

Administration Personnel?

Learning is not only classroom

Intellectual Output IO1- Comparative Report on the situation of the countries of the consortium as far as ECVET and EQF is concerned

(Intellectual Output 1)

Coordinator:

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Management Centre

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*Validation of
Formal, Non-
Formal and
Informal
Learning: The
case study of
Administration
Personnel*



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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Introduction

The Project EUPA_NEXT aims to develop a methodology for validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning concerning the non-regulated professions with the case study of the administration personnel. The European/International qualification for administration personnel will correspond to four levels of the European Qualification Framework (EQF) and contribute to the development of a European Area of skills and qualifications. EUPA_NEXT promotes the validation of knowledge, skills and competences using the assessment tool. Due to this project the training curriculum, training materials and online books corresponding to each of the four EQF levels will be developed. One of the objectives of the project is to increase the labour market relevance of the Vocational Education Training (VET). The research conducted during the beginning phase of the project EUPA_NEXT contributes to a comparative study on the situation of the partner countries concerning the development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), implementation of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) and validation of Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Learning in each of the partner country. The results of the research are incorporated into the comparative report which is a summary report based on the single national reports of five partner countries: Germany, Greece, Cyprus, Slovakia and Spain. The national reports embrace the desktop research and results of the interviews/questionnaires conducted with 18 stakeholders, 78 VET providers and 325 learners. The desktop research is carried on the development of NQF, the inclusion of Non-Formally and informally acquired skills in NQF and ECVET in each partner country. The aim of the interviews with stakeholders is to acquire information about the actual situation of the countries as far as EQF, NQF and ECVET are concerned. The questionnaires to VET providers are conducted to verify the level of their awareness about this framework and find out whether the training programs offered by the VET institutes are designed in accordance with EQF. The questionnaires filled by the group of learners serve as a source of data on their familiarity with EQF, NQF and ECVET. Through the questionnaires the information whether the learners choose the training programs taking into consideration the specific level of the training according to the National Qualifications Framework will be gathered. The overall report consists of the introduction, summary of the desktop research, the results of the interviews and questionnaires to stakeholders, VET providers and learners, glossary and references.

Part 1 Summary of desktop research

Development of the NQF in EU-countries (Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Slovakia, Spain)

The National Qualifications Frameworks have already been developed in all partner countries. **Cyprus** has submitted Cyprus national qualifications framework (CyQF) which includes all levels and types of qualifications from all subsystems of education and training, from primary to higher education qualifications¹. **Germany** is implementing an eight-level National Qualifications framework for lifelong learning based on learning outcomes (German Qualifications Framework known by its German abbreviation 'DQR')². **Greece** has developed a comprehensive Hellenic qualifications framework (HQF) for lifelong learning, aiming at a coherent and comprehensive system of qualifications from all parts and levels of education and training³. **Slovak** Qualification Framework (SKKR) has been finalized in 2015. **Spain** has developed its qualifications framework for lifelong learning (ESQF) known as Spanish qualifications framework (Marco Español de Cualificaciones) (MECU)⁴.

To be considered as a fully operational the National Qualifications Framework should match the following criteria: full implementation of quality assurance arrangements, assignment of qualifications to levels and integration of external, private and validation-based qualifications. The framework is not yet operational in the partner countries with an exception of Germany. The German NQF (DQR) is operational, especially in the context of formal and vocational education. Key documents and responsibilities for DQR implementation have been agreed among key stakeholders and published⁵. The DQR has an orientation character and no regulatory function. The system for

¹ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/cyprus-european-inventory-nqf-2014>

² <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/germany-european-inventory-nqf-2014>

³ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/greece-european-inventory-nqf-2014>

⁴ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/spain-european-inventory-nqf-2014>

⁵ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/germany-european-inventory-nqf-2014>

eligibility in Germany does not change due to the DQR. The admittance provisions still apply to the qualifications, not the DQR levels. The attainment of a specific DQR level does not automatically entitle access to the “next level”. The framework is not yet operational in **Cyprus**. CyQF will be established at the Ministry of Education and Culture as an in-service department and will be implemented gradually⁶. Due to the fact that the **Slovak** SKKR exists only for a very short period of time it is partially operational. Though a draft presidential decree on HQF has been prepared, which will clarify many operational aspects, the framework in **Greece** is not yet operational. The Royal Decree on the introduction of MECU will establish the legal basis for its implementation but this has not yet come into force in **Spain**.

The Qualifications Frameworks in the partner countries have nearly a similar structure to the European Qualification Framework. The National Qualifications Framework has eight levels which cover the entire range of qualifications from compulsory education up to highest education. The levels are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence. However, the German DQR has a “four-pillar structure” with Professional competence (Knowledge/Skills) and Personal Competence (Social Competence/Autonomy). However, there is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications system and the level descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework.

State of art referencing the national qualifications levels to the appropriate levels of the EQF

Further development and application of the National Qualifications Framework is expected in the partner countries. The referencing to EQF levels of all new qualification certifications issued, further activities to include Non-Formally and informally acquired competences, evaluation of DQR classification and allocations, eventual adjustments and allocation of school-based general education qualifications are some of the activities planned in **Germany**. The **Slovak** SKKR presupposes the anticipated influences on the Slovak qualifications system, mainly in the area of recognition of prior learning, strengthening the position of Non-Formal learning and support of recognition of Informal

⁶ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/cyprus-european-inventory-nqf-2014>

Learning. In Cyprus the the development of the CyQF is part of an ambitious reform programme in the education and training system of Cyprus. The system of vocational qualifications is also a distinct but integral part of the national qualification framework.

Bodies responsible for NQF

In each partner country there is a National Coordination Point (NCP) for NQF. In **Cyprus**, NCP comprises representatives from the Ministry of Education and Culture (Departments of Primary, Secondary General, Secondary Technical and Vocational, and Higher and Tertiary Education, the Pedagogical Institute and the Centre for Educational Research and Evaluation), the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance and the Human Resource Development Authority. The main body in charge of implementation is a coordination point for the **German** qualifications framework, set up by a joint initiative of the federal government and the *Länder*⁷. The implementation of **Hellenic** Qualifications Framework is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Research and religious Affairs, with the National organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and vocational Guidance (E.O.P.P.E.P.) as the main actor. Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak republic (MESRaS SR) is the Owner of NQF implementation process in **Slovakia**, ŠIOV (State Vocational Education Institute) is the National Coordination Point for SKKR. National Institute of Qualifications (INCUAL) is responsible for the **Spanish** Qualifications Framework.

Various stakeholders participated in the process of the development of NQF in each country. “A decision to create an NQF was taken by the Council of Ministers in 2008” in **Cyprus**. Then “a National committee for the development and establishment of the NQF was set up”⁸. A final proposal for a comprehensive national qualifications framework for lifelong learning based on learning outcomes (Deutscher Qualifikationsrahmen, DQR) in **Germany** was adopted in March 2011 by the working group Arbeitskreis DQR (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung and Kultusministerkonferenz, 2011)⁹. The framework of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF) in **Greece** was adopted by the

⁷ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/germany-european-inventory-nqf-2014>

⁸ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/6112>

⁹ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/6112>

Minister for Education and Religious Affairs in July 2013¹⁰. The development work of the **Slovak** SKKR included such stakeholders as: Sector Councils, representatives of all directly governed organizations of MESRaS SR, all resort ministries, as well as local governments and other agencies. A wide range of the stakeholders such as social partners, institutional coordination bodies, consultative bodies, agencies for evaluation and others (professional corporations and associations) took part in the development of the **Spanish** Qualifications Framework.

State of art in the context of inclusion of Non-Formally and informally acquired skills in NQF (National Qualifications Framework)

Efforts have been taken to include the validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in partner countries. The governmental organizations have already initiated the development of the validation mechanisms and their inclusion in the NQF. Different projects are carried out in some of partner countries aiming identification and documentation of learning outcomes.

