodation enterprises, in representation of the economic sector involved in the experimentation
- Sviluppo & Competenze (SV&CO) an agency specialising in European projects in the context of the Lifelong Learning Programme, which supports experimentation in the field of competence-based learning in the Italian VET system in particular as member of the associated partner CONFAO;
- CONFAO, A National Consortium for Vocational Education and Training, composed by around 136 VET public and private institutions throughout the national territory.

The international partners included:

- the French association France-Europea from Nantes, which trains students for professions in the agricultural sector – including rural tourism;
- CPI - the Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training in Ljubljana;
- CONSULTIS, a Portuguese consultancy specialising in European projects in the context of the Lifelong Learning Programme, which supports experimentation in some local VET institutions, in particular, carried out with the associated partner ISESP
- ISESP – Instituto Superior de Espigno in Portugal, an institute organising study visits abroad.

In the light of the five categories of actors necessary for a “smooth” application of an ECVET experimentation, as defined and presented in paragraph 2.2., and in relation to the specific project objective, the contexts, the professional area involved in the project and the typology

of “observed” experimentation foreseen, the partnership has been analysed according to the 5 categories as reported in the table below:

TYOLOGY OF NECESSARY ACTORS	FRANCE	ITALY	PORTUGAL	SLOVENIA
actors/stakeholders responsible for the definition of the specific training needs	<i>The referring diploma and eventual professional standards existing at national and regional level could be used for the experimentation instead of the direct involvement of the stakeholder</i>	FEDERALBERGHI CST Province of Perugia	ESPE – Escola Profissional de Espinho¹⁰ ISESP – Instituto Superior de Espinho¹¹	CPI Secondary School of Catering and Tourism Maribor
actors/stakeholders responsible for the definition of the specific training contents	France Europea The VET institutions which are part of the partner network <i>The referring diploma</i>	FEDERALBERGHI CST Province of Perugia The VET institutions responsible for the implementation of the IFTS pathway selected for the experimentation	Consultis The VET institutions ESPE ISEP responsible for the implementation of the pathways selected for the experimentation	CPI The VET institution Secondary School of Catering and Tourism Maribor responsible for the implementation of the pathways selected for the experimentation
actors/stakeholders responsible for the assessment and evaluation of the specific training contents	France Europea The VET institutions which are part of the partner network <i>The referring diploma</i>	Province of Perugia The VET institutions responsible for the implementation of the IFTS pathway selected for the experimentation <i>The referring IFTS framework</i>	Consultis The VET institutions ESPE ISEP responsible for the implementation of the pathways selected for the experimentation	CPI The VET institution Secondary School of Catering and Tourism Maribor responsible for the implementation of the pathways selected for the experimentation
actors/stakeholders responsible for the recognition and awarding of qualifications	France Europea The VET institutions	Province of Perugia The VET institutions	Consultis The VET institutions ESPE	CPI The VET institution Secondary

¹⁰ ESPE is a private secondary vocational school which mainly offers EQF level 4 vocational and educational training courses

¹¹ ISESP is a private polytechnic higher education institution which mainly offers EQF level 6 bachelor degree courses

TYPOLOGY OF NECESSARY ACTORS	FRANCE	ITALY	PORTUGAL	SLOVENIA
	which are part of the partner network <i>The referring diploma</i>	responsible for the implementation of the IFTS pathway selected for the experimentation	ISEP responsible for the implementation of the pathways selected for the experimentation	School of Catering and Tourism Maribor responsible for the implementation of the pathways selected for the experimentation
The final beneficiaries	Previously realised training pathways were selected for the testing/ experimentation phase	Participants in the IFTS pathway selected for the testing/ experimentation phase	Participants in the pathways in ESPE and ISEP selected for the testing/ experimentation phase	Participants in the pathways in <i>Secondary School of Catering and Tourism Maribor</i> selected for the testing/ experimentation phase

As can be seen, in the project framework, all the relevant actors were involved in the partnership, and wherever not directly involved as project partners or associated partners, they were involved as part of the national institutional networks linked to project partners.

In some context, where a reference structured framework existed, as in the case of France, where the specific partner was not available, the referring national documentation, framework, *Referentielle des Diplome, Referentielle des Metiers*, etc... could be taken into account in the experimentation.

3.2. Methodological approach

The innovative expected outcome of the N.E.T.WORK project lay in the idea of producing an analysis of the different professional profiles agreed on by the partnership for the experimentation and in its declination:

- in Learning Outcomes, in function of their evaluation, validation and recognition during the "certification" processes;
- in Learning Units in terms of the knowledge, skills and competences to be acquired

(qualitative dimension);

- and in the provision and application of credits, both to the L.O. and to units in order to articulate their weight in function of its possible transfer into the various national standards.(quantitative dimension).

Therefore the credits would illustrate the proportion that the unit represents in relation to the qualification, facilitating in this way the transfer of learning outcomes and establishing a reference point that is common to the qualification systems.

To this end the partnership was involved in work to identify and produce specific procedures both for the actuation of the subsequent testing and for the definition of appropriate tools for the registration of the credit recognised for each learning outcome. The partnership therefore proceeded in the parallel correlation of the units for the capitalisation and accumulation of credits with the levels indicated by the EQF.

In this sense, the N.E.T.WORK project, in line with what is provided for in the Community Recommendations, has not called for the determination of procedures and tools which require a modification of the VET systems applied in each partner country nor does it require the design of a new training pathway or a “new” qualification. Its aim, instead, is to identify, beginning with an analysis of the reference context, and share tools and methods for the application of the ECVET principles within already existing pathways and practices in the partner countries. These tools were tested first of all in the pathways existing in the reference territory and, following a philosophy of agreement, rules and methods for the application of the ECVET system were shared in the case of individual mobility.

The work of the partnership began with an analysis of the training contexts in the partner countries, with specific focus on pathways providing the training qualifications of hotel hospitality, and of the ways of assimilating and activating the ECVET system. Thanks to this analysis, the heterogeneousness of the descriptive elements and of the contents emerged with such force that the Learning Outcomes are seen as common elements .

The focus of the ECVET system on learning outcomes was decided, because it allows comparison not only with a vast variety of European training and specialization systems , but also with the most important reference systems for vocational training – the education system and the labour market. According to the evolution of the European training framework, learning outcomes are “declarations about what a student knows, understands and knows how to do, after completing a determined training pathway. These are defined as knowledge, skills and competences.”

The ECVET system is directed towards the individual, that is, it is based on the recognition of

knowledge, skills and competences (KSC) acquired by individual students. The learning outcomes are grouped into modules - Units-, with different characteristics according to the various training systems. The various Units determine the knowledge, skills and competences (KSC), which must be acquired to attain a certain qualification (qualitative dimension) and the importance of the various knowledge, skills and competences (KSC) in relation to the overall/final qualification to be attained (quantitative dimension).

In the ECVET context a clear terminological differentiation has been made between “units” and “modules “.

The term “module” belongs to the area of the pathways, that is, to that of the organisation and conduction of vocational training programmes. A vocational training programme structured in modules is composed of elements which, from an organisational point of view, differ from one another, that is, which must be verified and evaluated separately. In a corresponding way an “entire” vocational training programme is constituted by the accumulation of individual modules.

When speaking of “units”, instead, we have been referring to the area of outcomes, in the sense of parts of qualifications, which could be defined on the basis of knowledge, skills and competences. The “units” can be certified. The identification of training outcomes (even partial) does not exclude non-modular holistic training programmes, although for practical reasons it needs a similar structure for the formal comparison of learning processes.

A unit is a component of a qualification, which is a coherent complex of knowledge, skills and competences that can be evaluated and made valid with a series of associated ECVET points. In principle a qualification includes different units and is formed of a set of units.

In this project, enhanced mobility in the tourism and hospitality sector is seen as a long-term goal. As a first step to support the development of the ECVET system, the partners found it necessary to examine the design and organisation of qualifications in the various countries in order to try and find the elements common to all the programmes. Based on these common elements, the partners identified common learning outcomes.

In a second step, at least one partner in each of the countries involved tested the ECVET model by integrating new or modified training modules - based on the defined common units of learning outcomes – as part of an existing training pathway or active mobility project.

The partners settled on a professional profile which is quite common in all tourism and hospitality management sectors of the partner countries; since all types of hotels, bed and breakfasts or alternative lodging structures need a reception area, the professional profile of a receptionist is a common training pathway and/or professional profile in all countries.

To be able to describe the content of specific sections of the training pathway for receptionists in the four countries in terms of learning outcomes, the partners gathered national data, agreed on a common descriptive matrix, on learning outcome descriptors and common units for the testing phase.

This happened in consecutive phases. In the first phase, the partners analysed the elements characterising the training pathways in the national contexts of each country in two steps and by two different research methods. Each partner carried out:

- Desk research by analysing the existing national repertoires (IFTS systems, EU repertoires, V.A.E. system, etc.), with special focus on the vocational training system;
- and Field research, by conducting field observations and interviews of at least five operators filling these roles (according to hotel classifications identified and shared in the previous desk research).

The analysis was followed by a comparison of the design and organisation of the specific training connected to the qualification profile of a receptionist in Italy, France, Portugal and Slovenia according to the following criteria:

- planning and realisation;
- contents (in terms of knowledge, skills and competence);
- evaluation of learning outcomes;
- validation of learning.

Finally, training profiles were chosen that are equivalent both in terms of formal EQF level (IV-V) and in the number of months of instruction/training (12-15).

For each profile, the macro competences were identified by the partners, on the basis of a common shared framework. This framework defined the least common denominator, or in other words, the minimum shared elements and was organized methodologically in the form of a Matrix providing a first overview on the key learning outcomes of the selected training profiles.

In the next step, a common shared framework of macro-competences was constructed, selecting the elements common to all the profiles.

In a final step, each macro-competence was described in terms of knowledge, skills and competence (Framework KSC), according to the technical specifications annexed to the ECVET-Recommendation which defines learning outcomes as statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do upon completion of a learning process and which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence. It a comparative chart was produced to provide an

overview of the concordance of the units selected with the chosen training pathway in the respective countries. It is obvious that not all learning outcomes summarised in a unit and defined in the KSC matrix, were always present in the respective qualification as offered in the four countries. Since it was not the objective of the project to draw up new and more similar qualifications, this meant that in the experimentation phase only the acquired knowledge, skills and competences foreseen in the respective qualification pathway could be assessed and validated.

Then on the basis of this work, a proposal was set up for the construction of a framework of learning outcomes structured in units with related ECVET credit points – based on the relative weight of the unit.

To develop benchmarks for the allocation of ECVET points, the N.E.T.WORK project partners again undertook research activities. They initiated an online-survey, asking employers about the relative importance of the defined learning outcomes for the performance of employers. On the basis of roughly 450 responses from the partner countries, it turned out that the service-oriented competence (informing and advising guests) was rated as most important while the competence related to internal coordination was rated as least important. Furthermore, the size and structure of the enterprise was a decisive factor; in a little bed & breakfast or small family-owned hotel, receptionists need different skills and competences than receptionists in a big hotel which is part of an international franchise.

Consequently, the results of the research were less helpful for the task of allocating ECVET points than initially hoped for. However, the questionnaire did provide verification that the definition of the competences was clear and helped understand the level of importance assigned to the individual competences by production system itself. This is based on the conviction that the more important the competence and the greater the level of acquisition of these competencies by workers, the easier their mobility will be.

Based on the results and outputs of the previous steps, the partners organised a coordinated phase of “observed” experimentation to be carried out in the countries of the partnership.

The aim of the experimentation phase was to find out how far the students had acquired the defined skills, knowledge and competences in their respective training pathway and to test how these can be assessed and validated.

The experimentation was intended to measure the extent to which learning outcomes are acquired in the respective training system.

At least one partner in each of the countries involved tested the developed model as part of a training pathway or an active mobility project.

An experimentation plan was developed together with a guideline proposing experimentation methods which, on the one hand, corresponded to the ECVET technical specifications and on

the other hand, responded to the situations and needs in each partner country. Experimentation instruments were offered that allowed each partner to carry out an action in conformity with his/her own institutional mission and with the effective areas and typologies of the training processes existing in his/her own context. For instance, an assessment chart was provided, which made it possible to assess the acquired skills, knowledge and competences according to a common grid and templates for the collection of comparable data about the experimentations.

3.3. Procedures for the implementation of ECVET

The N.E.T.WORK Project was designed in a workplan organised in these different workpackages (WP):

WP1- Project management- This WP was aimed at coordinating, managing and monitoring the planned activities and the internal and external communication systems

WP2 - Description and selection of the professional profiles to be tested in the experimentations phase - This WP was aimed at structuring the descriptive outlines containing elements indispensable for the comparison and the definition of common elements/points of the professional profiles selected in the reference work area

WP3 - Sharing and validation of the methods for describing the learning outcomes and units - In this WP the partnership proceeded to defining the guidelines for describing the learning outcomes and units, considering as input the results and products of the preliminary research phase

WP4 -Definition of the professional profiles by Learning Outcomes and Units - This WP was aimed at realising a shared reformulation of the professional profiles analysed and selected in the previous workpackages, by describing the learning outcomes and units related to these figures based on the guidelines mentioned in the previous WP

WP5 - Quantification and attribution of credits points - In this WP, specific points were assigned to the Learning Outcomes, credits distributed among the units and the units that make up the qualification defined

WP6 - Definition of Learning Outcomes verification systems - In this WP the methods and instruments for verifying the learning outcomes were defined so that the partners all used the same instruments and evaluation parameters (indicators) to certify attainment of the learning outcomes.

WP7 - Constitution of an agreement among the partners for the implementation of the experimentation- In order to ensure the systemisation of the test results, an agreement

protocol was drawn up and signed by the partners involved.

WP8 - Fine-tuning the Experimentation Plan - The partnership set up the appropriate synergies and fine-tuning methods for coordinating the experimentations carried out in the partnership countries, on the basis of the results of the previous WPs

WP9 – Experimentation- This WP involved the partners charged with testing the ECVET system in mobility programmes and in long training and qualification pathways which include classroom training and work experience

WP10 - Validation and dissemination of the ECVET system guidelines- The objective of this WP was to guarantee the presence in the ECVET system of factors and elements of sustainability and transferability of the experimentation with a view to integration among systems and social dialogue

WP11 - Project valorisation & dissemination of results - This WP was aimed at valorising and disseminating the project and its outputs to the main and most important hospitality and training sector stakeholders

WP12 - Quality management - This WP was aimed at monitoring the organizational and management performance of the partnership and the various activities planned for communications and for dissemination/promotion/awareness raising

In the first period of project activity, the partnership realised the N.E.T.Work model for the application of the ECVET System; in particular, it:

- analysed the partnership's national contexts (certification systems and training supply regarding the sector of tourism and hospitality management with a particular focus on the reception areas in hotel and alternative lodging structures);
- selected the training profiles, which would be subject to testing, equivalent both in terms of formal EQF level and of the number of years of instruction/training:
 - o Provider of Hospitality & Accommodation in Agrotourism (France)
 - o Tecnico superiore per l'assistenza alla direzione di strutture ricettive (Italy)
 - o Head Receptionist (Portugal)
 - o Receptionist (Slovenia)
- analysed the modular structures of the training pathways in the different countries and identified the related LOs in a KSC (Knowledge, Skills and Competences) Framework for each structure;
- identified five shared Units and inserted the LOs in the KSC format for each shared UNIT;
- agreed on the assigning of credit points (overall and distinctly by single Units) and the differentiated assigning of percentile weights attributed to the LOs within the Units by each partner;
- defined a system for the verification and evaluation of the LOs.



