



**1st Web Conference**  
**“Network for the *Mobility* of Learning Outcomes”**  
**December 6, 2011**  
**Report**

*This document summarizes the results achieved during the first Web Conference of Project COLOR. The Conference, which was held on December 6, 2011, was organized by ISFOL (Project Coordinator) with the technical support of IAL Friuli and in collaboration with national partners. The 50 institutional stakeholders and Italian operators participating in the WC had the opportunity to share experiences and good practices addressed at improving the mobility of Learning Outcomes (LOs).*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Moderator **Giorgia Costalonga (IAL)** welcomed all participants and introduced the speakers (*name and presentation titles are listed below*) participating in the first Web Conference as part of a wider plan to promote the Project COLOR. After having reviewed the project objectives, the moderator introduced Gianni Biagi, Director of the Training and Employment Section of the Regione Toscana, who in his double role as project partner and coordinator of the State-Regions Conference Ninth Commission on Education and Training opened the works.

#### **SPEAKERS**

This is a summary of the presentations made during the Web Conference. Please note: summaries are briefer for those speakers who provided a written presentation (that you will find attached) and to which you can turn for further details.

 **Project COLOR: “Networked Actors for the Mobility of Learning Outcomes”**  
**Gianni Biagi – Regione Toscana**

After having presented colleagues Silvia Marconi (Regione Toscana) and Angelo Cornacchia (IAL Toscana), **Gianni Biagi** pointed out that the Tuscany Region is participating in the Project COLOR with the firm belief that it is absolutely necessary to move beyond national borders to guarantee the recognition of credits and qualification certificates. This is a fundamental premise for a true integration of the European system.

Answering a question on the recognition of qualifications and skills amongst Italian Regions, Biagi illustrated the many existing differences on the certification front: some Regions have already activated certification processes and systems to recognize competences as established by European certification standards, whilst other Regions are still working on this.

At the national level, the Regione Toscana, in its role as Coordinator of Regions, functions as a reference point for The Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Labour and guarantees the respect of EQF standards and role descriptions in Italy. At present, the aim is to develop and approve a series of documents meeting European standards.

In describing the national partnership, Biagi remarked that the five Regions participating in the Project COLOR would use their regional networks to leverage the results of the project objectives, which include:

- recognizing qualifications and Learning Outcomes based on national and regional agreements;
- increasing the number of subjects involved in the project and extending the recognition procedures being developed by Project COLOR to the 21 qualifications recently approved by the States-Region Conference.

A further fundamental objective is to employ the ECVET System to guarantee the recognition of national qualifications so that the 21 qualifications will be recognized at the European level. This would be truly beneficial not only to social partners, but also to the European economy as a whole.

Although starting with a fragmented system, Biagi believes that the Project COLOR and the work underway with the Regions and Ministries will soon lead to a homogeneous regional and national activity that meets European standards. Together with other Regions and the relevant ministries, the Regione Toscana has issued a *Citizen's training portfolio (Libretto formativo)* involving redundancy fund beneficiaries registering at job centres. The Portfolio will be discussed with all social partners in January.

"This is an important phase. The conditions are favourable for defining a system including EQF references and the acquisition of non-formal and informal competences. The Project COLOR can benefit from this," concluded the representative of the Regione Toscana.

### **Project ICARE – Project COLOR. Distinctive Elements and Complementarity** **Michela Vecchia, CEFASS Lombardia.**

**Michela Vecchia** presented the distinctive elements and complementary features of the Project I CARE, which was financed in the same round as COLOR and is another ECVET pilot in Italy (*see attachment 1*).

Michela began by presenting the three project objectives:

- Simplifying the recognition of competences acquired in other contexts and learning systems by individuals, operating in the fields of personal and healthcare, who move about Europe;
- Simplifying the development of lifelong learning in the sector through the use of evaluation tools and methodologies as well as the recognition and transferability of Learning Outcomes;
- Simplifying the job market integration of foreigners who wish to work (with accepted credentials) in the personal and healthcare sectors.

Subsequently, Michela turned to the beginning of the project and the selection of 7 qualifications connected to the personal care and healthcare sectors in Lombardy. During the first phase, we ascertained which profiles, in each participating country, were described in detail at the national level. Subsequently, we concentrated on regulated profiles, those with a definite educational profile, and turned to education and labour for support with our experimentation. Michela Vecchia welcomed the interest expressed by the Regione Calabria during the course of the Web Conference.