Cyprus

The inclusion of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in NQF is aimed in Cyprus. In 2013, following the Council Recommendation the cabinet of Ministers approved the establishment of an interdepartmental Committee to develop and see to the implementation (by 2018) of a comprehensive action plan for the validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. The Committee will take into account the work undertaken by the Human Resources Development Authority (HRDA) and incorporate it in a more comprehensive scheme which will include the general education sector, the adult education sector as well as the Non-Formal learning¹¹.

The Ministry of Education and Culture also runs a project co-funded by the European Social Fund (2014-2020) and the Republic of Cyprus, which aims to fill the gaps in the validation process mainly for educational purposes and/or other purposes.

Although specific efforts are under way, there is no comprehensive national strategy in Cyprus for the validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning.

¹⁰ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/greece-european-inventory-nqf-2014>

¹¹ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/cyprus-european-inventory-nqf-2014>

Germany

The first activities to include Non-Formally and Informally acquired skills have been already undertaken in Germany. In order to include results of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in the development of DQR an expert workshop was established in 2010 and its results showed that Germany had already a range of procedures to recognize informally acquired competences. The working group of experts is to develop the criteria for inclusion of qualifications from the non-formal sector.

There are also several initiatives below legislative level, in form of projects or different stakeholders' programmes. These relate mainly to identification and documentation of learning outcomes and are not generally linked to NQF developments. One of the most successful initiatives is the ProfilPASS, a system of counselling and documentation of learning outcomes based on biographical methods. Although the development of the NQF has strengthened work on validation, in Germany there is still no legal basis for validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in NQF.

Greece

The National Qualifications Framework for Non-Formal and Informal Learning in Greece is being supervised and managed by the state and especially by the Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. E.O.P.P.E.P undertakes the assignment of qualifications, i.e. the knowledge, skills and competencies of citizens acquired through formal and Non-Formal education, but also for Informal Learning (work experience, experiential learning).

Greece has a legal framework, which aims at treating validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in a systemic way; however, this framework has not yet been put in place due to a lack of political support. There is still a need to create the necessary conditions for validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning, bringing together all stakeholders and agreeing on measures, terms, objectives and commitment.

Slovakia

In the Slovak Republic, a comprehensive system of assessment and recognition of Non-Formal and

Informal Learning and quality assurance system of education is still missing.

In the field of further education in the Slovak Republic, there is a low and unstructured level of its linking with the initial VET. Certificates of completion issued by further education institutions indicate the eligibility of a graduate in order to assert in the areas and scope according to the objective of the course/activity. However, the acceptance of a certificate is upon an employer; there are not yet established criteria for assessing the results of courses.

The aim of the amendment that has already started is reflection of needs, terminological unification and above all, enhancement of participation and interest of the adult population in further education. This process might result in 2 Acts, one of which will focus especially on recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. However discussion has only started and no particular outcomes have been officially announced yet.

Spain

The NQF of Spain aims to reinforce the link to validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. The new Royal decree for the recognition of professional competences (1224/2009) was adopted. It regulates the procedures for validating professional competences acquired through Non-Formal and Informal Learning and professional experience. The national catalogue of professional qualifications is used as a standard for validating Non-Formal learning as well as for official diplomas on vocational training (CEDEFOP, 2013).

Spain does not have a comprehensive national strategy for validation; different laws frame validation, targeting different education sectors. The Organic Law of Education and the Organic Law of Universities incorporate actions to validate Non-Formal and Informal Learning, such as access exams to VET and university studies aimed at those people who do not have the required qualifications¹².

¹² <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/spain-european-inventory-nqf-2014>

State of the art in the implementation of ECVET in the partner countries

Although the ECVET is mostly understood as an instrument of transnational mobility in vocational education and training, it can be also applied beyond mobility activities e.g. transferability and definition of learning outcomes for various VET trainings. There is still need to extend the potential of ECVET among various target groups, according to the recommendation of ECVET experts, *“the stakeholders in initial training are already aware of ECVET while other areas of education like continuing training are not”*¹³.

The ECVET in partner countries is usually used as an instrument of transnational mobility. The partner countries give a number of the examples for projects concerning the implementation of ECVET.

Cyprus

A working committee on ECVET development and implementation in Cyprus was set up in September 2011. It comprises of stakeholders from the public and the private sectors as well as private providers of VET.

Erasmus+ National Agency is the ECVET National Coordination Point and Contact Point for ECVET National Team.

In Cyprus, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is used in higher education and is linked to learning outcomes for the majority of the programmes. However, universities do not provide full or partial qualifications through recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. In practice, Non-Formal learning is not recognised within higher education; but in some cases, Informal Learning/previous work experience may be taken into consideration. Nonetheless, it is considered a very unusual practice in the higher education institutions.

However, ECVET is not yet in place.

¹³ http://www.ecvet-info.de/media/Recommendations_of_Team_of_ECVET_Experts_2015.pdf

- The IVET system in Cyprus is mainly input-oriented (length of education and training programmes, quality of teachers) and does not utilize units or modules to qualifications or training programmes.
- Successful completion of the course is a prerequisite for the award of the state-recognised certificate.
- Education and training providers validate achieved learning, while the responsible ministries and sectoral bodies validate and recognise it and issue the certificate.
- There are no situations of transfer of assessed learning between qualifications, or institutions.

The ECVET system is planned to be developed in Cyprus with some elements of it to exist in the case of SVQ (System of Vocational Qualifications established and operated by HRDA), through which knowledge, skills and competences are assessed based on Standards of Vocational Qualifications that are developed. ECVET is expected to be integrated in the new curricula. For this reason, pilot ECVET projects will be implemented, designed by the ECVET European experts groups. Awareness raising events on ECVET have taken place and are planned in the short-term period.

There are a number of projects on ECVET in Cyprus. The **ECVET4Practitioners** (ECVET for practitioners) project aims to facilitate and promote student geographical mobility as a recognized and integrated part of Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification programmes within the hospitality sector. The project aims to achieve this goal by developing a mobility network in hospitality which will utilize the European Credit transfer system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) – between VET providers in five countries: Finland, Cyprus, Netherlands, Spain and UK. The main deliverable of the project is a toolkit that provides practitioners from the hospitality sector with access to information on how to implement practicum and study mobility using the European Credits for Vocational Education and Training system (ECVET).

The project **ECVET for Permeability and Transferability between the Non-Formal and Formal VET System** (ECVET PERMIT) aims to implement the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) methodology in the curricula of VET study programmes within the Non-Formal and

formal VET system, at national and EU level, in an effort to increase the permeability and transferability of the learning outcomes achieved within different learning contexts.

Germany

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has commissioned the National Agency Education for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (NA at BIBB) to set up the ECVET National Coordination Point (NCP-ECVET). The central task of the NCP-ECVET is to advise vet-providers and support them in the development of practical instruments and in the development of a common understanding of learning outcomes. The ECVET experts together with the National Coordination Point organized workshops on formulation of learning outcomes in mobility contexts for ECVET practitioners in schools and companies.

Since 2012 the ECVET National Experts have been carrying out more than 200 activities on dissemination and implementation of ECVET in Germany. Within those activities and events the Experts collected experiences and expertise on the current state of art of ECVET implementation in Germany. In 2014, the ECVET experts put in place 43 activities, e.g. counselling, workshops, presentations, conferences etc. In the years 2012 and 2013 the experts carried out 100 activities, among others 30 presentations about ECVET concept. The aim of the activities was to emphasize the added value of the ECVET among stakeholders, companies, schools, chambers, ministries.