All this work was realised following the indications of the RECOMMENDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) (Text with EEA relevance) (2009/C 155/02) and of ECVET project seminar contributions.

Throughout the development of WP8 (Fine-tuning the Experimentation Plan) the partnership organised the appropriate synergies and methods of coordinating the experimentations to be carried out in the partnership's countries, on the basis of the results of the previous WPs, with the direct objective of promoting (and incrementing) mobility and of consolidating its positive effects in terms of the recognition/acknowledgment of credits.

At least one partner in each of the countries involved tested the ECVET model as part of training pathways. In this phase the partners who carry out a central role in the national territory of reference, such as professional/vocational training agencies and institutions with a ready supply of training pathways/courses of specific qualification in the tourism industry, played a highly important and strategic role.

For this reason, the partners CST and SV&CO collected all the outputs and elaborated a comprehensive set of tools composed of the three main deliverables produced during WP7 and WP8:

1. Formal agreements (Deliverable nr. 7);
2. N.E.T.WORK Experimentation Plan (Deliverable nr. 8.1)
3. Guidelines for the application of ECVET (Deliverable nr. 8.2)

Among these tools, in particular, the N.E.T.WORK Experimentation Plan and Guidelines were composed of key-documents for the actual experimentation of ECVET N.E.T.WORK model in the partners' national contexts. These included:

- Consistency of Units and LO of the WP5 framework with Units and LO of the experimentation pathway
- KSC Framework
- Outline of the Units and comparative chart of the LOs
- Grid for verification of the training contents of the pathway according to the ECVET system
- Verification and Evaluation Method Grid

These documents were used by the partners for the experimentation and, following the Guidelines elaborated to co-ordinate the testing phase, all the methods and instruments defined by the partnership were fully respected. In fact the fields of application, roles, timing,

expected results and direct and indirect target groups were all clearly outlined in the Guidelines.

From the context analysis, conducted using the output from WP 2 and WP 3, a certain heterogeneity in the practices and VET instruments used in the partnership countries has emerged, as well as a differentiation of functions and missions among the subjects involved as partners .

Nevertheless, this has brought added value to the project for two orders of reasons:

- 1) it has faithfully mirrored the real situation among the member nations of the European Union;
- 2) it has allowed the N.E.T.WORK Project to identify and experiment methods for putting the ECVET system into effect involving not just the certifying agencies but also those who operate "upstream" and "downstream" of the certification process.

For these reasons and on the basis of the joint consideration reached during the 3rd trans-national partnership meeting held in Ljubljana, CST and SV&CO proposed and concurred with the partnership some experimentation methods and tools in order to:

- allow each partner to carry out the experimentations in conformity with his/her own institutional mission and with the effective areas and typologies of training processes existing in his/her own context;
- offer, by means of experimental evidence, indications to the Agency that monitors the work of the partnership, about the possibility of different subjects acting with various capacities in the sector of vocational education and training working in agreement under the ECVET system;
- demonstrate that the same system can provide – even within the differentiated VET processes already existing and in use in the reference countries - homogeneous forms of application, that are able to involve all the levels of actuation present to date.

This working document was preliminary to the presentation of the experimentation plan which, as foreseen by the project (cfr. WP8: Output 8.1), contained detailed information on:

- the training pathways chosen for testing, and their structuring consistent with the framework of LOs and Units already agreed on by the partners .
- the expected results;
- the organisation (timing, resources, targets, etc.);
- the subjects (learners, students, structures, pathways, etc.) involved and their related

roles;

- support activities;
- monitoring activities.

This document, once validated, has also represented the technical reference for the stipulation of the "Formal Agreements" (WP7).

As part of the N.E.T.WORK project an "observed experimentation" of the pathways identified by the partners in their respective Formal Agreements was conducted, by applying to the various training pathways the set of tools produced in the previous comparison and coordination phases of the partnership. Specifically, the main key-references were the KSC Framework and the synthesis of WP 5 (See Deliverable 8.2.). Concerning the identification of coherent training pathways active in the time period considered, some of the partners were able to activate the experimentation as part of the pathways analysed in WP 2/3, while others had to make agreements with other subjects who provide similar pathways in the same area of the study. It has been stressed that the experimentation could even be conducted on pathways that are not directly handled by the partner. In fact, since this was meant to be an "observed" experimentation, it was not obligatorily connected with the direct involvement of the partner in the training pathway management. This management could therefore be entrusted to "external" training structures able to guarantee:

- a. the conduction of the training pathway in the time period foreseen by the project (between November 2010 and April 2011);
- b. the supply of training similar to the reference area of the project and which could be brought back to the KSC system.

Therefore it was sufficient to identify, within the various "Formal Agreements", an adequate structure able to guarantee the commitment of an educational co-ordinator and of the related trainers/teachers to applying the project experimentation guidelines and tools elaborated in the Project during their standard training activity.

Both in the case of direct management of the training by the partner and in that in which the testing was carried out on pathways provided by third parties, a Formal Agreement was nevertheless to be signed, following the model prepared (see Deliverable n.7 – Formal Agreement), containing the Experimentation Plan.

Concerning the activation of the observed experimentation process, this provided for:

- the "interpretation", on the part of the trainers/teachers, of the training content of the pathways carried out in terms of KSC (output WP3) and Units/LOs (output WP5), using the

grids prepared by CST and SV&CO (See Deliverable 8.2. Guidelines - Attachment nr. 05 "Grid for verification of the training contents of the pathway according to the ECVET system")

- the transfer of these contents to the framework of the LOs and Units defined according to the outputs of WP5 and WP6
- the calculation of credit points starting with the scores established for the LOs in the output of WP5
- an explanation of the verification and evaluation methods, following the grid prepared by CST and SV&CO (See Deliverable 8.2. Guidelines - Attachment nr. 06 "Verification and Evaluation Method Grid")
- the issuing to each participant in the experimentation of "certification" following a format common to the partners which has been agreed upon on the basis of the first feedback from the experimentation itself. In the "certification", the results of the observed experimentation have been indicated in the terms of the ECVET system (Units, LOs, Credit points).

The experimentation, planned to last 7 months (that is, scheduled to start at the beginning of November 2010 and end by 30 April 2011), effectively lasted between 3 and 5 months, excluding preliminary activities with the hosting institutions which, in some cases, were contacted at the end of the preceding year (see Paragraph 3 below). It was supposed to be applied to approximately 30 subjects for each partner, who could belong to a single course or more than one courses. However the evaluation had to be carried out by identifying the results distinctly for each participant.

The testing has been monitored in qualitative and quantitative terms.

- As far as the quantitative data are concerned, each partner Actuator of the experimentation drafted at least two "activity records" – one by 31 December 2010 and one by 15 April 2011 - following the format prepared by CST and SV&CO.
- As far as the qualitative data are concerned, at the end of the experimentation the operators involved received an "appreciation test", also prepared by CST and SV&CO, aimed at determining evaluations of efficiency and effectiveness regarding the products/instruments tested.

The partners directly involved in the testing phase were:

P2- Province of Perugia – IT –

P5 – Association FRANCE EUROPEA – FR –

P6 – CPI – National Institute for Vocational Education and Training - SI –

P7 – Consultis – Entrepreneurship Consultancy Ltd – PT -

The qualitative transnational comparative analysis of data reported in the national reports, in relation to the operational planning of the experimentation, has highlighted these features which have influenced the process of managing and implementing the testing phase:

- 1) the nature of the partner, its “institutional dimension” and its specific field of expertise
- 2) the operational networks of the involved partners
- 3) the level of interest and involvement of VET institutions and teachers/trainers/VET operators
- 4) the appeal/attractiveness of the specific elective training module for reception work, and consequently the number of VET courses available for the experimentation
- 5) the funding available to support the testing phase
- 6) the availability/lack of mobility experiences in progress or that may be activated during the testing phase.

Concerning the first two features, from the comparative analysis it emerges that, when the partner is an “institutional body” such as in the case of P2- Province of Perugia – IT – and P6 – CPI – National Institute for Vocational Education and Training - SI –, the operational planning of the testing phase was facilitated, on the part of the Province of Perugia in Italy by a direct and focused selection of the institution and courses to be considered for the experimentation with 100% involvement success rate, while, on the part of CPI in Slovenia, starting with the analysis of the whole National network of public high schools available to the partner, and following a direct and focused selection of the two institutions and courses available for the experimentation, with a 50% success rate in the involvement of one out of two contacted institutions.

On the part of the other two partners, where the “institutional dimension” was weaker since, in the case of Consultis, we have a private consulting agency, while, in the case of Association FRANCE EUROPEA we have a network of VET institutions working in the agricultural field, the key-elements were:

- the consolidated networks of VET institutions and strong previous relationships and collaborations for Consultis in Portugal, which, working with the educational and training actors of secondary vocational or regular schools, training centres, polytechnics and universities, found it easier to use its institutional network in order to proceed in the direct selection of two institutions which might be appropriate and interested in the experimentation. In the process, the partner identified and contacted two organisations

which immediately accepted the challenge of developing the experimentation under Consultis supervision: ESPE – Escola Profissional de Espinho (VET Institution) and ISESP – Instituto Superior de Espinho (Higher Education Institution). Thus, the contacts resulted to be very easy and efficient and the agreements were promptly established, mainly due to the good relations maintained with these two educational institutions after more than six years of collaboration in training projects;

- the connection to the “Rural tourism” National Institutional network, managed by the Ministry of Agriculture, in the case of Association FRANCE EUROPEA, which has filled the gap between the specific expertise of the partner (in agriculture) and the specific elective training module for reception work, by identifying the 2 modules in rural tourism managed by agricultural VET institutions taking part in Association FRANCE EUROPEA

Concerning the third feature, related to the level of interest and involvement of VET institutions and teachers/trainers/VET operators, this was a rather critical aspect in two cases: in the testing carried out in France and in Slovenia. In the French case, difficulties were mostly due to the fact that for political and economic reasons the training centre did not continue to organise courses during the time of the experimentation and so it was not possible to involve learners and specifically organised pathways, but only teachers/trainers.

In the Slovenian case, since they are not an educational institution, they had to contact schools and teachers who are teaching in the VET programme to ask them to implement the testing with their students, filling in the grids for each student according to the teaching and assessment plan prepared by the teachers for each module. The result was that if the school is not involved in international projects they do not see the purpose of it, and teachers perceive it only as an extra work load.

Concerning the fourth feature, related to the appeal/attractiveness of the specific elective training module for reception work, and consequently the number of VET courses available for the experimentation, this was a rather critical aspect, specifically: even greater problems emerged for the French and the Slovenian partner, in the first case no courses in rural tourism were offered during the testing period, and in Slovenia the problem emerged of a lack of interest among students for this type of programmes, so schools did not have enough students to offer all the elective modules, and sometimes it happened that some schools did not have any students attending the module for reception work.

Strictly linked to some of the issues emerged in the previous points, the fifth feature, concerning the funding available to support the testing phase, has been directly or indirectly highlighted by almost all the partners involved in the testing.

In fact, the Slovenian partner highlighted that the institutions and teachers involved perceived

testing as an extra work load and the lack of any international project which involved them directly in the testing has been perceived as a weakness.

In France, “economic” reasons are behind the lack of any on-going training pathway to carry out the experimentation.

The Italian partner had, in any case, the chance to involve only one IFTS training pathway, and shortage of funding has been indirectly highlighted in relation to the next feature.

The situation and environment for the testing phase in Portugal benefited from two aspects: the fact that the two institutions involved were “private” institutions, and the fact that the two courses taken as case studies for the experimentation were, in one case, funded by the ESF and National funds of the Operation Programme for Human Potential 2007/2013 (see below next paragraph for details), and in the other paid for privately by the students.

The last feature, related to the availability/lack of mobility experiences, in progress or that could be activated during the testing phase, has been a major concern especially for the Italian partner. In fact, one of the limits of the ECVET piloting action is the fact that there was not enough funding for including and testing an actual mobility experience, and in the specific case, not enough time to organise it among the project partners and with other channels, as in the case of the Italian partner.

3.4. Operational Tools

The N.E.T.WORK project intended to coordinate, redirect and integrate within the ECVET framework those processes, procedures and tools which, in the current situation of the partner countries, have been recognised as effectively testable and which can be attributed to that system. The partnership has been able to bring about:

- a systemic, shared and coordinated reference framework for the development and testing of ECVET;
- the definition, validation and recognition – within the diversified specific features of training paths (formal and informal) effectively existing in the chosen areas of qualification – of congruent and measurable “modules” (learning outcomes and units), valid for all the partner countries
- the congruence of certifications related to the ECVET system and their recognition within the formalised systems.

The core of the project, which is centred on a methodological and operational prospective based on the systemic integration into ECVET of experiences matured or underway in the partner countries, was therefore the **design of specific operational tools able to facilitate, within the ECVET system, the common definition, delivery, recognition and validation of modular training pathways**. These have been tested in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses in supporting credit transfer and accumulation as well as mobility and employability.

With this in mind, the project has realised this set of products:

Guidelines for the verification and evaluation of Learning Outcomes: this product called for an approach and instruments that allow flexible recognition, in function of certification and verification, of the "products" of learning (in the specific case going beyond a strictly quantitative approach).

Credit recognition systems substantially fulfill two tasks:

A. they measure quantities, for example in relation to the entire training programme (a sort of "accumulation function") or in relation to the units and learning outcomes that compose the qualification;

B. they facilitate quantitative exchanges among the parties (exchange or transfer function)

The measure of a credit depends on how the credits are defined and certified, for example in accordance:

- with the types/themes or disciplinary areas;
- with learning outcomes;
- with the training place;
- with the learning methods.

The most important aspect, going beyond the type of approach, is that the objectives of certification are declined in terms of acquired competences.

Therefore the guidelines call for an approach and instruments that allow flexible recognition, in function of certification and verification, of the "products" of learning (in the specific case going beyond a strictly quantitative approach).

The information provided in the guidelines made constant reference to the existing national systems of verification and evaluation with an eye to the sustainability and transferability of the methodological approach and of the instruments proposed by the partnership, guaranteeing in any case the trans-national approval of the elements.

The direct users of these guidelines are the partners' experts/researchers and final users are:

- VET institutions and operators
- potential learners/students;
- learners/students involved in the experimentation.

Descriptive outline of credit points for the analysed qualifications and the related units: Credit points, expressed in number form, were associated with each unit referring to a qualification; these points supply information in relation to the value represented by the unit itself in relation to a qualification. A different number may be assigned to the same unit afferent to two figures chosen for testing according to the Learning outcomes that compose the unit of reference. In the descriptive outline, which represented the indispensable work basis for the shared application of projects expected results, the partnership specified that the characteristic features of the professional qualifications and related units and credit points assigned them, would not depend on the differences existing in the learning methodologies.

The direct users of these descriptive outlines were the partners' experts/researchers and final users are:

- VET institutions and operators
- potential learners/students;
- learners/students involved in the experimentation.