The project is currently developing competence matrices. Our transnational partners are verifying the correspondence of common LOs so that we may continue to develop experimental tools and verify - on the field - if there is a role for the recognition of learning. A matrix was developed that uses complete sentences to describe profiles, LOs, the regional standards of Lombardy and the data observed on the field. The Knowledge Skills Matrix will be used to describe competences. The profile descriptions revealed significant levels of know-how and skills in the field, especially for healthcare and personal care assistants.

Similarities and differences between COLOR and I CARE include:

- a common target group: immigrants and individuals with specific professional skills that have no formal certification;
- a common profile: healthcare worker;
- the different role of European partners: supervisory in the Project COLOR as opposed to reciprocal collaboration in identifying common tools amongst countries in the Project I CARE.

Nonetheless, the two projects have the same objectives and expected results: work towards validating and recognising informal, non-formal and transferrable profiles; both projects entail a test phase to verify the feasibility of these processes.

Then, Michela presented the three reports produced to date (available at <http://www.icareproject.eu>):

- Identification of qualifications in the healthcare and personal care sectors;
- Analysis of existing methodological approaches for the application of ECVET at the national, regional and sector-specific levels;
- Data synthesis; Evaluation of the transparency of qualifications and identification of the most suitable methodology.

The attached presentation is also available at [www.color-project.it](http://www.color-project.it) in the “materials” section.

■ **Individuals and Mobility Work. An Overview of the Last Caritas Report.**  
Giancamillo Trani – Caritas Diocesana Napoli

**Giancamillo Trani**, editor of the Caritas Statistic Dossier, presented an overview - based on the recent Caritas Migrants Report - of data on foreigners in Italy (see *Attachment no. 2*). There were 4,028,370 Italian emigrants or 6.7% of Italian residents and roughly equivalent to the number of immigrants living in Italy. Italy has become a major immigration centre, along with Germany, France and the United Kingdom (7.5% of foreigners arrived in Italy in 2010).

Istat data (21<sup>st</sup> Report) indicates that in Italy:

- Registered residents are 4,570,317 with a growing percentage of women (51.8%)
- The total legal presence is estimated at 4,968,000
- Ascertained illegal immigrants were 50,717
- Most immigrants arrive from Europe (53.4%) and Africa (21.6%) The Asian community is growing (16.8%).

The largest community is the Romanian one (ca. one million individuals). In geographical terms, the presence of legal immigrants in Italy is concentrated in the North (Lombardy, Veneto, Lazio and Emilia-Romagna) and the Centre (Campania). The South and islands have a greater presence of clandestine or illegal immigrants.

Work and family are the factors that allow immigrant stabilization in Italy (more than 2 million). The service sectors employ the most foreign workers (60%): in services to families (23%) and construction (16%). The data is skewed due to the enormous number of illegal workers employed in family services (cleaners, baby sitters, etc.) and in the construction sector.

Mr. Trani concluded with a reflection on the Law regulating migration. At present, a national bill regulates the number of immigrants in Italy based on required foreign labour. Mr. Trani defines this bill as a *ticketless lottery*. In 2010, the bill established the allocation of 98,000 entry permits, but this number dropped to 88,000 in 2011. The decree bill, which will no longer be in effect next year, will certainly lead to an increase in irregular and clandestine immigration.

The attached presentation is also available at [www.color-project.it](http://www.color-project.it) in the “materials” section.

■ **ECVET and the Importance of Learning Outcomes European Strategy and Opportunities for Italy**  
Marta Santanicchia – ISFOL

**Marta Santanicchia** introduced the ECVET system in the larger context of the European strategy for the transparency and mobility of qualifications, degrees and competences. In fact, the strategy is expressed in terms of a series of processes that are being developed at a European and national level. These include: EQF, EQAVET, NFIL (for the recognition of non formal and informal learning), ECTS and EUROPASS (see attachment 3). All of these processes are

based on a common approach to Learning Outcomes and focus on assessable and compatible results, independently from the formative approach. Training and learning pathways are increasingly differentiated and fragmented. In fact, the New Agenda for Adult Learning (Council of the European Union, 28 November 2011) addressed the fact that, due to the instability of the job market and the current economic crisis, adults - especially low-skilled and low-qualified individuals – need to be presented with excellent opportunities to develop their professional and personal competences and reduce social exclusion.