Several ECVET pilot projects and projects implementing the ECVET approach were carried out in Germany. **ICARE**, the project dedicated to improving the mobility for the personal care and social workers, was one of the ECVET Pilot Projects of the second generation. This project implemented the experimental application of the ECVET system for recognition of qualifications and career paths in the field of personal care and social work. As a result the recognition model was developed and validated in the countries participating in the project¹⁴.

Partners working on the project **TRIFT** (a Leonardo-da-Vinci-Transfer of Innovation-Project) elaborated a Competence Matrix (according to the VQTS-model) for the professional area 'foreign trade', which allows the mapping of competences into competence areas and competence development steps. One of the issues of the project was the allocation of credit points according to

¹⁴ <http://www.icareproject.eu/pages/news.html>

the ECVET-process. As a result this project allows the distribution of ECVET-credit-points in the field of foreign trade¹⁵.

EREIVET is a network project which aimed to develop the strategies for the enhancement of learning cross-border mobility using the following instruments as ECVET and EUROPASS. EREIVET developed the unit concerning Office administration which also ensures the compliance with ECVET principles¹⁶. According to the National Agency BiBB in the last round of the projects within the programmes ERASMUS + more than 15 % of applicants declared using of ECVET elements. Additionally, according to the statistic of NA BIBB on the basis of survey with more than 240 respondents (representatives of education sector), the knowledge and use of ECVET is growing.¹⁷

Greece

The Greek education and training system needs to be reformed to fully adopt the learning outcomes approach. The IVET system in Greece is mainly input-oriented but there are courses in which the curriculum follows a learning outcomes format, as the corresponding national occupational standards apply a learning outcomes approach. Three laws (Law 3879/2010, Law 4115/2013 and Law 4186/2013) establish the development of a credit system in line with ECVET (units of learning outcomes, credit points and partnerships) and create the necessary legal and regulatory framework. The laws are not yet being put into practice. The most recent (4186/2013) considers the development of curricula for the EPAL and the IEK using the learning outcomes approach and in line with ECVET, taking into account the existing national occupational profiles. It also regulates all issues in relation to the management and operation of E.O.P.P.E.P and confirms that E.O.P.P.E.P will be the ECVET NCP and the body in charge of implementing a national credit system for VET. As part of its institutional operation, E.O.P.P.E.P, in cooperation with all social partners, is involved in the activities related to the implementation of ECVET both at national and regional level.

Stakeholders promote ECVET through several events, which take place in the implementation stage of European projects they are involved in. These indicative activities are not taking place under the auspices of the national point for ECVET and EQF. Unfortunately, not many activities have been

¹⁵ <http://www.trift.eu/project.html>

¹⁶ <http://www.ereivet.net/index.php/en/>

¹⁷ Online Umfrage zu ECVET 2014, <http://www.ecvet-info.de/de/286.php>

organized in cooperation with EOPPEP and/or Cedefop in Greece. In fact, only few official events have taken place in the previous years.

Greece is testing different ECVET components within the projects. **ECVET STEP** (ECVET for Strengthening Training to Employment Pathways) focused on the development of an ECVET Capability Maturity Framework (CMF) which will allow VET-related organizations and individual actors across Europe, starting from the agricultural domain but ranging to other domains and sectors, to understand and reap the benefits of ECVET from their perspective as well as to track their performance and to assure and control the quality of the integration of the ECVET system into their existing processes and workflows.

Be-TWIN 2 (Be-TWIN 2 ECTS-ECVET: building bridges and overcoming differences) intended to respond to EU policies by setting the overarching aim to facilitate a common implementation of ECVET and ECTS for improving learner's and workers' mobility, linking the benefits of both credit systems, fostering mutual understanding and promoting the transferability and recognition of qualifications in Europe.

The aim of the project "Highlight the Competences: European cooperation for a system of credit transfer for **VET-ECVET**, relating competence and professional needs of the cooperative enterprises working in the services sector" was to promote transparency and comparability of qualifications, transferability, validation and recognition of learning outcomes achieved by individuals in different learning contexts (formal, Non-Formal and informal), in different countries and at sectoral level, through the transfer of previous innovative contents and results for the development of a European cooperation process based on the four implementation stages of ECVET - European Credit Transfer System for VET.

Slovakia

The ECVET in Slovakia is exclusively used as an instrument of transnational mobility in VET. As far as other various elements of ECVET are considered, units of learning outcomes are planned to be developed – some already exist as part of the NQR. Assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes have been developed.

The owner of the ECVET implementation process in Slovakia is the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak republic. The National contact point for ECVET has been set up at

National Institute of Vocational Training (ŠIOV). SAAIC – National Agency for Erasmus+ programme for education and training fields is responsible for project on implementation of ECVET in Slovakia financed by the EC, has established the National team of ECVET experts in 2012. This team provides training, consultation and other activities helping the schools interested in the ECVET implementation in mobility projects financed under Erasmus+ programme.

Most of the activities promoting ECVET in Slovakia are organized by the National agency Erasmus+ for education and training fields. These activities and events are aimed at implementation of the ECVET tools and principles for geographical mobility under Erasmus+ programme. The project promoters are trained in the preparation of project using this methodology, the external evaluators of the submitted projects are trained in evaluation of the ECVET strategies in projects and the best practice projects are published and presented to other people interested in ECVET. Seminars and workshops are planned not only for VET providers, but also for a wider spectrum of stakeholders.

There are dozens of projects which have piloted and used the tools and ECVET methodology. Project CREDCHEM was included in to an EU-wide pilot testing of ECVET, implemented in the years 2008-2011. CREDCHEM brought a valuable experience in formulation of learning outcomes and design of units related to qualification and practical training of laboratory professionals in the chemical sector. Nine units of learning outcomes have been identified, all learning outcomes of a unit were generalised in a matrix. Learning outcomes were described in terms of knowledge, skills and competences with three levels of competences.

The project **ECVET Tour II** (Transfer of VET innovation in the field of gastronomy and hotel management) is one of six projects which were supported by the National Agency of the Lifelong Learning within the Leonardo da Vinci - Transfer of Innovation - with financial support from the European Commission at the end of 2012. Project focused on the modernization of two branches of study/profession: COOK and RECEPTIONIST. The competence matrices represented an overview of knowledge, skills and competences of graduate of the profession cook and receptionist, understandable even for future employers. ECVET implementation in the future will be based on the Learning Outcomes evaluation and validation.

Spain

“One of the main objectives of developing a **Spanish** Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning

compatible with the EQF and the QF-EHEA is to make Spanish qualifications easier to understand by describing them in terms of learning outcomes; it should also clarify relations between them. It is expected that this will improve the extent to which stakeholders are informed about national qualifications, raising trust and making mobility easier. The NQF aims to support lifelong learning, link IVET and CVET, and improve access and participation for everyone, including the disadvantaged. Through the NQF – it is expected – it will be easier to identify, validate and recognise all kinds of learning outcomes (including Non-Formal and Informal Learning), regardless of the way they were acquired. It will support better use of qualifications at national and European level” (Cedefop, 2013). Spanish VET system is output oriented and the qualifications are expressed in terms of learning outcomes. This element will foster the further integration within the ECVET system. *“Policy initiatives on ECVET implementation within IVET are currently on hold, pending the final approval of NQF. Once the policy-decision is taken, it will be easy to bring the existing credit system closer to ECVET”*

Bodies responsible for ECVET in Spain are El Comité Técnico para la Formación Profesional, el Consejo General de Formación Profesional, el Consejo Escolar del Estado y la Conferencia Sectorial sobre Educación. Both Ministry of Education and Labour Ministry (Ministerio de Educación y Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración) will be responsible for ECVET within initial VET, and Labour Ministry (Ministerio de Trabajo) will be responsible for ECVET within continuous VET. The Spanish National coordination point is the VET Department at the Ministry of Education (El Punto de Coordinación Nacional es la Dirección General de Formación Profesional del Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deportes).