Formal agreements: the agreements were confirmed using the models and instruments made available by the European ECVET system. In the agreements, besides citing the instruments and operational methods constructed by the partnership and described in the guidelines, the details of the testing were also defined as well as the roles of each partner organisation. Parallel to the agreements among members of the partnership we hypothesised the formulation of agreement protocols extended to other institutional subjects and training agencies of the territories involved.

Specifically, the agreements were formally produced in the partnership working language (ENG) as well as in the four partner languages.

N.E.T.WORK experimentation plan: The experimentation plan of the ECVET system of the "N.E.T. WORK" project contains detailed information on:

- the training pathways chosen for testing and their structuring in units and Learning Outcomes;
- the expected results;
- the organisation (timing, resources, targets, etc.);
- the subjects (learners, students, structures, pathways, etc.) involved and their related roles;
- support activities;
- monitoring activities.

The partners' experts/researchers were the direct users of the experimentation plan and final users of the model are:

- VET institutions and operators
- potential learners/students;
- learners/students involved in the experimentation;
- tourism and hospitality sector operators and institutions.

Guidelines for the application of ECVET: The experimentation was structured according to the guidelines in such a way that all the methods and instruments defined by the partnership in the preceding WPs were fully respected. In fact, the fields of application, roles, timing, expected results and direct and indirect target groups have all been outlined in the guidelines. The structure of the guidelines and the variables contained therein were drawn up in order to constitute a "work-tool" for the partnership that is also useful for the extension of testing to other subjects, territories, sectors.

The direct users of the guidelines were the partners' experts/researchers and final users are:

- VET institutions and operators
- potential learners/students;
- learners/students involved in the experimentation;
- tourism and hospitality sector operators and institutions.

3.5. Areas and conditions of application of the proposed methodologies and tools

In the light of the full presentation of the project development and characteristics provided in this chapter, these last two chapters are meant to introduce a critical analysis of project outcomes and results, reporting, above all, what emerged from the experimentation comparative analysis.

The **qualitative results** of the experimentations carried out in the partner countries, were monitored by collecting data in a national final summary report format filled out by each responsible partner the end of the testing phase.

In these National reports, the partners were asked to report in a discursive manner some qualitative elements in relation to the results of the experimentation, specifically:

- *to describe of the results of the experimentation, commenting the filled-in grids (Grid for the verification of the training contents of the pathway according to the ECVET system-*

Attachment 05 and Verification and Evaluation method Grid – Attachment 06).

- to report on the level of comprehension, interest and satisfaction shown by those involved (trainers, coordinators and teachers), briefly indicating whether the involvement of the operators in the experimentation was easy/difficult, and if it wasn't easy, explaining why (ex. timing, insufficient interest in the topic, training methodology, etc)

National data elaborated at transnational level, has produced these **results**:

RESULTS OF THE EXPERIMENTATION	FRANCE	ITALY	PORTUGAL	SLOVENIA	TRANSNATIONAL
<i>Use of the grids filled out</i>	Clear and not too complicated	Easy	Easy, clear and innovative	Punctually suitable for some of the units	Easy and clear
<i>Level of comprehension shown by those involved (trainers, coordinators and teachers)</i>	AVERAGE	HIGH	HIGH	QUITE GOOD	QUITE HIGH
<i>Level of interest and satisfaction shown by the professionals involved</i>	AVERAGE	HIGH	VERY HIGH	AVERAGE	QUITE GOOD
<i>Was the involvement of the operators in the experimentation easy/difficult?</i>	AVERAGE	EASY	AVERAGE	QUITE DIFFICULT	AVERAGE
Typology of difficulties shown	It was not easy to fully engage staff in the project, due to lack of support	NONE	Difficult, due to the operators' lack of knowledge about the context/legal framework (LOs, EQF, NQF) Continuing theoretical and practical support was necessary to better understand the approach methodology	Insufficient interest in the topic, lack of incentives for teaching staff and institutions to participate.	In general: - Not really easy to fully engage staff in the project, due to lack of preparation/ technical background, or lack of incentives to take part in

RESULTS OF THE EXPERIMENTATION	FRANCE	ITALY	PORTUGAL	SLOVENIA	TRANSNATIONAL
					<p>the project</p> <p>- The process has required the partners responsible for the experimentations to provide extra-support activities for the teaching staff involved.</p>

The **transnational comparative analysis of results** reported in national reports highlighted these features:

- with regard to the **results of the experimentation and the use of grids and tools** defined by the N.E.T.WORK Project to implement the testing phase, there was a general consensus of the partners in declaring them suitable, easy and clear, with some distinctions on the part of the Italian and Slovenian partners in terms of their not always punctual and immediate adaptability to the situations met during the experimentation. Specifically:
 - in **France**, the guidelines were perceived to be well written, explaining very well the way in which the experimentation should be carried out. The analysis grid was clear and using them was not too complicated, especially for VET practitioners. The documentation lacks reports from the various meetings or a summary document containing exchanges of information and opinions as well as the decisions taken during these group meetings (particularly in relation to the work plan).
 - in **Italy**, notwithstanding initial difficulty in linking the Network Project to the IFTS course "*Tecnico superiore per l'assistenza alla direzione di strutture ricettive*" (Advanced technician for assistance to reception structures management), the Province of Perugia drew up their experimentation plan and found, on working with the VET operators, that the experimentation tools were very similar to those used in the Umbria Region for the

design and implementation of training activities, as well as for the evaluation of the LOs; therefore the results were very positive

- in **Portugal**, there were no problems reported in compiling the grids. In fact, the grid for verification of the training contents was quite an innovative tool for the operators as they hadn't ever seen a monitoring document such this one and they felt very comfortable using it. The operators considered the LO description in terms of KSC very useful, not only in practice but also in theoretical terms. It represented a top down approach for them. Regarding the grid for the verification and evaluation methods, the operators were used to filling out a quite similar grid in their pedagogical activities. In fact, the Portuguese official training path used in the project included several suggestions for the verification and evaluation process, namely the evaluation criteria as well as a list of tools to be used;
 - in **Slovenia**, the contents coverage of units in the concerned programme resulted more suitable in units 1, 2, 3, 5 and less for unit 4. Moreover, of all the identified lectured knowledge, skills and competences, 27 were not evaluated separately. As for using the evaluation and verification methods, the most commonly used in the programme were: written tests; closed-ended questions, open-ended questions in units 1 and 2; and Case solutions, semi-structured interviews in units 1,2,3; while check-list of observations and technical reports were most commonly used in units 3 and 5.
- as far the **level of comprehension, interest and satisfaction shown by the professionals involved (trainers, coordinators and teachers)** is concerned, there was a general consensus of the partners in declaring the level of comprehension quite high and the level of interest and satisfaction suitable and quite good, with some weaknesses highlighted by the Slovenian partner in terms of lack of incentives to raise the interest and justify the extra workload perceived by the operators involved. More specifically:
- in **France**, "involvement wasn't difficult at all but by the way that they were "near" the main objectives, it was not easy to engage fully in the project. In fact, the ECVET approach was the main interest for this experimentation, not the support at all."
 - in **Italy**, once the problem of the different terminology used to refer to the same 'objects' was overcome, it was relatively easy to use the ECVET and N.E.T.WORK Project tools. It should be remembered in considering these outcomes, that this year the Umbria Region fully adopted the theoretical models of ECVET, and the Province of Perugia was adapting their own tools (project formats, guidelines for the vocational training pathways planning, etc..) to the regional guidelines. For these reasons the involvement of teaching and training staff and operators was very easy and the level of comprehension very

good, therefore the results were very positive;

- in **Portugal**, the involvement of the operators in the experimentation was at the same time easy and difficult. Easy, due to the motivation and interest shown by the professionals involved, as well as the ease of use of the tools. Difficult, due to the lack of operators' knowledge about the EQF in general and ECVET in particular. There was no problem linked to the approach methodology, but just a lack of knowledge which the partner tried to overcome with continuing theoretical and practical support. The level of comprehension was continually increasing, but the level of interest was always high. After ending the experimentation process, the operators showed a high level of satisfaction towards the experience. This interest and satisfaction with the success of the experience encouraged some operators to request from their heads of pedagogical committees authorisation to introduce some experimental changes in several monitoring documents used in their schools.
- in **Slovenia**, the level of comprehension, interest and satisfaction of the involved teachers was quite good after the initial meeting, although the involvement of the teachers/operators was quite difficult. In fact, teachers perceived testing as an extra workload, with no incentives. Also at an institutional level, if the school is not involved in international projects they have difficulty understanding the purpose of it.

S.W.O.T. Analysis of the Results of the experimentation - Summary table

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The set of guidelines, grids and tools to implement the testing phase resulted to be suitable, easy, clear and, to some extent, innovative 2. Systems are beginning to adapt to ECVET rules, such as in the case of the Province of Perugia 3. A very good commitment of responsible partners in accompanying and supporting the experimentation 4. Instruments and methodologies which can be applied even to systems that have assimilated the ECVET guidelines in different ways. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Lack of incentives to motivate the teaching staff in their involvement in the testing implementation 6. Teaching/training staff unprepared to deal with the key-issues of the ECVET system (LOs, EQF levels, NQF, competence-based training, etc..) 7. limited time available did not permit the application of the experimentation from the planning phases of the training paths but only when they were being delivered 8. Not having provided a form of training for sector trainers and operators
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong opportunity to validate the experimentation results and integrate it at VET System level 2. Up-grading of teaching/training skills of the VET practitioners involved and of teaching/training staff 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The risk of VET institutions and teachers/trainers/operators remaining outside the ECVET system and its opportunities

3.6. Sustainability of results achieved by the NET Work project

As stated before, beyond the single project results or the results of the individuals/learners, much of the work necessary to implement the ECVET mechanism in any single experimentation deserves a much higher impact on institutions involved and, indirectly and in the long term, in the systems, contexts and/or sectors involved, mainly with respect to repeatability, transferability and adaptability of outcomes and results.

In the light of the full presentation of the project development and characteristics provided in this chapter, these last paragraphs report what has emerged from the experimentation comparative analysis in terms of portability of the project results and outputs in possible future experimentations.

The focus was on the opportunity of repeating the specific experimentation, in the framework of the same given contexts, institutions and conditions, rather than evaluating the possible:

- **transferability** of the outcomes and results (procedures, methodologies, operational tools, frameworks, format of MoU and of Learning Agreements, etc...) of the specific experimentation, in similar contexts and/or sectors and in relation to similar qualifications or parts of qualifications, in the framework of similar given contexts, institutions and conditions;
- **adaptability** of the outcomes and results (procedures, methodologies, operational tools, frameworks, format of MoU and of Learning Agreements, etc...) of the specific experimentation, in different contexts and/or sectors and in relation to other qualifications or parts of qualifications, in the framework of different contexts, institutions and conditions.

In the National reports, the partners were asked to briefly and descriptively list a maximum of 3 Strengths and 3 Weaknesses of the experimentation, providing their own considerations in relation to the strengths and weaknesses of the application of the ECVET system to their National reference system.

National data elaborated at transnational level, has produced these results:

Referring Country	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
FRANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approach by objectives in vocational training with organisation by “competences”, “skills” and knowledge. ▪ Consistency of the gateways for training pathways that can be established between partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Our “alternative” position in the project (a “small” part of activities in tourism) ▪ Question about “professional identity” between “Head Receptionist” and “farmer” ▪ Vocational Training Courses support for experimentation concern very few training centres and depends on the financing of local institutions (Regional Council)
ITALY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involvement of VET Operators ▪ Once the problem of the different terminology used to refer to the same 'objects' was overcome, it was relatively easy to use the ECVET and N.E.T.WORK Project tools. ▪ This year the Umbria Region has fully adopted the theoretical models of ECVET, and the Province of Perugia is adapting their own tools (project formats, guidelines for the vocational training pathways planning, etc..) to the regional guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The greatest difficulty in ECVET model lies in the necessary matching of the description of a working task with the description of the training process that will be necessary to train a person in order to “perform” the specific working task. ▪ It seems that there is a certain concept of “redundancy” in the ECVET tools (L.O., competences, skills), that complicates the work of comparison among different countries and different learning pathways. we should severely simplify ECVET terminology and its conceptual tools, in order to better understand each other and rapidly realise a wide learners mobility. ▪ The description of the professional profile (units/ competences) should be clearly distinguished from the description of the learning process (LOs, knowledge, skills).
PORTUGAL	<p>1. Innovation The N.E.T.Work project was the only link to ECVET of the two educational institutions involved and the tools provided were the first ones conceived to work in this context and therefore considered very innovative and useful.</p> <p>2. Ease of Use of the Tools The tools provided by N.E.T.Work were considered very practical and handy, easily transferable to other vocational areas and learning environments. In fact, with the expression “tools”, the operators include all the innovative tools for them, from the description of qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes, highlighting knowledge, skills and competences, the allocation of credit points to the units, and the other practical tools which facilitate the implementation.</p>	<p>1. Lack of experience / knowledge of teachers and trainers concerning Learning Outcomes, EQF and even NQF – National Qualification Framework Due to the innovation of N.E.T.Work, the lack of knowledge and experience of teachers and trainers regarding the project context - Learning Outcomes, EQF, ECVET - was the main weakness of the experimentation. This weakness was overcome through an on-going monitoring and support activity developed on a weekly basis. We are of the opinion that other problems will arise if the application of the tools involves transnational mobility but this was not an issue for the N.E.T.Work project.</p> <p>2. Description of qualifications in</p>

Referring Country	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
		<p>terms of units of learning outcomes This was not a weakness for this project, as the training path chosen resulted from a partnership established by the parallel sector-related systems¹². However, the background documents – description of qualifications in terms of KSC – will be a problem and constitute a weakness of the application of the ECVET system whenever the training path will not be a result of a joint national effort.</p>
SLOVENIA	<p>1. as a national institute for VET, CPI has the chance to have feedback on how well the national standards are incorporated into the school curriculum</p> <p>2. The survey was performed by school teachers who also teach some of the contents in the programme, so they had a good understanding of the contents and knew the pupils</p> <p>3. the school perceived this experiment as a possibility to strengthen their mobility efforts</p>	<p>1. since CPI is not a school but a national institute for VET, they depended on the willingness of teachers to cooperate with them in the testing</p> <p>2. as this programme was being implemented over 3 years, CPI could evaluate only part of the programme</p> <p>3. because the mobility of the school's pupils is closely tied to funding it is difficult for them to implement mobility programmes if they do not acquire sufficient founding</p>

From **transnational comparative analysis of strengths and weaknesses** identified by the partners involved in the experimentation in their national reports the following issues have emerged:

- concerning **strengths**, the partners opinions converged towards these main issues:
 - the approach of ECVET by KSC – Knowledge, Skills and Competences – has proved to be functional to the whole preparatory work of the N.E.T.WORK project and its testing phase;
 - the tools were clear, easy to use and innovative, foreshadowing a possibility of further use in similar contexts. We must also report some initiatives deriving from the strengths identified above. This was evidenced particularly by the Portuguese partner. In fact, Consultis has been requested to develop some meetings with other trainers and teachers not directly involved in the experimentation in order to explain the ECVET system and the methodological approach of the experimentation. In addition, some monitoring tools that are usually used by ESPE and ISESP, the two institutions involved in the testing phase, were adapted according to the ECVET N.E.T.Work experimentation tools;
 - the testing has demonstrated enough consistency to establish some gateways between