ECVET is a system that has been conceived - and continues to be developed – on the basis of a national and transnational framework, which analyzes the subsystems in different countries and simplifies the recognition of experiences of mobility, integrates them into learning pathways, makes the acquired qualifications more immediate, promotes mobility amongst the sub-systems and supports lifelong learning and flexibility by making qualification programmes and curricula more flexible.

ECVET is based on a series of specific parameters, including the following key concepts: Learning Outcomes – LO, “Description of what a learner knows, understands and is capable of doing at the end of a learning process. Results are defined in terms of knowledge, abilities and competences (skills)” and Qualifications (Diplomas and certificates) that embody the “formal result of an evaluation and validation process that is acquired when the relevant authority establishes that an individual's learning results correspond to pre-defined standards” (EQF Recommendation April 2008). For a qualification (and the LOs on which it is based) to be isolated from a specific formal context and be able to “move” about Europe, the evaluation and validation process that leads to the LO must be clear and concisely structured.

In most countries, the ECVET System is being developed via a series of different strategies (see CEDEFOP Working Paper n. 10, the Development of ECVET in Europe 2010) but with a preference for the development of pilot projects. The Project COLOR (together with the Project I CARE) was financed by the 2010 Call for proposals together with projects for national ECVET implementation operating on two integrated fronts:

#### 1. Creation and consolidation of partnerships of relevant authorities (nationally relevant and stable networks)

Project COLOR is operative in 5 Regions (Campania - Arlas - Lead Partner, Lazio, Piedmont and Tuscany, with Basilicata as an associate partner) that represent the national partnership and coordinate their respective regional networks. Isfol acts as a technical support coordinator. The European Partnership (National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development in Romania; the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework and the Malta Qualifications Council) provides consultancy and supervisory services.

#### 2. Application of specific ECVET techniques to a set of qualifications

COLOR operates at a 2-3 EQF level (practically all qualifications are not explicit) in the professional Healthcare and Construction areas. Amongst the various synergies with other fundamental elements of European strategy, ECVET recognizes non-formal and informal apprenticeships, facilitating the recognition of the experience in these two sectors and promoting the acquisition of a formal qualification. ECVET parameters are applied both at the local regional

qualification level (which are not based on national agreements) and to the Construction Operator and HealthCare Operator qualifications (which are based on national agreements).

The qualifications that need to be analysed have been selected since March, the context (sectors, qualification systems, standards, previous projects) have been analysed by the Regions (Background and Pilot Sector Reports) and the ECVET (Descriptive Report on Qualifications) qualification parameters have been adapted and analysed (first adaptation planned for the first phase).

The attached presentation is also available at [www.color-project.it](http://www.color-project.it) in the “materials” section.

## CONCLUSIONS

On behalf of Labour Councillor Severino Nappi, **Patrizia Di Monte (ARLAS Director)** pointed out that the Regione Campania chose to participate in Project COLOR not only because of the Italy's delay on these issues with respect to the June 2012 deadline, as already underlined by Mr. Biagi, but also due to the need to employ projects to create a system for the certification and recognition of competences. This is particularly true for weaker and mobile individuals, whose need of skill recognition is particularly important for their jobs.

The Director was positively impressed by the approach employed during the course of the conference to overcome auto-referential limits and affirmed that “a new wind is blowing and we are aware that we must make up the time lost.” The discussion revealed the common need to discuss these issues. Thus, as lead partner, the Director explained that “they would be diligent and allow the regional debate to be profitable and lead to a national agreement on the 21 qualifications and then focus on the more ambitious objective of recognizing these 21 qualifications at the European level.”

The Director also made an interesting remark on the *Citizen's training* portfolio: we will have to blend the many different experiences together in order to provide job centres with the necessary tools and knowledge to recognise qualifications amongst different local realities, in Italy and elsewhere. In conclusion, the Director expressed her hope that the Project COLOR would be able to accelerate this process and contribute to the ultimate objective of mutual recognition.

**Giorgia Costalonga** closed the works by thanking the speakers and reminding everybody that all relevant information and documents could be found on the COLOR site: <http://www.color-project.org> .

The Conference recording is available at:

[http://www.ialweb.it/archivio\\_scheda\\_live.asp?RecordID=8165](http://www.ialweb.it/archivio_scheda_live.asp?RecordID=8165)