CENTRAL is a European project defining competence and educational standards according to ECVET principles for 2 professional profiles: the warehouse operator and the freight forwarding agent, providing a better response to the needs of training bodies, employees and employers.

The ProfDRV project (Professional driving - more than just driving!) investigated the opportunities offered by the EQFs learning outcomes approach and the overall EQF approach in order to improve comparability and transparency of professional driver qualifications in Europe with a special focus on the implementation of EC Directive 2003/59/EC on the qualification of professional drivers in Europe. Among others it developed an EQF learning outcomes based profile for "professional drivers (road freight transport)" and EQF-compatible quality standards for the implementation of related

qualification structures in the EU Member States. The project and its results contributed to the evaluation of the Directives implementation in 2013 with its results and recommendations.

NETINVET is a European network of training centers and companies, where mutual trust has been established in order to provide young people with mobility opportunities during their training pathway based on ECVET. It pertains to training programs in the field of international trade, but it is inclined to extend to other training courses within the trade and services sector. The network's coverage today extends to 9 countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain.

Part 2 Evaluation of data received from Stakeholders

Each partner country had to carry out interviews with the stakeholders. In total 18 policy makers responded to the interviews. The questions dealt with description of NQF, the stakeholders, validation of formal and Non-Formal learning and current situation in ECVET.

Description of NQF

The stakeholders answered whether the NQF had already been developed, described NQF concerning its levels, referencing with EQF and gave additional information about the future development of NQF. According to the stakeholders in **Cyprus**, the development of NQF in their country is in the process. Referencing with the EQF is in the process of being acquired in the National Plan and CyQF will have to be established by 2018. All of the stakeholders in **Germany** answered that the national qualifications framework (DQR) had been set up. According to the stakeholders, **Greece** has not developed a National Qualifications Framework. In **Slovakia** the stakeholders mentioned that SKKR has been finalized in 2015 and is composed of four sub-frameworks, reflecting the pathway of acquiring the qualification (general, formal VET, HE, Non-Formal and informal). Two stakeholders did not know about NQF in **Spain**. The third one pointed that it has been developed for VET intermediate and advanced.

Stakeholders responsible for EQF and ECVET

The interviewed persons provided detailed information about the stakeholders responsible for EQF and ECVET. The information contains the name of the stakeholder, its contact details and short description of the stakeholder organisation. The responses are provided in the form of the tables.'

Country	Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Cyprus	Ministry of Education & Culture	One of the departments of the ministry is the department of secondary technical and vocational education that is a key stakeholder for NQF and ECVET	http://www.moec.gov.cy/ Elias Margadjis, Director of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, margadjiselias@gmail.com Andreas Eleftheriou, First Class Education Officer aefletheriou@schools.ac.cy
	Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance	The mission of the Ministry is the promotion of social justice within a free democratic system based on the pillars of social cohesion and social inclusion, the maintenance and continuous improvement of the standard of living and the quality of life of the working population and of society in general.	Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance www.mlsi.gov.cy
	Human Resource Development Authority	The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) is the national agency responsible for human resource training and development. The Human Resource Development Authority has been designated as the competent Body for the promotion of a System of Vocational Qualifications.	www.hrdauth.org.cy Ioannis Zenios, Senior Human Resource Officer i.zenios@hrdauth.org.cy
Germany	Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung)	At the German federal government level, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is responsible for scientific and academic matters ¹⁸ .	Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung Kapelle-Ufer 1 D-10117 Berlin Tel.: +49 (0)30 18 57-0 Fax: +49 (0)30 18 57-5503 Email: information@bmbf.bund.de

¹⁸ https://www.academics.com/science/the_federal_ministry_of_education_and_research_30571.html

Country	Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
	The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs in Germany (Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (KMK))	The Standing Conference unites the ministers and senators of the Länder responsible for education, higher education and research, as well as cultural affairs ¹⁹ .	Sekretariat der Ständigen Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland Presse- und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit Graurheindorfer Str. 157 53117 Bonn Tel.: +49 (0)228 501 611 Fax: +49 (0)228 501 763 Email: info@kmk.org
	Social partners, Economic organisations, Chambers	The Chamber of Industry and Commerce for Munich and Upper Bavaria represents the interests of organisations in the field of industry, trade and services for Upper Bavaria.	Industrie- und Handelskammer für München und Oberbayern Balanstraße 55-59 81541 München Tel: 089 5116-0 Fax: 089 5116-1306 Email: ihkmail@muenchen.ihk.de
	Ministries on national and Länder level	Ministry of labour, social affairs, family and integration in Bavaria	Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, Familie und Integration Winzererstraße 9 80797 München Telefon: 089 1261-01 Telefax: 089 1261-1122
	Experts of the working group DQR	The working group DQR is a council consisting of experts from the field of general education, higher education, vocational training and further education training.	www.dqr.de/kontakt.php

¹⁹ <http://www.kmk.org/information-in-english/standing-conference-of-the-ministers-of-education-and-cultural-affairs-of-the-laender-in-the-federal-republic-of-germany.html>

Country	Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
	Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (Bundesinstitut für berufliche Bildung - BIBB)	The BIBB is engaged in a huge variety of programmes with practical focus. The BIBB conducts its own surveys in addition to processing external data. This provides the basis for evaluations and analyses, which then are included in publications such as the annual Data Report. ²⁰	Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) Robert-Schuman-Platz 3 53175 Bonn Tel: 0228 / 107 - 0 Fax: 0228 / 107 - 2977 Internet: www.bibb.de Email: @zentrale@bibb.de
Greece	EOPPEP	EOPPEP is the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance, an all-encompassing statutory body investing on better quality and more efficient & reliable lifelong learning services in Greece	www.eoppep.gr
Slovakia	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak republic	Owner of EQF implementation process	http://isdv.iedu.sk/Contacts.aspx Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu Slovenskej republiky Odbor celoživotného vzdelávania Stromová 9 813 30 Bratislava 1 Slovakia Ildikó Pathóová Phone: 00 421 2 59 374 661 E-mail: ildiko.pathoova@minedu.sk

²⁰ <https://www.bibb.de/en/25.php>

Country	Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
	ŠIOV - State vocational education institute	National coordination point for EQF	<p>http://www.siov.sk/index.php/sk/</p> <p>Štátny inštitút odborného vzdelávania Bellova 54/a 837 63 Bratislava Slovakia</p> <p>Alexandra Junášková Head of the department of contact and reference points Phone: 00 421 2 547 767 78 E-mail: alexandra.junaskova@siov.sk</p>
Spain	Spanish Ministry of Education		www.mecd.gob.es

Table 1: EQF/NQF Stakeholders in partner countries

Country	Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Cyprus	IDEP- Foundation for the management of European Lifelong learning programmes	IDEP is responsible for the management of European funds to be used by Cypriots in the area of training and lifelong learning. IDEP is responsible for the management of ERASMUS +	<p>ECVET NA Coordinator Dr. Androula Papanastasiou Manager, Foundation for the management of European Lifelong learning programmes Email: apapanastasiou@llp.org.cy ECVET NA Contact Person Roula Kyrillou Ioannidou Coordinator Erasmus + - Key Action 1 and 2 Email: rkyrillou@llp.org.cy</p>

Country	Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
	ECVET Experts	A group of ECVET experts (5) , The ECVET National Coordinator and the ECVET National Contact person	<p>Constantinos Georgiou Inspector secondary Technical and Vocational Education Email: kgeorgiou@schools.ac.cy</p> <p>Demetris Englezakis Head of KES Email: denglez@cytanet.com.cy</p> <p>Dr. Elias Margadjis Head Secondary Technical and Vocational Education Ministry of Education and Culture Email: margadjiselias@gmail.com</p> <p>Dr. Stylianos Mavromoustakos CEO Intercollege Email: mavromoustakos.s@intercollege.ac.cy</p> <p>Dr. George Horattas First Class Officer, Cyprus Productivity Center Email: ghorattas@kepa.mlsi.gov.cy</p>
Germany	Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Forschung - BMBF)	At the German federal government level, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is responsible for scientific and academic matters ²¹ .	<p>Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung Kapelle-Ufer 1 D-10117 Berlin Tel.: +49 (0)30 18 57-0 Fax: +49 (0)30 18 57-5503 email: information@bmbf.bund.de</p>