¹² Tourism of Portugal - Ministry of Economy, Institute for Employment and Vocational Training - Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity – and General Directorate for Vocational Training -Education Ministry.

different training pathways and different national contexts of the participating partners countries;

- the experimentation has been perceived by most of the VET professionals involved as an opportunity to better understand the on-going innovation in VET systems. This has been particularly strong in the testing carried out in **Portugal**, also thanks to a particular context situation. In fact, on 23rd July 2009, the Decree n°782/2009 was published which regulates the National Qualifications Framework and defines national qualification levels, following the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23rd April 2008. The application of this National Qualifications Framework entered in force on 1st October 2010. During this *vacatio legis* period, educational institutions hadn't prepare themselves for the NQF and thus the school year 2010/2011 served as an experimental year. During this period, no official documentation about ECVET was published nor was an ECVET National Contact Point nominated for Portugal. So, the educational communities in general were without any kind of knowledge and information regarding EQF and ECVET, even concerning its focuses on implementing an EU-wide credit recognition system for VET. That is why the N.E.T.WORK project experimentation proposed has contributed to shedding light on such a core issue for training and teaching staff;
 - the experimentation was perceived by most of the VET professionals involved as an opportunity to innovate the system and test the functioning of National Qualification Frameworks and Standards. This was particularly felt by the Portuguese and Slovenian partners;
 - the possibility of strengthening future mobility efforts;
- concerning **weaknesses**, the partners' opinions converged towards these main issues:
- there are still persisting barriers and difficulties in applying the ECVET system in those contexts where VET systems and qualification descriptions/standards are not yet based on units and/or learning outcomes, or wherever training pathways are not the result of a joint national effort. This has been particularly stressed in the testing carried out in **Portugal**. In fact the partner highlighted that, assuming that ECVET focuses on implementing an EU-wide credit recognition system for VET and that it aims to give people greater control over their individual learning experiences and make it more attractive to move between different countries and different learning environments, one of the pre-requisites to efficiency would be the national standards. In Portugal, this problem is being gradually solved by the National Qualifications Catalogue, a strategic management tool for non-higher education qualifications which integrates the National

Qualifications System¹³. However, whenever a system meets another system where this pre-requisite is missing, or is not properly implemented, problems may arise in developing any ECVET experimentation, and if the application of the tools involves transnational mobility experiences, this becomes even harder;

- the lack of experience and knowledge of teaching and training staff and VET operators concerning some basic concepts such as: competence based teaching/training, units and Learning Outcomes, National Qualification Frameworks and standards, European Qualification Framework, Standards and Levels;
- the testing phase lacked real mobility experiences to fully implement the experimentation.

4. Conclusions

As part of the testing it has been possible to “simulate” what should take place in a phase of full assimilation of the ECVET system, that is a “clear commitment on the part of the competent Bodies and institutions which provide the service, formalised in every country at various levels”.

This involvement has already been amply demonstrated in the Bologna process for higher education (HE), in which the explicit voluntary commitment has fostered the implementation of the ECTS system which, following a pilot phase conducted by the European Commission, is by now an integrating component of the higher education system of the majority of European nations.

As provided in the European Recommendations, the methodological process defined for the testing, as well as the tools have been constructed and later applied in compliance with a series of principles, rules and conventions essential for their implementation, but at the same time characterised by the greatest flexibility in their application.

The N.E.T.WORK project methodologies and tools were conceived in such a way that, besides being essentially flexible and sustainable, they render the ECVET system user-friendly and, since they respond to the real needs of real people, they will be used.

The testing has allowed us to identify strengths and weaknesses with direct reference both to the tool kit and to the ECVET system in its more general structure. Some considerations have been indicated below which offer ideas for the improvement of project output and indications about the conditions necessary for a real application of the ECVET system.

¹³ The Catalogue has been developed in line with the work of implementing the European Qualifications Framework - EQF and even the National Qualifications Framework

S.W.O.T. Analysis of Results and Impacts - Summary table

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The dimension and specific field of expertise of the partner - Availability of institutional and/or operational networks of the involved partners - The set of guidelines, grids and tools to implement the testing phase resulted as suitable, easy to use, clear and, to some extent, innovative - A very good commitment of responsible partners in accompanying and supporting the experimentation - The high total number of beneficiaries involved - Availability of homogeneous EQF levels of the VET pathways - Systems start to be adapted to ECVET rules, such as in the case of the Province of Perugia - Comparison and sharing of the methodologies for the definition of competences. - Reinforcement of common elements among different systems for the description of qualifications and learning pathways - Construction of a network among subjects operating in analogous systems in different territorial contexts which share the methodology and tools proposed in the testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching/training staff unprepared to deal with the key-issues of ECVET system (LOs, EQF levels, NQF, competences based training, etc..) - Lack of incentives to motivate the teaching staff in their involvement in the testing - The lack of funding available to support the testing phase - The small number of institution/pathways involved - The inexistence of actual mobility experiences in progress or that could be activated during the testing phase. - Complexity of the passage from a system based on the recognition of entry credits through the assessment of competences to one based on "<i>learning outcomes</i>" - Difficult comparison of professional standards, training standards, evaluation standards and recognition/certification standards among systems - Difficulty establishing common procedural standards and univocal methods for the recognition of credits - Difficulty of application in contexts not based on learning outcomes - Difficulty in linking up systems with other countries - Complexity of the processes of verification, recognition and validation of learning and the variety of validation systems - Difficulty getting the competent institutions involved to amplify the impact on a system-wide level - Testing applied only in the delivery phase and not in the design and planning of training pathways - Application and testing only of competences gained in a formal way

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong opportunity to validate the experimentation results and integrate it at VET System level - Wide opportunity to disseminate the ECVET outcomes - Up-grading of teaching/training skills of the VET practitioners involved and teaching/training staff - Rich heterogeneousness of the education and training systems - Opportunity to learn about different cultural and professional contexts, for support of the promotion of "mutual trust" necessary to facilitate the transition/integration between different systems and training contexts - Opportunity for discussion among the institutional actors and those actually working in the field of validation of learning outcomes - Occasion for the promotion of a shared culture of transparency of learning outcomes and competences - Improvement in the quality of education and training systems and support in systems innovation - Opportunity for recognition of learning outcomes on a national and transnational level - Laying foundations for geographical, and professional mobility and mobility between training systems - If "mainstreamed", the application of the tools in the medium-long range could be less costly - Capitalisation and exchange of the ECVET project testing (sharing, possibility of transferring the work methods and competence analysis tools to different sectors and professional profiles, MoU format and <i>Learning Agreements</i>) - Testing the project results in mobility pathways - Development of up-dating pathways for IFP operators on <i>competence based</i> training planning for ECVET purposes 	<p>ON AN OPERATIONAL LEVEL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The risk for VET institutions and teachers/trainers/operators of remaining outside of the ECVET system and its opportunities - The recent low attractiveness of the specific elective training module for reception work, and consequently the shortage of VET courses available for the experimentation (only in Slovenia) - Application limited to the LdV Mobility experience (mobility not included in institutionalised pathways, diversity in the procedures for managing mobility) - Costs of the operation, organisational and logistical problems, complexity of procedures - Experimental level of the project not yet able to impact the organisational and system orders <p>ON A LEVEL OF VET SYSTEMS GOVERNANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different development levels of the national qualification systems - In some national contexts work on the national qualifications framework and on adaptation to EQF standards and levels is still in the planning phase and has not been assimilated at an operational level - Difficulty integrating the operational plan with the system plan - Difficulty with the recognition of individual competences, especially those acquired in informal/non formal contexts - Legislative limitations which do not make LO validation easy

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6. ATTACHMENTS: Tools of the NET Work Project



DESCRIPTIVE OUTLINE OF CREDIT POINTS FOR THE ANALYSED QUALIFICATIONS AND THE RELATED UNITS (OUTPUT n. 5)

GUIDELINES FOR THE VERIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES (OUTPUT n. 6.1)

The work process

We proceeded to analyse and compare the following intermediate products:

- KSC
- Pathway
- LO and Units

The intermediate products produced by the partners have shown a diversity of training pathways among the partner countries; specifically the content assigned to the 5 Units (defined according to the KSC validated together) differ for "size" and EQF level.

Since, as mentioned above, the purpose of this project is to test ECVET procedures and instruments on existing pathways underway in each country of the partnership, at the same time following the Committee recommendations, we have:

- defined a method of assigning CPs (credit points) and made proposals for "weights" to be validated or corrected by each partner
- identified in terms of KSC the "lowest common denominator" for each of the Units and LOs through the comparison and homogenisation of language
- described procedures for testing and evaluation.

Here then are the resulting products.

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DESCRIPTIVE OUTLINE FOR THE ATTRIBUTION OF CREDIT POINTS FOR THE ANALYSED PATHWAYS AND THE RELATED UNITS

(DELIVERABLE NR. 5)

In the N.E.T WORK project the construction of descriptive outlines for the attribution of credits should be proposed with two distinct methods:

- 1) the assigning of CPs (credit points) to the Units identified with one accord within the various training pathways of the different countries according to the outline agreed upon during phases WP3/WP4 (Chart to connect the MODULES of the trainings pathways with the UNITS) and subordinately – within these Units - the assigning of CPs to the Learning Outcomes identified therein;
- 2) definition of the value in CPs of Units of the same name (and of the related LOs) in the individual training pathways examined, in relation to their usability/assessability in other training pathways.

In this phase it is believed a priority to define the first method, keeping in mind that a primary condition of the project is that the indications and the methodologies already defined for ECVET be respected. Therefore we propose without important variations the formula recommended by the European Community, using the following outline:

1. Calculation of the total CPs that can be assigned in the reference training pathway, for each country, according to the recommended formula:

1 training year = 60 CPs

[by training year, a range of 800-1.200 hours could be considered]

The following situation emerges from an approximate count based on WP3 products:

	Total duration of the entire reference training pathway in hours (*)	Total CPs That can be assigned	Duration of the specific part of the pathway in hours (*)	CPs that can be assigned
France	1,000	60	500	30
Italy	660	40	400	25
Portugal	350	25	350	25
Slovenia (**)	4,940	240	1,001	68

(*) With reference to the pathways described in the WP3 and by approximate calculation

(**) the credit points assigned are a sum of credits for each module with the addition of practical training (10 credits)

1. Approximate calculation of the CPs “available” in each country for the Units identified, starting with the “weight” in percentages that each is considered to have within its specific pathway

	FRANCE		ITALY		PORTUGAL		SLOVENIA	
	CPs Val %	CPs V.A.	CPs Val %	CPs V.A.	CPs Val %	CPs V.A.	CPs Val %	CPs V.A.
UNIT 1 - To coordinate the operational running of the reception department	10	3	30	7.5	30	7.5	25	17
UNIT 2 = To inform guests about services and events	30	9	20	5	10	2.5	20	13.6
UNIT 3 = To maintain communications and collaboration with other departments	10	3	15	3.75	10	2.5	20	13.6
UNIT 4 = To choose appropriate ways for organising his/her own and staff activities	20	6	20	5	30	7.5	20	13.6
UNIT 5 = To perform financial assignments and commercial activities	30	9	15	3.75	20	5	15	1.2
	100	30	100	25	100	25	100	68

NB: to facilitate the analysis, given the need to develop an analogous measure for the LOs in the individual Units, it could be useful to use figures multiplied by 10 or 100 (for example: work on a total of 250 or 2500 CPs)



2. Calculation of the CPs that can be assigned to the individual LOs in each Unit, separately for each country

It would be useful to work here as well mainly in percentile terms in relation to the reference Unit, as can be seen from the charts that follow:

UNIT 1 – To handle/coordinate the operational running of the reception department							
Learning Outcomes							
France		Italy		Portugal		Slovenia	
		To supervise and manage the approach phase	33%	To organise and coordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	70%	To accept, negotiate and manage the reservations (booking) and associated documentation	20%
		To supervise and manage the check-in and check-out phases	34%	To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities	30%	To accept and advise guests, perform check-in and check-out procedures, issue the bill	30%
		To supervise and manage the live-in phase	33%			To prepare, promote and sell the services of hospitality establishments	20%
						To provide and exchange information and coordinate work with other hotel departments	15%
						To use contemporary programme tools for preparation and design of texts, digital presentations and electronic communication	15%
			100%		100%		100%

NB = Percentage weights for the LOs in relation to the reference Unit have been determined following the indications from EU Recommendations of 09.04.2008 on the application of ECVET:

“The relative weight of a unit of learning outcomes, with regard to the qualification, should be established according to the following criteria or to a combination thereof:

- *the relative importance of the learning outcomes which constitute the unit for labour market participation, for progression to other qualification levels or for social integration;*
- *the complexity, scope and volume of learning outcomes in the unit;*
- *the effort necessary for a learner to acquire the knowledge, skills and competence required for the unit.*

UNIT 2 - To inform guests and advise them about services and events in the local environment							
Learning Outcomes							
France		Italy		Portugal		Slovenia	
		To organise and manage information about services in the local environment	40%	To organise and coordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	40%	He/she acquires and evaluates tourism data from different sources, advises guests and sells services	40%
To advise clients on the opportunities offered by the territory	70%	To improve the level of customer satisfaction about the services provided	30%			Preparation and offer of the tourism programmes of home environment and selling tourism programmes	
To manage a benefit in rural tourism	30%	To propose and apply measures to foster customer loyalty	30%	To co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel	60%	To encourage and coordinate connection among individual tourist subjects (establishments) in the area of the tourism destination, advance informational, selling and marketing services in home environment tourism, to plan packet offers	10%
						Written and verbal processing of information in the field of tourism in Slovenian and at least two foreign languages under the rules of business communication and Bon ton	30%
						He/she compares tourism regions in Slovenia and designs the activities into an actual tourism offer	
						He/she forwards information about natural and cultural heritage in Slovenia	
						In the scope of work he/she takes into account the habits and customs of foreign guests	10%
						He/she communicates in business situation and uses the expert terminology in selected foreign language	10%
	100%		100%		100%		100%

UNIT 3 - To maintain efficient communications and to collaborate with other departments in the hotel							
Learning Outcomes							
France		Italy		Portugal		Slovenia	
		To collaborate in his/her own sector with the organisational choices of the management	60%	To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities	60%	Performance of public appearances and public presentations	40%
		To collaborate in organising and managing the general services of prevention and safety for his/her own sector	40%	To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	40%	He/she organises and leads team work (activities)	30%
						He/she presents him/herself with the professional/vocational portfolio	30%
			100%		100%		100%

UNIT 4 - To choose appropriate ways for organising his/her own and, as necessary, staff activities in the reception department							
Learning Outcomes							
France	?	Italy		Portugal		Slovenia	
		To recognise and evaluate work situations and problems, applying technical knowledge and ability in a pro-active way to design organisational structures in relation to one's own activities, resources and needs	40%	To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities	35%	He/she analyses, plans and prepares own work and controls that of co-workers	35%
		To effectively handle relations in an organisational and work context both within his/her own work group and outside it.	60%	To organise and co-ordinate activities in the reception service and ensure the most complex activities		He/she analyses, plans and prepares the work of co-workers and controls/ supervises the work of co-workers	35%
				To ensure the human and functional management of the work team	15%	He/she is responsible for the organisation and looks after the smooth, undisturbed flow of work activities of complementary hotel offer.	20%
				To co-operate with the personnel department in the human resources management	15%	He/she looks after the safety of employees at work	10%
				To identify the key aspects and characteristics of enterprise management and organisation	25%		
				To identify the key aspects and characteristics of the management and organisation of a hotel unit			
				To identify the principles and techniques of human resources management, leadership and interpersonal relations	10%		
			100%		100%		100%

UNIT 5 - To perform financial assignments, conduct commercial activities and ensure quality control of the services and work provided							
Learning Outcomes							
France		Italy		Portugal		Slovenia	
To organise and realise a benefit or event in rural tourism	70%	To organise and manage the administrative procedures connected with the functioning of his/her own sector	40%	To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities	25%	He/she markets products and services and composes sales contracts	40%
To market benefits of rural tourism	30%	To collaborate in co-ordinating and carrying out business marketing interventions for his/her own sector	40%	To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities		He/she prepares and implements the calculations and monitors the financial business transactions	40%
		To prepare and realise surveys (SWOT analyses) for the sector of competence	20%	To co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel	30%	He/she adapts the gastronomy and tourism offer to different target groups of tourists	20%
				To identify the key aspects and characteristics of enterprise management and organisation	20%		
					25%		
			100%		100%		100%

- To make the level of mastery of the competences explicit through:

a) the definition of “level descriptors” to use both for the Knowledge LOs and for those of Skills, deriving these in a homogeneous way from the EQF levels. For example:

Level descriptor (from EQF)	Knowledge	Skill
2	Knowledge of the essential operational elements, acquired in accordance with specific directions	Cognitive and practical skills using relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools
3	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a specific field of work or study	Cognitive and practical skills to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information
4	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	Cognitive and practical skills to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study
5	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge	Cognitive and practical skills developing creative solutions to abstract problems

b) the application of level descriptors to a grid of LOs shared in the corresponding Units of the various pathways of the partners. These descriptors define situations of mastery of the competences within the specific level definitions of the individual courses of the various Partner nations (NQF)

UNIT 1 - To handle/co-ordinate the operational running of the reception department							
Learning Outcomes							
France	Level	Italy	Level	Portugal	Level	Slovenia	Level
		To supervise and manage the approach phase	4	To organise and coordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	5	To accept, negotiate and manage the reservations (booking) and associated documentation	3
		To supervise and manage the check-in and check-out phases	4	To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities	5	To accept and advise guests, perform check-in and check-out procedures, issue the bill	3
		To supervise and manage the live-in phase	4			To prepare, promote and sell the services of hospitality establishments	3

UNIT 2 = To inform guests and advise them about services and events in the local environment							
Learning Outcomes							
France	Level	Italy	Level	Portugal	Level	Slovenia	Level
To advise clients on the opportunities offered by the territory	4	To organise and manage information about services in the local environment	4	To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	4	Acquires and evaluates tourism data from different sources, advises guests and sells services	4
						Preparation and offer of the tourism programmes of home environment and selling tourism programmes	4
To manage a benefit in rural tourism	4	To improve the level of customer satisfaction about the services provided	4	To co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel	4	To encourage and co-ordinate connection among individual tourist subjects (establishments) in the area of the tourism destination, advance informational, selling and marketing services in home environment tourism, to plan packet offers	4
		To propose and apply measures to foster customer loyalty	4				

UNIT 3 = To maintain efficient communications and to collaborate with other departments in the hotel							
Learning Outcomes							
France	Level	Italy	Level	Portugal	Level	Slovenia	Level
		To collaborate in his/her own sector with the organisational choices of the management	4	To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities	4	Organises and leads team work (activities)	4
				To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	4		

UNIT 4 = To choose appropriate ways for organising his/her own and, as necessary, staff activities in the reception department							
Learning Outcomes							
France	Level	Italy	Level	Portugal	Level	Slovenia	Level
		To recognise and evaluate work situations and problems, applying technical knowledge and ability in a pro-active way to design organisational structures in relation to one's own activities, resources and needs	4	To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities	5	To analyse, plan and prepare own work and to control that of co-workers	4
				To ensure the human and functional management of the work team	5		
		To effectively handle relations in an organisational and work context both within his/her own work group and outside it.	4	To organise and co-ordinate activities in the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	5		
				To co-operate with the personnel department in human resources management	5	To analyse, plan and prepare the work of co-workers and control/ supervise the work of co-workers	4
				To identify the principles and techniques of human resources management, leadership and interpersonal relations	5		
				To identify the key aspects and characteristics of enterprise management and organisation	5	To be responsible for the organisation and look after the smooth, undisturbed flow of work activities of complementary hotel offer.	4
				To identify the key aspects and characteristics of the management and organisation of a hotel unit	5		

UNIT 5 = To perform financial assignments, conduct commercial activities and ensure quality control of the services and work provided							
Learning Outcomes							
France	Level	Italy	Level	Portugal	Level	Slovenia	Level
To organise and realise a benefit or event in rural tourism	4	To organise and manage the administrative procedures connected with the functioning of his/her own sector	4	To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities	5	To prepare and implement the calculations and monitor the financial business transactions	4
				To identify the key aspects and characteristics of enterprise management and organisation	5		
				To identify the fundamental marketing techniques	5		
To market benefits of rural tourism	4	To collaborate in co-ordinating and carrying out business marketing interventions for his/her own sector	4	To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	5	To apply marketing of products and services and compose sales contracts	4
				To co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel	5		

The methodological approach and instruments proposed in this paper have been constructed using one of the cardinal principles of the ECVET system, that is the need to identify methods for the application of the system that integrate with, rather than modifying, the procedures already present and in use in the various territorial contexts. Therefore we have compared and identified descriptors that represent the “minimum common denominator” among the Units produced by the partners. Below you will find the results of this labour, which although it cannot be exhaustive and scientifically “balanced” is meant to be a “guide” and reference for the experimentation.

UNITS

NAME OF UNIT 1
To handle/coordinate the operational running of the Reception department
Name of the LO
<p>IT: To supervise and manage the approach phase; To supervise and manage the check-in and check-out phases; To supervise and manage the live-in phase</p> <p>SL: To accept, negotiate and manage the reservations (booking) and associated documentation; Accepts and advises guests, performs check-in and check-out procedures, issues the bill; Prepares, promotes and sells the services of hospitality establishments</p> <p>FR:</p> <p>PT: Organise and coordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities - Plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities</p>
LEARNING OUTCOMES IN TERMS OF COMPETENCE
<p>He/she is able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accept, negotiate and manage the reservations (booking) and associated documentation • accept and advise guests, perform check-in and check-out procedures, issue the bill • prepare, promote and sell the services of hospitality establishment • use modern computer and information technology • make accurate work estimations and plan daily activities to meet the service needs and accomplish the objectives of the sector • make decisions on complex situations or problems within the reception service activities • analyse the most common complaints and propose general procedures for problem solving • manage, establish procedures and make decisions on specific situations, such as no-shows, over-booking, cancellations, waiting lists, GDS management • establish friendly and correct relationships with customers, accepting their demands and complaints or dealing with their stay-related problems • manage potentially conflicting situations with customers • develop or assist in developing strategies for optimisation of services in the accommodation area • make decisions about hotel rates aligned with market situations
KNOWLEDGE LEARNING OUTCOMES
He/she knows:

- methods of planning, organisation and co-ordination of work applicable to the reception services.
- problem solving techniques, applicable to hospitality
- management standards and general procedures for solving no-shows, over-booking and GDS situations.
- hotel policy and regulations on the procedures to follow regarding complaints, customer's inappropriate behaviour, etc.
- techniques and methods of collection, analysis and treatment of data of various types and with different goals or purposes.
- rules for communicating with hierarchy, colleagues, customers and external entities, public or other.
- organisation of work in reception, reception tasks and the application of work conditions, the meaning of team work in order to satisfy the guests
- the basics of using hotel information system programmes and equipment
- the administrative procedures in a hotel
- the basic procedures for building an archive
- techniques and procedures for check-in and check-out
- information technology: instruments and programmes (hardware and software)

SKILL LEARNING OUTCOMES

He/she:

- organises and establishes standards of performance for each type of activity
- makes decisions about changes in accommodation plans, depending on the events and strategies to maximise the hotel capacity
- manages check-in and check-out
- manages and makes appropriate decisions in specific situations of no-shows, over-booking, cancellations, waiting lists, or other unexpected occurrences
- plans strategies to maximise accommodation and occupation
- sets daily rate of accommodation, depending on the market
- creates records and bills services
- passes information among the different departments
- optimises the use of computer tools in the reception service

Indicators from EQF

Knowledge

Skill

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

EQF LEVEL

4/5

ECVET CREDIT POINTS

PROPOSED DURATION (RANGE)

NAME OF UNIT 2
To inform guests and advise them about services and events in the local environment
Name of the LO
<p>IT: To organise and manage information about services in the local environment; to improve the level of customer satisfaction about the services provided; to propose and apply measures to foster customer loyalty</p> <p>PT: To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities; to co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel</p> <p>SL: Acquires and evaluates tourism data from different sources, advises guests and sells services; preparation and offer of the tourism programmes of home environment and selling tourism programmes; to encourage and co-ordinate connection among individual tourist subjects (establishments) in the area of the tourism destination, advance informational, selling and marketing services in home environment tourism, to plan packet offers</p> <p>FR: To advise clients on the opportunities offered by the territory; to manage a benefit in rural tourism</p>
LEARNING OUTCOMES IN TERMS OF COMPETENCE
<p>He/she is able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • execute more specific or complex activities, such as welcoming and taking care of VIP customers, groups, persons with disabilities, children, etc. • propose programmes, packages of services or promotional means relevant in commercial terms and able to capture the interest of customers. • obtain and provide meaningful data for developing strategies, programmes and resources appropriate to market trends and customer interests. • acquire and evaluate tourism data from different sources, advise guests and sell services • prepare and offer tourism programmes of the home environment and sell these • provide information about natural and cultural heritage • take into account the motivations and expectations of customers • conduct an assessment of the service (customer satisfaction, compliance with specifications) • inform customers about the possibilities offered by the territory
KNOWLEDGE LEARNING OUTCOMES
<p>He/she knows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ general protocol and techniques for receiving and hosting V.I.P. and special guests. ▪ techniques for research and data analysis for the exploration of interests and specific motivations within different client types. ▪ techniques for improving customer loyalty ▪ information about the region (transport, historical aspect, etc) ▪ the offer of the home environment ▪ statistical methods and different types of statistical data ▪ different activities which can be integrated in the tourism offer ▪ procedures and instruments for organising and implementing reservations

- legislation on the preservation of natural and cultural heritage
- business materials (publications) in foreign languages
- the tourist location and tourism environment
- local and protected local products
- eating and cultural habits of guests
- techniques for understands different groups of guests, their needs and customs
- differentiation of verbal and non-verbal communication
- different promotional approaches

SKILL LEARNING OUTCOMES

He/she:

- interacts with customers correctly and with empathy, fulfilling their needs, solving any problems, demonstrating commitment to offering a pleasant stay, enhancing their satisfaction and making them loyal to the hotel.
- establishes contacts with various entities and potential customers in order to obtain information on present and future interests regarding services in the field of tourism and hospitality.
- collaborates in the assessment and improvement of the services provided to customers.
- acquires and advances information about the region
- orders promotional materials
- informs guests about local tourism events and activities
- presents the specificities of individual tourism areas (geographical characteristics, cultural and natural historical development of home region, capital city)
- uses appropriate business communication
- plans and implements business interviews
- reacts appropriately in problem and/or conflict situations
- uses the appropriate promotional approach according to the potential guest
- presents him/herself to guests adequately dressed and tidy (clothes, external appearance, tidiness)

Indicators from EQF

Knowledge

Skill

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

EQF LEVEL

4

ECVET CREDIT POINTS

PROPOSED DURATION (RANGE)

NAME OF UNIT 3
To maintain efficient communications and to collaborate with other departments in the hotel
Name of the LO
<p>PT: To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities; To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities</p> <p>SL: Organises and leads team work (activities)</p> <p>IT: To collaborate in his/her own sector with the organisational choices of the management</p> <p>FR:</p>
LEARNING OUTCOMES IN TERMS OF COMPETENCE
<p>He/she is able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate and establish effective interpersonal relationships with colleagues, hierarchy and external activities. • organise and lead team work activities • present him/herself with a professional/vocational portfolio • communicate in written and oral form in at least two languages • use different codes and methods of interaction according to the type of client, in order to describe and enhance the service offered, orally (in the presence of the client or on the phone) and in written form (drawing up estimates, e-mail, etc.)
KNOWLEDGE LEARNING OUTCOMES
<p>He/she knows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ rules for communicating with hierarchy, colleagues, customers and external entities, public and other ▪ standards for communications with hierarchy, colleagues, subordinates, customers and other entities within the reception service ▪ different methods of presentation ▪ principles of the preparation of presentations (greetings, introduction, core, conclusion, questions) ▪ the terms of work, working group, work organisation ▪ theoretical communications models. ▪ principles of communications and sales psychology. ▪ psychological fundamentals useful for understanding the relationship dynamics of various types of clients. ▪ Level B2 language competences, including the technical terms of the sector, for English. ▪ Level B2 language competences, including the technical terms of the sector, for a third language (French / German / Spanish)
SKILL LEARNING OUTCOMES
<p>He/she:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communicates with various internal and external entities and co-ordinates the various sectors

of the hotel unit

- co-ordinates with other sectors for the collection and transmission of information, and co-ordination of procedures
- publicly performs in different business situations

THE INDICATORS FROM EQF:

Knowledge

Skill

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

EQF LEVEL

4

ECVET CREDIT POINTS

PROPOSED DURATION (RANGE)

NAME OF UNIT 4
To choose appropriate ways for organising his/her own and, as necessary, staff activities in the reception department
Name of the LO
<p>PT: To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities; to ensure the human and functional management of the work team; to organise and co-ordinate activities in the reception service and ensure the most complex activities; to co-operate with the personnel department in the human resources management; to identify the key aspects and characteristics of enterprise management and organisation; to identify the key aspects and characteristics of the management and organisation of a hotel unit; to identify the principles and techniques of human resources management, leadership and interpersonal relations</p> <p>SL: Analyse, plan and prepare own work and control that of co-workers; analyses, plans and prepares the work of co-workers and controls/ supervises the work of co-workers; is responsible for the organisation and looks after the smooth, undisturbed flow of work activities of complementary hotel offer.</p> <p>IT: To recognise and evaluate work situations and problems, applying technical knowledge and ability in a pro-active way to design organisational structures in relation to one's own activities, resources and needs; to effectively handle relations in an organisational and work context both within his/her own work group and outside it.</p>
LEARNING OUTCOMES IN TERMS OF COMPETENCE
<p>He/she is able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop or assist in developing strategies for optimisation of services in the accommodation area • make accurate work estimations and plan daily activities to meet the service needs and accomplish the objectives of the sector • organise and establish rules for carrying out various activities in order to make the resources productive, make the sector more productive and ensure unity and the safety of persons • co-ordinate and supervise the activities of the sector aiming at the provision of quality services. • make decisions on complex situations or problems within the reception service activities • identify needs within the human resources department which meet the real needs of the sector • analyse, plan and prepare one's own work and control / supervise the work of co-workers
KNOWLEDGE LEARNING OUTCOMES
<p>He/she knows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ planning techniques, applied to reception services ▪ types of activities sought by the hotel, their characteristics and work requirements in relation to the reception services received (gym, room hire, events, etc.) ▪ techniques for collecting, analysing and processing data, applicable to the organisation of the reception work ▪ planning, organisation and co-ordination methods ▪ techniques of work organisation and management and time control, applicable to the reception service ▪ techniques for the supervision and guidance of reception staff ▪ techniques of organising and managing work teams and organisation and management of shift work ▪ general legislation on shift work, holidays and absences and the hotel's rules on the subject