²¹ https://www.academics.com/science/the_federal_ministry_of_education_and_research_30571.html

Country	Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
	Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung BIBB / NKS at the NA-BIBB (from 2016 NA-BIBB))	The BIBB is engaged in a huge variety of programmes with practical focus. The BIBB conducts its own surveys in addition to processing external data. This provides the basis for evaluations and analyses, which then are included in publications such as the annual Data Report. ²²	Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) Robert-Schuman-Platz 3 53175 Bonn Tel: 0228 / 107 - 0 Fax: 0228 / 107 - 2977 Internet: www.bibb.de E-mail: zentrale@bibb.de
	Social partners, Economic organisations, Chambers	The Chamber of Industry and Commerce for Munich and Upper Bavaria represents the interests of organisations in the field of industry, trade and services.	Industrie- und Handelskammer für München und Oberbayern Balanstraße 55-59 81541 München Telefon: 089 5116-0 Telefax: 089 5116-1306 email: ihkmail@muenchen.ihk.de
	Departments for European Affairs on federal state (Länder) level e.g: EU Agency, Regional Authority Government of Cologne, ISB State Institute for school quality and education research Munich	They promote the participation in European projects and mobilities	EU-Geschäftsstelle - Wirtschaft und Berufsbildung - der Bezirksregierung Köln Bezirksregierung Köln 50606 Köln Staatsinstitut für Schulqualität und Bildungsforschung (ISB) Schellingstr. 155 80797 München

²² <https://www.bibb.de/en/25.php>

Country	Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Greece	EOPPEP	EOPPEP is the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance, an all-encompassing statutory body investing on better quality and more efficient & reliable lifelong learning services in Greece	www.eoppep.gr
Slovakia	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak republic	Owner of ECVET implementation process	http://isdv.iedu.sk/Contacts.aspx Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu Slovenskej republiky Odbor celoživotného vzdelávania Stromová 9 813 30 Bratislava 1 Slovakia Ildikó Pathóová Phone: 00 421 2 59 374 661 E-mail: ildiko.pathoova@minedu.sk
	ŠIOV - National institute of vocational training	National contact point for ECVET	http://www.siov.sk/index.php/sk/ Štátny inštitút odborného vzdelávania Bellova 54/a 837 63 Bratislava Slovakia Alexandra Junášková Head of the department of contact and reference points Phone: 00 421 2 547 767 78 E-mail: alexandra.junaskova@siov.sk

Country	Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
	SAAIC - Slovak academic association for international cooperation	National Agency for Erasmus+ programme for education and training fields, responsible for project on implementation of ECVET in Slovakia	http://www.saaic.sk/ Slovenská akademická asociácia pre medzinárodnú spoluprácu Križkova 9 811 04 Bratislava Slovakia Irena Fonodová Director Phone: 00 421 2 209 222 01 E-mail: irena.fonodova@saaic.sk
Spain	Spanish Ministry of Education		www.mecd.gob.es

Table 2: ECVET Stakeholders in partner countries

Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning

During the interviews the stakeholders were asked whether there is a strategy for validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in their countries.

In **Cyprus** two of the stakeholders mentioned that there is no strategy for the validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. Only one of the stakeholders stated that there is a strategy probably because of the System of Vocational Qualifications of HRDA in which validation is possible and will be incorporated in the CyQF. According to the stakeholders in **Germany** there is yet no strategy for the validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. Such a strategy is in the preparation stage. The validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning through the development of a national and easily understood system, based on occupational standards, is still remaining a promising issue for the social dialogue than a concrete operational reality for the national policy agenda in **Greece**. The stakeholders mentioned that the official document of strategy for validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning does not exist in **Slovakia**. It is in the process of being developed and should be a part of a new law that is being prepared on further education. All stakeholders in **Spain** pointed that there isn't a strategy for the validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in VET. Some

stakeholders foresee the changes concerning the validation of Formal and Non-Formal learning in future. According to the stakeholder from Greece there is a general consent that the question of the recognition of qualifications, regardless of the way they have been acquired is urging. German stakeholders mentioned that the recommendations concerning the inclusion of Informal and Non-Formal competences are under development in Germany.

Current situation in ECVET

As far as the current situation in ECVET is concerned the following questions were to be answered during the interview:

1. What is the current situation of the country regarding ECVET?

In **Cyprus** ECVET is promoted by the National Agency (ΙΔΕΠ Δια Βίου Μάθησης) IDEP which is the organisation that promotes lifelong learning. Additionally, there is a National team of ECVET experts that promotes the implementation of ECVET. A number of stakeholders are developing their curricula according to ECVET principles. Each stakeholder works individually and the whole process is done in a non-coordinated manner. One of the stakeholders mentioned that currently the curricula (technical and vocational education) are being transformed in accordance with ECVET. At present, there is no political support in **Germany** for the implementation of ECVET in the national vocational education system. One possible reason is the number of actors in the VET sector. For the national VET policy, ECVET is used as an instrument for quality assurance in transnational mobility. On the basis of the main principles, the instruments are to be developed to support the transparency between the levels of education. The number of projects which use the ECVET instruments in order to organize their mobilities has grown constantly, in 2015 15,8 % of all projects put in place. In **Greece**, some people undertake learning activities outside their country. The interest for this kind of mobility is limited by several factors, most notably by the lack of provisions for the transfer, validation and recognition of learning outcomes achieved in foreign countries. The same applies to the transition from one vocational education and training system to another or from an Informal Learning situation to a formal training context. The ECVET thus aspires to be an information exchange tool designed to help individuals take full advantage of learning acquired, in particular as a result of transnational mobility, whether the context was formal, Non-Formal or informal. According to the findings, in Greece the

idea is still in the beginning and at a very early stage. The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports in **Slovakia** did not adopt any measures for ECVET implementation in the Slovak VET system²³. Moreover, there was presented a clear rejection of its implementation in the formal VET system and allowed it only for no formal education (It is planned to be used for a part of the qualifications to be put in the SKKR in the category of “Occupational Qualifications”). Some elements of ECVET are however being used, such as EUROPASS CV and ECVET is predominantly aimed at support of VET students and teachers mobility projects. National Agency for Erasmus+ for education and training fields, responsible for implementation of special ECVET project financed by the EC, has established the National team of ECVET experts in 2012-2013. This team provides training, consultations and other activities helping the schools interested in the ECVET implementation in mobility projects financed under Erasmus+ programme. Shortly, the ECVET initiative is implemented on bottom-up principle – currently there are dozens of projects which already used the tools and ECVET methodology in their projects.

Due to a lack of information, the stakeholders **Spain** did not respond to this question.

2. Is there a credit system in VET that allows accumulating and/or transferring learning outcomes of individuals?

According to one of the stakeholders in **Cyprus** there is a system but it does not operate in an organised manner in accordance to the suggestions of ECVET. Two other stakeholders answered negatively in this question. Based on the answers of stakeholders in **Germany**, it could be stated that there is no such system in Germany. There are single cases of recognition in ECTS-system. Credit points are not used because there is no complete system. The implementation of the valid credit system is to be realised on the European level. In **Greece**, credits are used in a small range of learning outcomes although the Hellenic credit system is trying to adapt to ECVET. A new credit system is being developed. The VET credit system which would allow accumulation and/or transfer of the learning outcomes of individuals does not exist in **Slovakia**. Due to a lack of information, the stakeholders **Spain** did not respond to this question.