- concepts and basic functions of personnel management
- basic functions of the manager (planning, organising, directing, controlling) and their general features
- concept of planning (starting point, arrival point, pathway elements)
- methods and general techniques of planning, definition of objectives and scheduling of activities
- components of the human resource management activity, administrative management, functional and human management
- code of conduct in accordance with the business concept of the hotel
- standards of health protection at the work place
- techniques for determining the needs of human and material resources applicable to the reception service
- key elements in the organisation of departments or sectors (goals and plans, authority relations, work organisation, people characteristics)

SKILL LEARNING OUTCOMES

He/she:

- establishes goals and plans strategies of operation, development and profitability of the reception service.
- anticipates needs of human and material resources considering the objectives, strategies and occupational forecasts.
- plans and distributes the day's activities, taking into account the estimated volume, types of work to do and execution times of tasks, assignments, strategies and objectives for the sector and the human resources available.
- organises and establishes standards of performance for each type of activity
- establishes organisational standards for documentation of the reception service which contribute to the speed and efficiency of paperwork.
- organises work shifts for the reception service, according to expected activities, general movement, peak workloads and available personnel
- consistently applies the regulations of health protection to his/her own work and the work of co workers

THE INDICATORS FROM EQF:

Skill

Knowledge

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

EQF LEVEL

4/5

ECVET CREDIT POINTS

PROPOSED DURATION (RANGE)

NAME OF UNIT 5
To perform financial assignments, conduct commercial activities and ensure quality control of the services and work provided
Name of the LO
<p>PT: To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities; to organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities; to co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel ; to identify the key aspects and characteristics of enterprise management and organisation; to identify the fundamental marketing techniques</p> <p>SL: Prepares and implements the calculations and monitors the financial business transactions; markets products and services and composes sales contracts</p> <p>IT: To organise and manage the administrative procedures connected with the functioning of his/her own sector; to collaborate in co-ordinating and carrying out the business marketing interventions for his/her own sector</p> <p>FR: To organise and realise a benefit or event in rural tourism; to market benefits of rural tourism</p>
LEARNING OUTCOMES IN TERMS OF COMPETENCE
<p>He/she is able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make decisions about hotel rates in line with the market situation, which make resources profitable and optimise the cost / revenue relationship. • demonstrate knowledge of the purpose and general operation of a hotel, in what regards, particularly, the reception, the general rules of organisation and business management, rules of exploration of new markets and organisations or means, suppliers of useful data for forecasts and planning of various strategies. • control the conditions determining the need for price changes (researching and collecting data) and impose changes accordingly • manage and make decisions on situations involving billing problems and customer accounts, city-ledger and the current accounts of the company, etc. • propose programmes, packages of services or promotional means that are relevant in commercial terms and able to capture the interest of customers. • obtain and provide meaningful data for developing strategies, programmes and resources appropriate to market trends and customer interests • market products and services and compose sales contracts • prepare and implement calculations and monitor financial business transactions
KNOWLEDGE LEARNING OUTCOMES
<p>He/she knows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the concept of budget, its parts and items ▪ concepts and rules for calculating cost / benefit ▪ rules for the exploration of new markets in hotel accommodation ▪ quality and productivity standards for reception services ▪ methods and techniques of quality control, applicable to reception activities ▪ elements of tax and fiscal law ▪ types of accounting books and documents and their characteristics ▪ storing bookkeeping documents ▪ the main accounting software ▪ general and internal regulations and requirements on billing problems and customer accounts,

city-ledger and current account(s) of the company, debt collection difficulties, etc.

- techniques for promoting and selling services
- techniques for improving customer loyalty
- result control techniques in hotel accommodation
- methods and techniques of quality control and its basic requirements (objectivity, flexibility, appropriateness to the situation and possibility of correction)
- marketing techniques for the hospitality industry
- incomes and outflows
- differentiation of expenses
- the term "depreciation"
- the basic expert terms in the field of tourism and hospitality
- differentiation between cost and selling price
- basic accounting standards and indicators of business success
- importance of investments
- techniques for the design and organisation of dissemination and promotion services, applicable to specific situations

SKILL LEARNING OUTCOMES

He/she:

- makes predictions and budget proposals of revenue and costs of the reception service (staff, materials, uniforms, etc.), monitors compliance with the established budget and propose changes if necessary
- ensures market research through contacts with public entities, similar enterprises or by other means
- develops procedures for customer fidelity following their stay, trying to understand their tastes and interests, contacting them to show the interest of the hotel in their well-being and satisfaction, and developing hosting procedures which are appropriate to their personal characteristics
- ensures the monitoring of results achieved by the hotel unit
- identifies and characterises the general principles and fundamental techniques of work organisation and quality control
- prepares a simple statement of business results
- handles agency commissions
- deals with overdue payments
- takes care of ordinary administrative management

THE INDICATORS FROM EQF:

Knowledge

Skill

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

EQF LEVEL

4/5

ECVET CREDIT POINTS

PROPOSED DURATION (RANGE)

GUIDELINES FOR THE VERIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES (DELIVERABLE n. 6.1)

In ECVET, units of learning outcomes achieved in one setting are assessed and then, after successful assessment, transferred to another setting.

We remind you of the distinction between assessment, validation and recognition.

- **assessment** of learning outcomes means methods and processes used to establish the extent to which a learner has in fact attained particular knowledge, skills and competence;
- **validation** of learning outcomes means the process of confirming that certain assessed learning outcomes achieved by a learner correspond to specific outcomes which may be required for a unit or a qualification;
- **recognition** of learning outcomes means the process of officially attesting achieved learning outcomes through the awarding of units or qualifications.

Therefore evaluating learning outcomes means establishing what the learner is able to know, understand and/or know how to do at the end of a certain period of learning.

To reach the above-mentioned objective, we recommend the use of *performance-based* tests.

According to Le Boterf (2004) the competences can be considered:

the ability to activate and/or combine:

- *the internal resources possessed (concepts, principles, skills, interests, volition, etc.)*
- *with the external ones available (equipment, materials, teachers, classmates, etc.)*

in order to face in a valid and productive way a specific set of cultural and/or professional activities and/or problems

The prospect of an alternative evaluation in substitution of the traditional one was proposed for example by Grant Wiggins (1993) in the sense of an evaluation that is meant to verify not only what a student knows, but also “what he knows how to do with what he knows” that is, based on a real and adequate demonstration of learning.

Recent reflections on teaching and learning processes fully justify this form of evaluation. The theories of authentic learning, of situational knowledge, of social constructivism in fact demonstrate that students understand and assimilate to a greater degree when they are dealing with real situations compared with what they learn in de-contextualised situations.

Verification and evaluation following a performance-based approach should be set up keeping in mind the individual Learning Outcomes, and subsequently synthesised as a procedure for

the overall evaluation of the individual Units.

It would be opportune, for this process, to develop the indications contained in product WP3 - ANALISIS TOOL – Contents of Training Paths, specifying as far as possible the tools effectively used. Further indications on the methods and instruments of verification and evaluation will, therefore, be contained in the agreement.

In this area we suggest using the grid proposed in the LdV 2000-06 project “ECVET IN FOOD”:

For example:

EVALUATION PROCEDURES				
Type of test	Mandatory / optional	Classification	Optional indications	
Written tests	Closed-ended questions	multiple choice		
		questions to be completed (with the choice of a set of options)		
		fill in the blanks (with the choice of a set of options)		
		mini-cases (with multiple choice questions)		
		matching questions		
	Open-ended questions	open-ended questions		
		questions to be completed (free wording)		
		fill in the blanks (free wording)		
	Case solutions	X	with open-ended questions closed-ended questions	X
	"Traditional" tests	Essays		
Problems				
Exercises (e.g. equations)				
Oral tests	Interviews	structured		
		semi-structured		
		unstructured		
Practical tests	Checklist of observations	X	process-related product-related	X X
	Technical reports			
Simulated performance	Checklist of observations		process-related product-related	
	Technical reports			

Formal agreements (Deliverable nr. 7)

N.E.T.WORK Experimentation Plan (Deliverable nr. 8.1)

Guidelines for the application of ECVET (Deliverable nr. 8.2)

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Guidelines for the application of ECVET experimentation

From the context analysis, conducted using the output from WP 2 (Description and Selection of the training profiles to be tested in the experimentations) and WP 3 (Sharing and validation of the description modalities for the learning outcomes and units), a certain heterogeneity in the practices and VET instruments used in the partnership countries has emerged as well as a differentiation of functions and missions among the subjects involved as partners.

Nevertheless, this brings added value to the project for two orders of reasons: it faithfully represents the real situation among the member nations of the European Union and it allows us to identify and experiment methods for putting the ECVET system into effect which involve not just the certifying agencies but also those who operate “upstream” and “downstream” of the certification process.

For the above-mentioned partnership context, represented even more precisely by the outputs of WP3/ WP4 (Description of selected training profiles connecting the MODULES of the trainings paths with the UNITS) and on the basis of the joint reflection reached during the 3rd trans-national partnership meeting held in Ljubljana, it was thought necessary to realise this document “propaedeutical” to the output of WP7 (Formal agreements) and of WP8 (N.E.T.WORK experimentation plan).

For this CST and SV&CO intend to propose and share with the partnership some experimentation methods which on the one hand correspond with what was foreseen in the project proposal (cfr. WP 8 and WP 9) and on the other respond to the situations and needs that have emerged for each partner.

Specifically, the document intends to offer experimentation instruments that allow each partner to carry out an action in conformity with his/her own institutional mission and with the effective areas and typologies of training processes existing in his/her own context.

This set up also allows us to offer, through experimental evidence, indications to the Agency that monitors the work of the partnership, about the possibility of different subjects which act in various capacities in the sector of vocational education and training working in agreement under the ECVET system; and that the same system can provide – even within the differentiated VET processes already existing and in use in the reference countries - homogeneous forms of application, that are able to involve all the levels of actuation present to date.

This working document has been sent to each partner in anticipation of the presentation of an experimentation plan which, as foreseen by the project (cfr. WP8: Output 8.1), will contain detailed information on:

- the training pathways chosen for testing, and their structuring consistent with the

framework of LOs and Units already agreed on by the partners (See Attachment n. 01: Consistency of the Units and LOs of the WP5 framework with those of the experimentation pathway).

- the expected results;
- the organisation (timing, resources, targets, etc.);
- the subjects (learners, students, structures, pathways, etc..) involved and their related roles;
- support activities;
- monitoring activities.

Once validated, this document will also represent the technical reference for the stipulation of the "Formal Agreements" (WP7).

1. Type of experimentation

As part of the NET WORK project an "observed experimentation" will be conducted of the pathways identified by the partners in their respective Formal Agreements, by applying the instruments produced in the previous phases of comparison and coordination of the partnership to the various training pathways. Specifically, the principal references will be the KSC Framework (see attachment nr. 02) and the synthesis of WP 5 (see attachment nr. 03)

2. Testing phases

2.1. Identification of coherent training pathways active in the time period considered

For some partners it will be possible to activate the experimentation as part of the pathways analysed in WP 2/3, while for others it could be necessary to make agreements with other subjects who provide similar pathways to the area of the study. We stress the fact that the experimentation can even be conducted on pathways that are not directly handled by the partner. In fact, since this is an "observed" experimentation, it does not seem obligatorily connected with the direct involvement of the partner in the training pathway management. This management can be entrusted to "external" training structures that guarantee:

- a) the conduction of the training pathway in the time period foreseen by the project (between November 2010 and April 2011);
- b) the supply of training similar to the reference area of the project¹⁴ and which can be brought back to the KSC system.

Therefore it will be sufficient to identify, within the various "Formal Agreements", an adequate structure which guarantees the commitment of an educational co-ordinator and of the related trainers/teachers to apply the instruments elaborated in the Project in the course of their standard training activity.

¹⁴ The area of tourism-hospitality welcoming and more specifically the reception area of hotel structures.

2.2. Activation of agreements with subjects managing pathways with the stipulation of an agreement model

Both in the case of direct management of the training by the partner and in that in which the testing is carried out on pathways provided by third parties, a Formal Agreement must nevertheless be signed, following the model prepared by SV&CO and CST (see attachment nr. 04), which will contain the Experimentation Plan

2.3. Activation of the observed experimentation process

This provides for:

- the “interpretation”, on the part of the trainers/teachers, of the training content of the pathways carried out in terms of KSC (output WP3. See Attachment nr. 01) and Units/LOs (output WP5. See attachment nr. 02), using the grids prepared by CST and SV&CO (see Attachment nr. 05)
- the transferral of these contents to the framework of the LOs and Units defined according to the outputs of WP5 and WP6
- calculation of credit points starting with the scores established for the LOs in the output of WP5
- an explanation of the verification and evaluation methods, following the grid prepared by CST and SV&CO (see attachment nr. 06)
- the issuing to each participant in the experimentation of “certification” following a format common to the partners which will be agreed upon on the basis of the first feedback from the experimentation itself. In the “certification”, of which a draft will be prepared by CST and SV&CO and distributed by the end of January 2011, the results of the observed experimentation will be indicated in the terms of the ECVET system (Units, LOs, Credit points).

The experimentation will last 7 months (scheduled to start at the beginning of November 2010 and end by 30 April 2011). It must be applied to approximately 30 subjects for each partner, who may belong to a single course or more than one courses. The evaluation will nonetheless be made identifying the results distinctly for each participant.

The testing must be monitored in qualitative and quantitative terms.

- As far as the quantitative data are concerned, each partner Actuator of the experimentation will draft at least two “activity records” – one by 31 December 2010 and one by 15 April 2011 - following the format that will subsequently be prepared by CST and SV&CO .
- As far as the qualitative data are concerned, at the end of the experimentation the operators involved will be given an “appreciation test”, which also will be prepared by CST and SV&CO, aimed at determining evaluations of efficiency and effectiveness regarding the products/instruments tested.