²³ In Slovakia, term VET refers only to Formal Secondary VET schools

3. Which of the following situations applies the most.

For **Cyprus** following answers were collected:

- Some components are still missing (2 out of 3 stakeholders)
- Lack of expertise on ECVET (1 out of the three stakeholders)
- Other (1 out of the three stakeholders):
 - The standards of professional qualifications are written in the form of learning outcomes, with components of recognition of prior learning. The Qualifications of the System of Vocational Qualifications have not been developed according to ECVET principles yet. ECVET principles gained ground after the Qualifications were already developed, and there could not be any reviews or changes made, since we were limited to the fact that we were within program period 2007-2013 and the aim was to certify candidates. With the new program period, 2014-2020, the aim is to develop the standards of vocational qualifications according to ECVET principles, provided we have Board of Directors approval.

In **Germany**, the stakeholders answered that the following situations apply the most:

- Satisfaction with the current system,
- Lack of trust among actors in the VET system,
- Lack of resources/capacity.

There were no specific answers given in **Greece**.

The following number of answers was given as the reason by stakeholders in **Slovakia**:

- satisfaction with the current system – 1
- decision-makers do not see the added value of ECVET principles – 3
- ECVET concept remains unclear – 2
- lack of resources/capacity – 1
- lack of trust among actors in the VET system – 1
- some components still missing – 3

- other (please specify) :
 - Responsibility for basic (level 1,2) and secondary education incl. VET (3,4,5) – local governments, while state is responsible directly for higher education it is almost impossible to reach consensus

Due to a lack of information, the stakeholders **Spain** did not respond to this question.

4. Please identify the current situation of the VET in the context of ECVET?

In **Cyprus** some ECVET technical components are tested through the use of pilot projects. In **Germany**, there are also pilot projects, however, some of them will not be supported in the future. ECVET is successfully used by 18% of all projects within Erasmus+ VET KA1. In Bavaria, the ISB recommends and promotes the concept. This is the reason why the majority of all KA1 application from vocational schools uses the three ECVET instruments and the ECVET principles. Although a credit system is used in a few professions, there is no overall credit system in Germany, which allows the validation and transfer of learning outcomes for individuals. There are single cases of recognition in ECTS-system. Credit points are not used because there is no complete system. Moreover, ECVET is used as an instrument for quality assurance for transnational mobilities as stated above.

No specific answers were given in **Greece** for this question. For the current situation of the VET in the context of ECVET all stakeholders mentioned that some technical components are tested. One of the stakeholders pointed out, that in **Slovakia**, it is not planned to implement the credit system (meaning credit points). ECVET implementation is and will be based on the Learning Outcomes evaluation and validation. Due to a lack of information, the stakeholders **Spain** did not respond to this question.

5. Please provide information which of the following components of ECVET exist and in which phase of implementation:

In **Cyprus**, although it seems that there is some disagreement between the stakeholders as far as components and phase of implementation is concerned, we can conclude that ECVET is at an introductory stage. It is noted that HRDA has developed the SVQs (where some of the components already exist). Some ECVET technical components are tested by ERASMUS+ Projects (e.g. ECVET

PERMIT). In **Germany**, there is also some disagreement between the different answers of stakeholders. However, they state that all of the components (Units of Learning Outcomes, Assessment of Learning Outcomes, Validation of Learning Outcomes, Recognition of Learning Outcomes, Learning Agreements, Memorandum of Understanding, Transcript of Record) exist and/or are currently in testing. The ECVET points are here a single exception since they are usually not used in Germany. No specific answers were given in **Greece** for this question. The results in **Slovakia** are very similar to the German ones, all components are existing and/or being developed except for the ECVET points. Due to a lack of information, the stakeholders **Spain** did not respond to this question.

6. Does the existing system allow learners to have their learning outcomes acquired in different learning settings, e.g formal vet programmes, Non-Formal programmes, informally (in the working place).

Both negative and positive answers were given. In further questioning, they clarified that the learning outcomes can be acquired in formal Vet and Non-Formal programmes, but not informally in the working place. For example in **Cyprus** all stakeholders answered positively. The HRDA mentioned that they offer a number of subsidizing schemes for the employed and the unemployed, in order for them to participate in VET training programmes and develop their knowledge, skills and competences. The schemes that HRDA offers are considered non formal learning. However as far as validation and recognition is concerned, one of the stakeholders mentioned that this happens to some extent eg the evening technical school formally recognises the learning (Ministry of Education and Culture) while two stakeholders mentioned the SVQ system of HRDA. In **Germany**, both, negative and positive answers were given. It is to emphasize that the Informal Learning in the working process plays an important role in the German dual vocational education. Additionally, the dual system makes possible comprehensive qualifications, in formal as well as in Non-Formal education because different concrete situations under real and/or simulated working conditions are given. However, a separate validation of Non-Formal and Informal competences does not take place. In regards to this and the next question in **Greece**, there is a belief that the existing system allows learners to acquire learning outcomes in different learning settings and the current state of the system in context of evaluation has been planned. For the question, whether the existing system allows learners to have their learning outcomes acquired in different learning settings, in **Slovakia**,

both negative and positive answers were given, due to the fact that the question was not formulated properly. In further questioning, they clarified that the learning outcomes can be acquired in formal vet and Non-Formal programmes, but not informally in the working place. As was mentioned before, tools for the Informal Learning validation do not exist in Slovakia. Due to a lack of information, the stakeholders **Spain** did not respond to this question.

7. What is the current state of the system in context of evaluation

In Cyprus there were different answers from stakeholders to this question: One of the stakeholders considered that the System of Vocational Qualifications has been evaluated. There is overall satisfaction with the operation of the system so far, but there is room for improvement. The System had contributed in the improvement of knowledge and skills of the participants. There needs to be more awareness and acceptance of the System of Vocational Qualifications (this stakeholder refers to SVQ). One of the stakeholders mentioned that the evaluation is planned and another stakeholder mentioned that they do not know the current state of the system in context of evaluation. Concerning the current state of the system in the context of evaluation, two stakeholders noted that the system had been evaluated in **Germany**. Once again in **Greece** there is a belief that the existing system allows learners to acquire learning outcomes in different learning settings and the current state of the system in context of evaluation has been planned. Concerning the current state of the system in context of evaluation, all stakeholders in **Slovakia** responded that the evaluation is planned. Due to a lack of information, the stakeholders **Spain** did not respond to this question.

8. What kind of activities are undertaken in your country to promote ECVET?

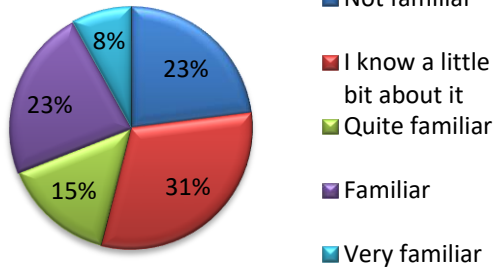
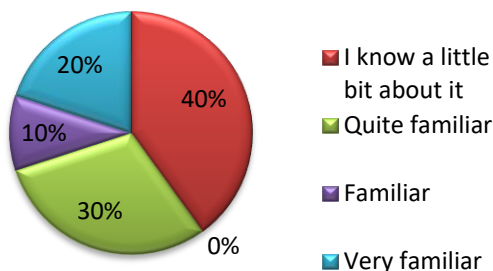
Several ECVET promotional activities have been implemented in **Cyprus** such as seminars for ECVET awareness and implementation are organized, by HRDA, IDEP and ECVET experts, implementation of projects, development of curricula in according to ECVET principles, promoting the possibility of mobility among the programmes etc. The kinds of activities undertaken in **Germany** to promote ECVET depend on funding programs like Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus+ or public funding research programs. There are publications, bodies of experts and some posts in educational authorities which bear reference to ECVET. There was also the so-called “Nationale Koordinierungsstelle ECVET”, which

promoted ECVET as a quality assurance instrument for geographical mobility together with a national team of thirteen ECVET experts and in which educators are supported with recommendations, workshops, materials, practice-orientated materials and best practice examples. The activities which are undertaken in **Greece** in order to promote ECVET are several events, conferences and workshops mostly organized by EOPPEP and VET providers or the Ministry of Education. In **Slovakia**, the team of national experts for ECVET was set up, the first results of their work were presented in national setting on a conference in 2014, lot of small projects are running in order to test the system elements. Most of the activities to promote ECVET in Slovakia are organized by the National agency Erasmus+ for education and training fields. These activities and events are aimed at implementation of the ECVET tools and principles in the geographical mobility under Erasmus+ programme. The project promoters are trained in preparation of project using this methodology, the external evaluators of the submitted projects are trained in evaluation of the ECVET strategies in projects and the best practice projects are published and presented to other people interested in ECVET. Seminars and workshops are planned not only for VET providers, but also for a wider spectrum of stakeholders. The key components of all projects are the learning outcomes, units of LO, their evaluation, validation and recognition. Currently it seems to be the most promising way of ECVET implementation in Slovakia due to problems mentioned above. Due to a lack of information, the stakeholders **Spain** did not respond to this question.

Part 3 Evaluation of the data received from VET providers

Familiarity with EQF

The rate of familiarity differentiates in the partner countries. The percentage of the VET providers that are quite familiar, familiar or very familiar with EQF is 46 percent in Cyprus, 60 percent in Germany, 30 percent in Greece, 64 percent in Slovakia and 50 percent in Spain. The answers for question in each partner country are presented in the table.

Country	Diagram "Familiarity with EQF"	Description
Cyprus	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>A small percentage (8%) declares themselves as very familiar with EQF while 23 percent consider themselves to be familiar and 15% consider themselves to be quite familiar. Quite big percentages (23% and 31%) mention that they are not familiar or that they know a little bit about it.</p>
Germany	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>20 percent of the VET Providers admit to be very familiar with EQF. 10 percent of the persons interviewed are familiar with the EQF and 30% quite familiar. 40 percent of VET providers know a little bit about this framework. For none of VET Providers the EQF was unfamiliar.</p>

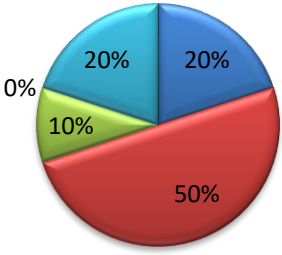
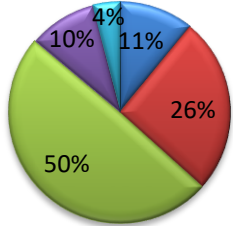
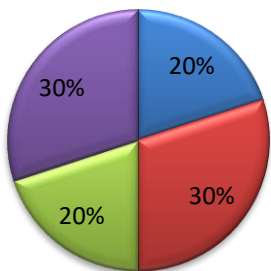
<p>Greece</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>Most of the participants know only a little about EQF. 20 percent of the VET providers are unfamiliar with it.</p>
<p>Slovakia</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>As much as 64 percent of providers are quite familiar, familiar or very familiar with EQF and only 11 percent are not familiar with it.</p>
<p>Spain</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>50 percent of the participants state to be quite familiar or familiar with the EQF.</p>

Table 3: Familiarity with EQF (VET providers)

Practical Experience on EQF

In Cyprus, Germany and Slovakia approximately 80-85 percent of the interviewed VET providers have no practical experience on EQF. Only 15-20 percent of VET providers have already had practical experience with EQF, such as: description of the professional competences, experience from different projects and working group for development of NQR in the field of health and care (Germany), cooperation on creation of National Qualifications Register, participation in Erasmus+

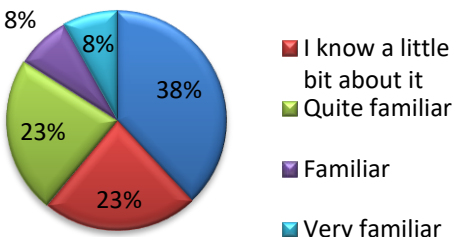
mobility projects, design of education programs – to be in accordance with EQF for mobility projects (Slovakia). The VET providers from Spain and Greece do not have practical experience on EQF.

What is the added value of EQF

In general VET providers consider the increasing quality of the training and of the teaching staff as well as the attractiveness of training programmes and VET occupations/professions to be the most important added value of EQF - although they did note also the amplification of the possibilities of the European labour market for students and the increasing cooperation with other companies/networking.

Familiarity with NQF

The percentage of the familiarity (very familiar, familiar, quite familiar) with NQF differentiates in the partner countries: 39% in Cyprus, 60 % in Germany, 70 % in Greece, 50 % in Slovakia and 50 % in Spain are familiar or quite familiar with NQF in their country. The detailed results of the answers are presented in the form of the table.

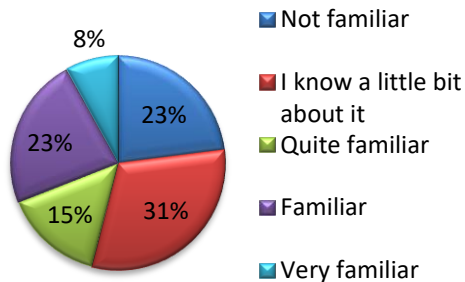
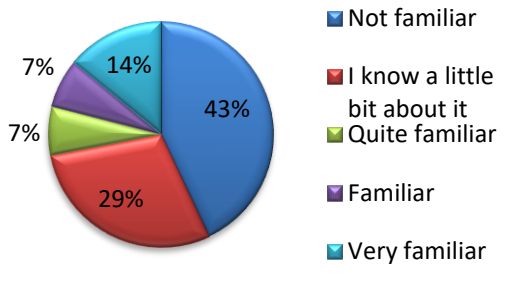
Country	Diagram “Familiarity with NQF”	Description
Cyprus	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	The highest percentage (61%) are not familiar with or know a little about NQF while only 16 percent are familiar or very familiar. 23 percent of the VET providers declare themselves as quite familiar.

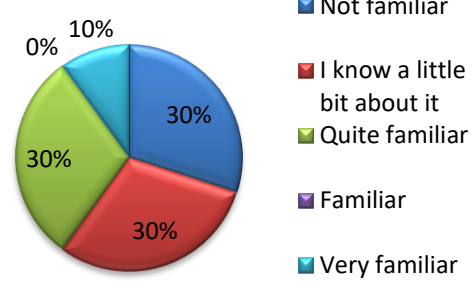
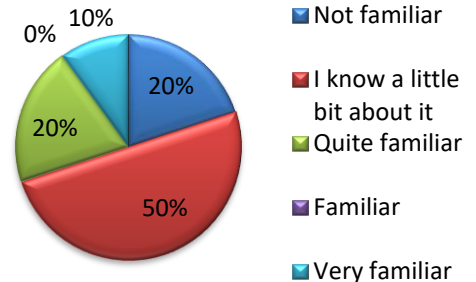
<p>Germany</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>More than half of the VET providers (60%) are familiar or quite familiar with NQF. 40 percent of the VET Providers being interviewed are not familiar the German Qualification Frame.</p>
<p>Greece</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>10 percent each are very familiar or familiar, 50 percent are quite familiar, 20 percent know a little bit about it and the 10 percent are not familiar.</p>
<p>Slovakia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>Only 16 percent of VET providers are either familiar or very familiar with SKKR, 34 percent are quite familiar and 50 percent of VET providers are not familiar at all or know only a little about it.</p>
<p>Spain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>50 percent of the interviewed persons are quite familiar with the NQF in Spain. 50 percent VET providers are not familiar with NQF.</p>

Table 4: Familiarity with NQF (VET providers)

Familiarity with ECVET and Familiarity with the ECVET developments in your country

Similar to the answers about the familiarity with the EQF and NQF not all the interviewed VET providers are familiar with ECVET and its developments in the own country. Approximately 21,5 percent of the VET providers from the partner countries know nothing about the ECVET. Concerning the development of ECVET in the own country the percentage of familiarity is lower. The results of these questions are presented in the table.