Attachment nr. 01: Concordance of Units and LOs of the WP5 framework with those of the experimentation pathway (*)

(*) This chart has an indicative function and is to be applied only to training pathways that will not be run directly by the partners and which were not analysed in WP3 and WP4

WP5 Framework	Experimentation Pathway	
	CHECK	NOTES
UNIT 1= To co-ordinate the operational running of the reception department		
To supervise and manage the approach phase;		
To supervise and manage the check-in and check-out phases;		
To supervise and manage the live-in phase		
To accept, negotiate and manage reservations (booking) and the associated documentation		
To receive and advise guests, perform check-in and check-out procedures, issue the bill		
To prepare, promote and sell the services of hospitality establishments		
To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities		
To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities		
UNIT 2 = To inform guests and advise them about services and events in the local environment		
To organise and manage information about services in the local environment		
To improve the level of customer satisfaction about the services provided		
To propose and apply measures to foster customer loyalty		
To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities		
To co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel		
To acquire and evaluate tourism data from different sources, to advise guests and sell services		
To prepare and offer tourism programmes of the home environment and to sell tourism programmes		
To encourage and co-ordinate connection among individual tourist subjects (establishments) in the area of the tourism destination, to advance information, selling and marketing services in home environment tourism, to plan packet offers		
To advise clients on the opportunities offered by the territory		
To manage a benefit in rural tourism		
UNIT 3 = To maintain efficient communications and to collaborate with other departments in the hotel		
To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities		
To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most		

WP5 Framework	Experimentation Pathway	
	CHECK	NOTES
complex activities		
To organise and lead team work (activities)		
To collaborate in his/her own sector with the organisational choices of the management		
Unit 4 = To choose appropriate ways for organising his/her own and, as necessary, staff activities in the reception department		
To organise and co-ordinate activities in the reception service and ensure the most complex activities		
To co-operate with the personnel department in human resource management;		
To identify the key aspects and characteristics of the management and organisation of a hotel unit		
To identify the principles and techniques of human resource management, leadership and interpersonal relations		
To analyse, plan and prepare one's own work and to control that of co-workers		
To analyse, plan and prepare the work of co-workers and control/ supervise the work of co-workers		
To be responsible for the organisation and to look after the smooth, undisturbed flow of work activities of complementary hotel offer		
To recognise and evaluate work situations and problems, applying technical knowledge and ability in a pro-active way to design organisational structures in relation to one's own activities, resources and needs;		
To effectively handle relations in an organisational and work context both within his/her own work group and outside it.		
UNIT 5 = To perform financial assignments, conduct commercial activities and ensure quality control of the services and work provided		
To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities		
To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities		
To co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel		
To identify the key aspects and characteristics of enterprise management and organisation		
To identify the fundamental marketing techniques		
To prepare and implement the calculations and to monitor the financial business transactions		
To market products and services and to compose sales contracts		
To organise and manage the administrative procedures connected with the functioning of his/her own sector		
To collaborate in co-ordinating and carrying out the business marketing interventions for his/her own sector		

Attachment nr. 02: Framework KSC

Macrocompetence ① = He/she is able to handle the operational running of the department, according to parameters of efficiency, effectiveness and quality		
Knowledge	Skill	Competence
1. Knows principles and procedures for basic use of ICT 2. Knows communications techniques 3. Knows sales techniques 4. Knows the necessary procedures for room reservations operations 5. Knows the hotel mission, as well as the services available to customers 6. Knows two foreign languages	1. Optimises the use of computer tools in the reception service 2. Supplies information on the availability of services and the sales terms 3. Receives requests for reservations using various communications tools 4. Confirms or rejects reservations on the basis of the capacity optimisation plan 5. Manages cancellations, over-bookings and changes in reservations 6. Communicates with guests in two foreign languages	1. Is able to manage the approach and sales phases <i>(is able to make reservations according to demand and to the occupancy and service-distribution plan)</i>
7. Knows the methodologies and techniques of the check-in system 8. Knows the way to handle emergency procedures	7. Records the arrival on the obligatory documents 8. Opens an account and a position for the client 9. Finds out the guest's needs 10. Communicates company regulations 11. Informs new guests about the range of hotel services	2. Is able to manage the check-in phase <i>(is able to welcome guests and take care of them)</i>
9. Knows established principles for the resolution / satisfaction of customers' complaints, suggestions, needs and expectations	12. Handles complaints 13. Manages the procedures for handling correspondence and registering information addressed to customers 14. Takes care of the safety of guests and their property 15. Masters communication over the telephone 16. Masters procedures in a state of emergency (death, theft,...)	3. is able to manage the "live-in" phase <i>(including car rentals, sightseeing tours, reservation and confirmation of tickets to shows, manual and electronic records, delivery of keys or magnetic room cards and providing luggage service, handling telephone services, distribution of correspondence, exchange of foreign currency, care of luggage and valuables, etc.)</i>
10. Knows the administrative procedures for guest registration 11. Knows methods for gathering and reporting statistical data	17. Records charges 18. Prepares reports and printouts 19. Conducts administrative controls 20. Applies documentation filing techniques 21. Updates the guest database 22. Updates occupancy status 23. Prepares data on reservations and keeps statistics (receptions and rejections)	4. Is able to carry out the activities of registering charges and of administrative and statistical management
12. Knows the proper "check-out" procedures 13. Knows Reception back office procedures	24. Records the departure on the obligatory documents 25. Prepares statement of account, concludes and makes out an invoice; 26. Authenticates and enters credit and cash payments; 27. Exchanges foreign currencies and	5. Is able to carry out the activities of the check-out phase <i>(namely charging accounts, billing, payment of debts, checks, manual or computer records, collecting keys or magnetic cards and providing</i>

Macrocompetence ① = He/she is able to handle the operational running of the department, according to parameters of efficiency, effectiveness and quality		
Knowledge	Skill	Competence
	prepares statement of exchange according to daily rates	<i>luggage services and transport)</i>

Macrocompetence ② = He/she is able to inform and give advice to guests on services and events in the local environment		
Knowledge	Skill	Competence
Knows the historical and cultural environment and tourist services to provide customers with information Knows the sources and techniques for finding information on events	Gathers and records information about the cultural, environmental and gastronomic opportunities of the territory Keeps the data base of opportunities up to date	1) Is able to carry out the activities of gathering information on the opportunities offered by the surrounding territory <i>(including car rentals, sightseeing tours, reservation and confirmation of tickets to shows, etc.)</i>
Knows the principles for constructing a tourism supply package integrated with the territory Knows the principles of destination management	3. Contacts and collaborates with other operators to formulate integrated tourism supplies 4. Handles relations with intermediaries both of tourism and non-tourism-related distribution	2) Is able to integrate the tourism offer with the contribution of other public and private stakeholders of the territory
5. Knows the principles of territorial marketing	5. Informs about and promotes the cultural, natural and food&wine opportunities of the territory 6. Helps guests with transportation, reservations, gathering information on services outside the hotel and on the historical and cultural environment 7. Sells souvenirs and other promotional and contact material	3) Is able to promote the tourism destination where the structure is located

Macrocompetence ③ = He/she is able to maintain efficient communication with other departments in the hotel		
Knowledge	Skill	Competence
<p>Knows the techniques of internal business communications</p> <p>Knows the mechanisms of inter-functionality in the operational organisation of the hospitality business</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Organises models of co-operative behaviour oriented toward results, in function of the objectives and of the organisational system of the business 2) Sees to the application of co-ordination mechanisms based on company directives 3) Optimises the passing of information, by organising and managing aggregation moments (<i>briefings, debriefings, reporting, etc.</i>) 4) Applies functional control techniques to the work of his/her own division in relation to company quality objectives 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is able to see to the organisation of work, the definition of procedures and the operational effectiveness of the reference division in relation to the various divisions of the hospitality business
<p>Knows the procedures of internal communication among departments</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5) Informs the other departments of the client's particular needs 6) Informs main kitchen and, if necessary, other departments about booked rooms and pre-announced group arrivals on a daily basis 7) Reports complaints to the sales department 8) Informs sales department about guest allocations and their period of stay in the hotel 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Is able to co-ordinate the processes of production and supply of the service in relation to the other services of the hospitality business

Macrocompetence ④ = He/she is able to choose appropriate ways for organising his/her own and, as necessary, staff activities in the hotel reception department		
Knowledge	Skill	Competence
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Knows the procedures for the management of reception area human resources, materials, and equipment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Contributes in the planning and acquisition of necessary goods and materials 2) Collaborates in the implementation of quality, hygiene and safety-at-work programmes 3) Collaborates in the implementation of hotel promotional programmes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is able to define goals and activities in the reception service based on the strategies, available resources and standards set by management
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Knows the rules for establishing a positive working environment 3) Knows the techniques of organising work and performing different tasks 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4) Plans and organises his/her own work 5) Checks planned daily activities 6) Solves organisational problems and problems connected with performing individual tasks together with co-workers and superiors 7) Uses professional terminology 8) Works in teams 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Is able to plan and organise his/her own work according to parameters of efficiency and effectiveness and to work in a team

Macrocompetence ⑤ = He/she is able to perform financial assignments and execute commercial activities and ensure quality control of the services and work conducted		
Knowledge	Skill	Competence
1) Knows the fundamentals of using ICT to manage commercial activities 2) Knows the techniques of quality management of the reception service	1. Identifies the level of customer satisfaction and defines measures to adjust services; 2. Applies the quality control techniques of the reception service; 3. Organises gathered data and prepares charts and reports; 4. Develops on-line promotion and sales procedures; 5. Elaborates virtual product lines and a shopping cart for on-line transactions;	1) Is able to collaborate with hotel management in the definition of targets and procedures to promote and conduct commercial activities
3) Knows the main process analysis methodologies and business diagnosis tools.	6. Applies data-gathering methods (surveys, interviews, targeted observation) referring to the specific sector; 7. Monitors the production processes in relation to descriptors and indexes of quality, productivity and profitability; 8. Applies the directives regarding access to and handling of sensitive data. 9. Elaborates an action plan for positioning his/her sector within the company market	2) Is able to collaborate in evaluating the quality of services, in verifying the level of consumer satisfaction and in making the necessary corrections or adjustments

Attachment nr. 03: Outline of the Units and comparative chart of the LOs

UNIT 1 = To co-ordinate the operational running of the reception department			
France	Italy	Portugal	Slovenia
	To supervise and manage the approach phase	To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	To accept, negotiate and manage the reservations (booking) and associated documentation
			To receive and advise guests, perform check-in and check-out procedures, issue the bill
	To supervise and manage the check-in and check-out phases To supervise and manage the live-in phase		To prepare, promote and sell the services of hospitality establishments

UNIT 2 = To inform guests and advise them about services and events in the local environment			
France	Italy	Portugal	Slovenia
To advise clients on the opportunities offered by the territory	To organise and manage information about services in the local environment	To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	To acquire and evaluate tourism data from different sources, advise guests and sell services To prepare and offer the tourism programmes of home environment and sell tourism programmes
To manage a benefit in rural tourism	To improve <u>the level of customer satisfaction about the services provided</u> To propose and apply measures to foster customer loyalty	To co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel	To encourage and co-ordinate connection among individual tourist subjects (establishments) in the area of the tourism destination, advance informational, selling and marketing services in home environment tourism, to plan packet offers

UNIT 3 = To maintain efficient communications and to collaborate with other departments in the hotel			
France	Italy	Portugal	Slovenia
	To collaborate in his/her own sector with the organisational choices of management	To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities	To organise and lead team work (activities)
		To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	

UNIT 4 = To choose appropriate ways for organizing his/her own and, as necessary, staff activities in the reception department			
France	Italy	Portugal	Slovenia
	To recognise and evaluate work situations and problems applying technical knowledge and ability in a pro-active way to design organisational structures in relation to one's own activities, resources and needs	To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities	To analyse, plan and prepare one's own work and to control the work of co-workers
		To ensure the human and functional management of the work team	
	To effectively handle relations in an organisational and work context both within his/her own work group and outside it	To organise and co-ordinate activities in the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	
		To co-operate with the personnel department in human resource management	To analyse, plan and prepare the work of co workers and to control/ supervise the work of co-workers
		To identify the principles and techniques of human resource management, leadership and interpersonal relations	
		To identify the key aspects and characteristics of enterprise management and organisation of a hotel unit	To be responsible for the organisation and look after the smooth, undisturbed flow of work activities of complementary hotel offer

UNIT 5 = To perform financial assignments, conduct commercial activities and ensure quality control of the services and work provided			
France	Italy	Portugal	Slovenia
To organise and realise a benefit or event in rural tourism	To organise and manage the administrative procedures connected with the functioning of his/her own sector	To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities	To prepare and implement the calculations and monitor the financial business transactions
		To identify the key aspects and characteristics of enterprise management and organisation	
		To identify the fundamental marketing techniques	
To market benefits of rural tourism	To collaborate in co-ordinating and carrying out the business marketing interventions for his/her own sector	To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities	To market products and services and compose sales contracts
		To co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel	

Attachment n. 04: Formal Agreement

In the framework of the project and more specifically in order to realise the actions regarding:

- the definition of methods and instruments for verifying the learning outcomes so that the partners will all use the same instruments and evaluation parameters (indicators) to certify the attainment of the learning outcomes (WP6)
- verification of the functionality of the elements necessary for the subsequent experimentation in different training pathways (WP6)
- realisation of partners' agreements for the implementation of the experimentation, under the ECVET system framework (WP7)
- provision of the appropriate synergies and methods of coordinating the experimentation to be carried out in the partnership countries (WP8)

Keeping in mind that the experimentation is intended to make possible - in prospective - the constitution of "voluntary agreement between two or more national authorities, VET providers, sectors or competent bodies on cooperation in the field of validation, transfer and, if appropriate, recognition of learning outcomes and credits achieved by mobile learners" (**Memorandum of understanding**) and - in operational terms – the verification, evaluation, validation , certification and eventual transfer, according to the ECVET system, of the Units and LOs foreseen in the training pathways conducted by the individual project partners;

XY
 in his/her capacity as Partner of the project, and promoter of the experimentation
 (Promoter)

and

WZ
 as the person/structure responsible for bringing about the training pathway in which the experimentation will take place (Actuator)

agree as follows:

1. the Promoter entrusts to the Actuator the task of conducting the experimentation according to the attached Experimentation Plan (EP), which constitutes an integral part of the present agreement.
2. the experimentation will be carried out within one of the pathways presented by the Promoter in WP3 (Analysis Tool) of his own country. Should this not be possible it will be carried out within an analogous pathway which will be described in the EP with the same outline.
3. the Actuator makes a commitment to carry out the experimentation process through:
 - the assignment, to the trainers/teachers who conduct the chosen training pathway, of the "verification" of its contents in terms of KSC and Units/LOs, using the grids prepared by the Promoter and attached to the EP.
 - the explanation of the testing and evaluation method, following the grid prepared by the Promoter and attached to the EP
 - the certification and validation of the results in the terms of the ECVET system, according to the grid prepared by the Promoter and attached to the EP
4. The Promoter will provide the Actuator with guidelines and operational instruments (charts, analytical grids, instruments for testing and evaluating the LOs, etc.).

The Actuator makes a commitment to use the methodologies and instruments indicated according to the instructions of the Promoter.

Attachment nr. 5: Grid for verification of the training contents of the pathway according to the ECVET system

UNIT 1 =To co-ordinate the operational running of the reception department	Realised	Evaluated
LEARNING OUTCOMES		
To supervise and manage the approach phase;		
To supervise and manage the check-in and check-out phases		
To supervise and manage the live-in phase		
To accept, negotiate and manage the reservations (booking) and associated documentation		
To receive and advise guests, perform check-in and check-out procedures, issue the bill; to prepare, promote and sell the services of hospitality establishments		
To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities		
To prepare, promote and sell the services of hospitality establishments		
LOs IN TERMS OF COMPETENCE = He/she is able to:	Realised	Evaluated
accept, negotiate and manage the reservations (booking) and associated documentation		
receive and advise guests, perform check-in and check-out procedures, issue the bill		
prepare, promote and sell the services of hospitality establishment		
use modern computer and information technology		
make accurate work estimations and plan daily activities to meet the service needs and accomplish the objectives of the sector		
make decisions on complex situations or problems within the reception service activities		
analyse the most common complaints and propose general procedures for problem solving		
manage, establish procedures and make decisions on specific situations, such as: no-shows, over-booking, cancellations, waiting lists, GDS management		
establish friendly and correct relationships with customers, accepting their demands and complaints or dealing with their stay-related problems		
manage potentially conflicting situations with customers		
develop or assist in developing strategies for optimisation of services in the accommodation area		
make decisions about hotel rates aligned with market situations		
KNOWLEDGE LEARNING OUTCOMES = He/she knows:	Realised	Evaluated
methods of planning, organisation and co-ordination of work applicable to the reception services		
problem solving techniques, applicable to hospitality		
management standards and general procedures for solving no-show, over-booking and GDS situations.		

UNIT 1 =To co-ordinate the operational running of the reception department	Realised	Evaluated
hotel policy and regulations on the procedures to follow regarding complaints, customers' inappropriate behaviour, etc.		
techniques and methods of collection, analysis and treatment of data of various types and with different goals or purposes.		
rules for communicating with hierarchy, colleagues, customers and external entities, public or other.		
organisation of work in reception, reception tasks and the application of work conditions, the meaning of team work in order to satisfy guests		
the basics of using hotel information system programmes and equipment		
the administrative procedures in a hotel		
the basic procedures for building an archive		
techniques and procedures for check-in and check-out		
information technology: instruments and programs (hardware and software)		
SKILL LEARNING OUTCOMES = He/she:	Realised	Evaluated
organises and establishes standards of performance of each type of activity		
makes decisions about changes in accommodation plans, depending on the events and strategies to maximise the hotel capacity		
manages check-in and check-out		
manages and makes appropriate decisions in specific situations of no-shows, over-booking, cancellations, waiting lists, or other unexpected occurrences		
plans strategies to maximise accommodation and occupations		
sets daily rate of accommodation, depending on the market		
creates records and bills services		
passes information among the different departments		
optimises the use of computer tools in the reception service		

UNIT 2 = To inform guests and advise them about services and events in the local environment	Realised	Evaluated
LEARNING OUTCOMES		
To organise and manage information about services in the local environment		
To improve the level of customer satisfaction about the services provided		
To propose and apply measures to foster customer loyalty		
To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities		
To co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel		
To acquire and evaluate tourism data from different sources, advise guests and sell services		
To prepare and offer tourism programmes of the home environment and sell these		
To encourage and co-ordinate connection among individual tourist subjects (establishments) on the area of the tourism destination, advance informational, selling and marketing services in home environment tourism, plan packet offers		
To advise clients on the opportunities offered by the territory		
To manage a benefit in rural tourism		
LOs IN TERMS OF COMPETENCE = He/she is able to:	Realised	Evaluated
execute more specific or complex activities, such as welcoming and taking care of VIP customers, groups, persons with disabilities, children, etc.		
propose programmes, packages of services or promotional means relevant in commercial terms and able to capture the interest of customers		
obtain and provide meaningful data for developing strategies, programmes and resources appropriate to market trends and customer interests		
acquire and evaluate tourism data from different sources, advise guests and sell services		
prepare and offer the tourism programmes of home environment and sell these		
provide information about natural and cultural heritage		
take into account the motivations and expectations of customers		
conduct an assessment of the service (customer satisfaction, compliance with specifications)		
inform customers about the possibilities offered by the territory		
KNOWLEDGE LEARNING OUTCOMES = He/she knows:	Realised	Evaluated
general protocol and techniques for receiving and hosting V.I.P. and special guests		

UNIT 2 = To inform guests and advise them about services and events in the local environment	Realised	Evaluated
techniques for research and data analysis for the exploration of interests and specific motivations within different client types		
techniques for improving customer loyalty		
information about the region (transport, historical aspect, etc)		
the offer of the home environment		
statistical methods and different types of statistical data		
different activities which can be integrated in the tourism offer		
procedures and instruments for organising and implementing reservations		
legislation on the preservation of natural and cultural heritage		
business materials (publications) in foreign languages		
the tourist location and tourism environment		
local and protected local products		
eating and cultural habits of guests		
techniques for understands different groups of guests, their needs and customs		
differentiation of verbal and non-verbal communication		
different promotional approaches		
SKILL LEARNING OUTCOMES = He/she:	Realised	Evaluated
interacts with customers correctly and with empathy, fulfilling their needs, solving any problems, demonstrating commitment to offering a pleasant stay, enhancing their satisfaction and making them loyal to the hotel		
establishes contacts with various entities and potential customers in order to obtain information on present and future interests regarding services in the field of tourism and hospitality		
collaborates in the assessment and improvement of the services provided to customers		
acquires and provides information about the region		
orders promotional materials		
informs guests about local tourism events and activities		
presents the specificities of individual tourism areas (geographical characteristics, cultural, natural and historical development of home region, capital city)		
uses appropriate business communication		
plans and implements business interviews		
reacts appropriately in problem and/or conflict situations		
uses the appropriate promotional approach according to the potential guest		
presents him/herself to guests adequately dressed and tidy (clothes, external appearance, tidiness)		

UNIT 3 = To maintain efficient communications and to collaborate with other departments in the hotel	Realised	Evaluated
LEARNING OUTCOMES		
To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities		
To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities		
To organise and lead team work activities		
To collaborate in his/her own sector with the organisational choices of the management		
LOs IN TERMS OF COMPETENCE = He/she is able to:	Realised	Evaluated
communicate and establish effective interpersonal relationships with colleagues, hierarchy and external activities		
organise and lead team work activities		
present him/herself with a professional/vocational portfolio		
communicate in written and oral form in at least two languages		
use different codes and methods of interaction according to the type of client, in order to describe and enhance the service offered, orally (in the presence of the client or on the 'phone) and in written form (drawing up estimates, e-mails, etc.)		
KNOWLEDGE LEARNING OUTCOMES = He/she knows:	Realised	Evaluated
rules for communicating with hierarchy, colleagues, customers and external entities, public and others		
standards for communications with hierarchy, colleagues, subordinates, customers and other entities within the reception service		
different methods of presentation		
principles of the preparation of presentations (greetings, introduction, core, conclusion, questions)		
the terms of work, the working group, work organisation		
theoretical communications models.		
principles of communications and sales psychology.		
psychological fundamentals useful for understanding the relationship dynamics of various types of clients.		
Level B2 language competences, including the technical terms of the sector, for English.		
Level B2 language competences, including the technical terms of the sector, for a third language (French / German / Spanish).		
SKILL LEARNING OUTCOMES = He/she:	Realised	Evaluated
communicates with the various internal and external entities and co-ordinates the various sectors of the hotel unit		
co-ordinates with other sectors for the collection and transmission of information, and co-ordination of procedures		
publicly performs in different business situations		

UNIT 4 = To choose appropriate ways of organising his/her own and, as necessary, staff activities in the reception department	Realised	Evaluated
LEARNING OUTCOMES		
To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities		
To ensure the human and functional management of the work team		
To organise and co-ordinate activities in the reception service and ensure the most complex activities;		
To co-operate with the personnel department in human resource management;		
To identify the principles and techniques of human resource management, leadership and interpersonal relations;		
To identify the key aspects and characteristics of enterprise management and the organisation of a hotel unit		
To analyse, plan and prepare one's own work and to control that of co-workers		
To analyse, plan and prepare the work of co-workers and control/ supervise this		
To be responsible for the organisation and look after the smooth, undisturbed flow of work activities of complementary hotel offer.		
To recognise and evaluate work situations and problems, applying technical knowledge and ability in a pro-active way to design organisational structures in relation to one's own activities, resources and needs;		
To effectively handle relations in an organisational and work context both within his/her own work group and outside it.		
LOs IN TERMS OF COMPETENCE = He/she is able to:	Realised	Evaluated
develop or assist in developing strategies for the optimisation of services in the accommodation area		
make accurate work estimations and plan daily activities to meet the service needs and accomplish the objectives of the sector		
organise and establish rules for carrying out various activities in order to make the resources productive, make the sector more productive and ensure unity and the safety of persons		
co-ordinate and supervise the activities of the sector aiming at the provision of quality services.		
make decisions on complex situations or problems within the reception service activities		
identify needs within the human resources department which meet the real needs of the sector		
analyse, plan and prepare one's own work and control / supervise the work of co-workers		
KNOWLEDGE LEARNING OUTCOMES = He/she knows:	Realised	Evaluated
planning techniques, applied to reception services		
types of activities sought by the hotel, their characteristics and work requirements in relation to the reception services received (gym, room hire, events, etc.)		

UNIT 4 = To choose appropriate ways of organising his/her own and, as necessary, staff activities in the reception department	Realised	Evaluated
techniques for collecting, analysing and processing data, applicable to the organisation of the reception work		
planning, organisation and co-ordination methods.		
techniques of work organisation and management and time control, applicable to the reception service		
techniques for the supervision and guidance of reception staff.		
techniques of organising and managing work teams and organisation and management of shift work		
general legislation on shift work, holidays and absences and the hotel's rules on the subject		
concepts and basic functions of personnel management		
basic functions of the manager (planning, organising, directing, controlling) and their general features		
concept of planning (starting point, arrival point, pathway elements)		
methods and general techniques of planning, definition of objectives and scheduling of activities		
components of the human resource management activity, administrative management, functional and human management		
code of conduct in accordance with the business concept of the hotel		
standards of health protection at the work place		
techniques for determining the needs of human and material resources applicable to the reception service		
key elements in the organisation of departments or sectors (goals and plans, authority relations, work organisation, people's characteristics)		
SKILL LEARNING OUTCOMES = He/she:	Realised	Evaluated
establishes goals and plans strategies of reception service operation, development and profitability		
anticipates needs of human and material resources considering the objectives, strategies and occupational forecasts		
plans and distributes daily activities, taking into account the estimated volume, types of work to do and execution times of tasks, assignments, strategies and objectives for the sector and the human resources available		
organises and establishes standards of performance for each type of activity		
establishes organisational standards for documentation of the reception service which contribute to the speed and efficiency of paperwork		
organises work shifts for the reception service, according to expected activities, general flows, peak workloads and available personnel		
consistently applies the regulations of health protection to his/her own work and the work of co workers		

UNIT 5 = To perform financial assignments, conduct commercial activities and ensure quality control of the services and work provided	Realised	Evaluated
LEARNING OUTCOMES		
To plan or collaborate in the planning of the reception service activities		
To organise and co-ordinate the activities of the reception service and ensure the most complex activities		
To co-operate in the sales effort of the hotel		
To identify the key aspects and characteristics of enterprise management and organisation		
To identify the fundamental marketing techniques		
To collaborate in coordinating and carrying out the business marketing interventions for his/her own sector		
To prepare and implement calculations and monitor financial business transactions		
To market products and services and compose sales contracts		
To organise and manage the administrative procedures connected with the functioning of his/her own sector		
LOs IN TERMS OF COMPETENCE = He/she is able to:	Realised	Evaluated
make decisions about hotel rates in line with the market situation, which make resources profitable and optimise the cost / revenue relationship		
demonstrate knowledge of the purpose and general operation of a hotel, particularly, the reception, the general rules of organisation and business management, rules of exploration of new markets and organisations or means, suppliers of useful data for forecasts and planning of various strategies		
control the conditions determining the need for price changes (researching and collecting data) and impose changes accordingly		
manage and make decisions on situations involving billing problems and customer accounts, city-ledger and the current accounts of the company, etc.		
propose programmes, packages of services or promotional means that are relevant in commercial terms and able to capture the interest of customers		
obtain and provide meaningful data for developing strategies, programmes and resources appropriate to market trends and customer interests		
market products and services and compose sales contracts		
prepare and implement calculations and monitor financial business transactions		
KNOWLEDGE LEARNING OUTCOMES = He/she knows:	Realised	Evaluated
the concept of budget, its parts and items		
concepts and rules for calculating cost / benefit		
rules for the exploration of new markets in hotel accommodation		
quality and productivity standards for reception services		

UNIT 5 = To perform financial assignments, conduct commercial activities and ensure quality control of the services and work provided	Realised	Evaluated
methods and techniques of quality control, applicable to reception activities		
elements of tax and fiscal law		
types of accounting books and documents and their characteristics		
storing bookkeeping documents		
the main accounting software		
general and internal regulations and requirements on billing problems and customer accounts, city-ledger and current account(s) of the company, debt collection difficulties, etc.		
techniques for promoting and selling services		
techniques for improving customer loyalty		
result control techniques in hotel accommodation		
methods and techniques of quality control and its basic requirements (objectivity, flexibility, appropriateness to the situation and possibility of correction)		
marketing techniques for the hospitality industry		
incomes and outflows		
differentiation of expenses		
the term "depreciation"		
the basic expert terms in the field of tourism and hospitality		
basic accounting standards and indicators of business success		
importance of investments		
techniques for the design and organisation of dissemination and promotion services, applicable to specific situations		
SKILL LEARNING OUTCOMES = He/she:	Realised	Evaluated
makes predictions and budget proposals of revenue and costs of the reception service (staff, materials, uniforms, etc.), monitors compliance with the established budget and proposes changes if necessary		
ensures market research through contacts with public entities, similar enterprises or by other means		
develops procedures for customer fidelity following their stay, trying to understand their tastes and interests, contacting them to show the interest of the hotel in their well-being and satisfaction, and developing hosting procedures which are appropriate to their personal characteristics		
ensures the monitoring of results achieved by the hotel unit		
identifies and characterises the general principles and fundamental techniques of work organisation and quality control		
prepares a simple statement of business results		
follows / monitors current economic events and processes		
handles agency commissions		
deals with overdue payments		
takes care of ordinary administrative management		

Attachment nr. 06: Verification and Evaluation Method Grid

Type of test		Instruments	Observations	Application in the UNITS					
				1	2	3	4	5	
WRITTEN TESTS	Closed – ended questions	Multiple choice							
		Questions to be completed (with the choice of a set of options)							
		Fill in the blanks (with the choice of a set of options)							
		Mini-cases (with multiple choice questions)							
		Matching questions							
	Open – ended questions	Open-ended questions							
		Multiple choice							
		Questions to be completed (free wording)							
		Fill in the blanks (free wording)							
		Mini-cases (with open-ended questions)							
	Case solutions	With free wording							
		With open-ended questions							
		With closed - ended questions							
	"Traditional" tests	Essays							
		Problems							
Exercises (e.g.: equations, etc.)									
Type of test		Instruments	Observations	1	2	3	4	5	
ORAL TESTS	Interviews	structured							
		semi-structured							
		unstructured							
PR AC	Check-list of observations	process related							
		product related							

TIC AL TES TS	Technical reports							
	Check-list of observations	process related						
SIMULATED PERFORMANCES	Technical reports	product related						