Country	Diagram "Familiarity with ECVET"	Description
Cyprus	<p>Familiarity with ECVET</p>  <p>Familiarity with the ECVET developments in your country</p> 	<p>Only 8 percent are very familiar with ECVET, 23 percent are familiar with it, 15 percent are quite familiar. The majority (54%) declared that they know a little bit about the European Model ECVET (31%) or are not familiar with it (23%).</p> <p>14 percent are very familiar, another 14 percent are familiar (7%) or quite familiar (7%) with the ECVET developments 29 percent know little about it, 43 percent are not familiar.</p>

<p>Germany</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Familiarity with ECVET</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>10 percent of the VET Providers are very familiar with the ECVET, 30 percent are quite familiar, another 30 percent each know little about it or are not familiar with it.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Familiarity with the ECVET developments in your country</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>10 percent are very familiar with the development of ECVET in Germany. One fifth (20 percent) of the VET providers are quite familiar with the establishing of the credit system. 50 percent of the interviewed persons know just a little bit about the development of this system in Germany. 20 percent of the VET providers are not familiar with ECVET developments in Germany.</p>

<p>Greece</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Familiarity with ECVET</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Not familiar</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I know a little bit about it</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quite familiar</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Familiar</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very familiar</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Familiarity with the ECVET developments in your country</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Not familiar</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I know a little bit about it</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quite familiar</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Familiar</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very familiar</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Percentage	Not familiar	20%	I know a little bit about it	20%	Quite familiar	40%	Familiar	10%	Very familiar	10%	Category	Percentage	Not familiar	40%	I know a little bit about it	20%	Quite familiar	30%	Familiar	10%	Very familiar	0%	<p>10 percent are very familiar and 10 percent are familiar with the ECVET. 40 percent of the interviewed persons are quite familiar with ECVET, 20 percent have some knowledge about the European credit system for vocational education and 20 percent are not familiar with this system at all.</p> <p>Similar to the answers above only 10 percent are familiar with the development of ECVET in Greece. 30 percent of the interviewed persons are quite familiar. 20 percent know a little bit about the development of ECVET in their own country and 40 percent of the VET providers are not familiar at all.</p>
Category	Percentage																									
Not familiar	20%																									
I know a little bit about it	20%																									
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Not familiar	21%																									
I know a little bit about it	34%																									
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<p>Spain</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Familiarity with ECVET</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Not familiar</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I know a little bit about it</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quite familiar</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Familiar</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very familiar</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Familiarity with the ECVET developments in your country</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Not familiar</td> <td>70%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I know a little bit about it</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quite familiar</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Familiar</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very familiar</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Percentage	Not familiar	30%	I know a little bit about it	40%	Quite familiar	20%	Familiar	10%	Very familiar	0%	Category	Percentage	Not familiar	70%	I know a little bit about it	10%	Quite familiar	10%	Familiar	10%	Very familiar	0%	<p>Only 10 percent of the VET providers interviewed declared that they are familiar with ECVET, another 20 percent are quite familiar with the ECVET. 40 percent of the interviewed persons know a little bit about ECVET. 30 percent state that they are not familiar with the ECVET developments in their country.</p> <p>Only 10 percent each of the VET providers claim to be familiar or quite familiar with the ECVET developments. 10 percent of VET providers have only little knowledge about the ECVET developments or 70 percent are not familiar with it at all.</p>
Category	Percentage																									
Not familiar	30%																									
I know a little bit about it	40%																									
Quite familiar	20%																									
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I know a little bit about it	10%																									
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Familiar	10%																									
Very familiar	0%																									

Table 5: Familiarity with ECVET

Practical Experience with ECVET

92 percent of the interviewed VET Providers in **Cyprus** have got no experience with ECVET. In **Germany** 90 percent of the VET Providers have no practical experience on ECVET. The remaining 10 percent of the VET providers in Germany are engaged in co-work with expert group ECVET in Germany, talks on the topic, implements ECVET in Workshops. In Greece, the majority (40%) answers that the use of learning outcomes provides greater flexibility in education and training, allowing learners to accumulate learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification or part-qualification. 46 percent of VET providers questioned in **Slovakia** claim to have got practical experience on ECVET through working on Erasmus+ KA2 and KA1 and mobility projects, incorporating ECVET components into education program (Learning agreement, Memorandum of understanding, Transcript of record) for students and teachers mobilities, taking part in ECVET training or conference. In **Spain**, only one head of teachers had experience with ECVET: *“There are students from Poland in an Erasmus + mobility for studies. We have tried to adapt our curriculum in order to give them the possibility to validate the studies in their countries of origin. Although meeting difficulties we have tried to reformulate some contents and reorganize schedules and credit number”*.

Added Value of ECVET

As far as Added Value of ECVET is concerned, the interviews show a range of possibilities that may be considered. The VET providers were asked to choose possible answers in a multiple choice question (more answers were possible). In the following table, the variety of answers is shown:

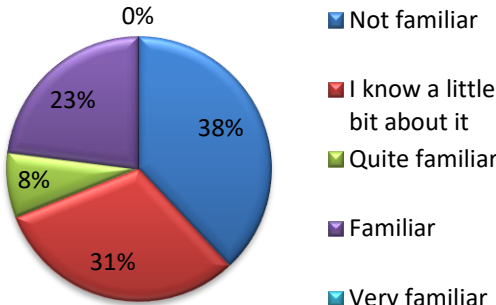
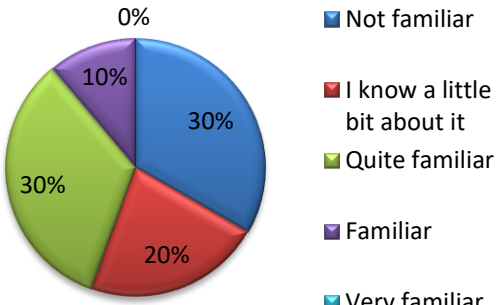
VET provider responses	CYPRUS Percentage	GERMANY Percentage	GREECE Percentage	SLOVAKIA Percentage	SPAIN Percentage
Use of learning outcomes provides greater flexibility in education and training, allowing learners to accumulate learning outcomes with a view to achieving a	11%	16%	40%	57%	40%

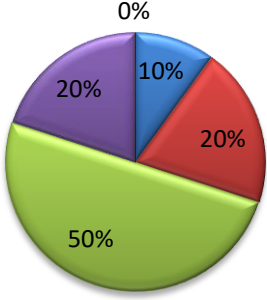
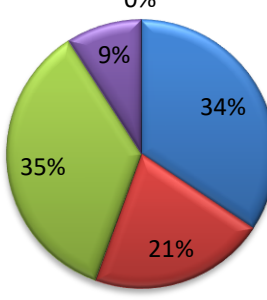
VET provider responses	CYPRUS	GERMANY	GREECE	SLOVAKIA	SPAIN
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
qualification or part-qualification					
Increased recognition of learning, including that achieved through geographical mobility	20%	16%	5%	86%	60%
Improved credibility for international mobility among learners and employers.	24%	16%	20%	31%	40%
Structured and quality-assured mobility provision leading to a reduced workload for mobility practitioners in the longer-term and making use of a common language for recognition in mobility.	7%	5%	5%	29%	50%
Improved understanding of different national or regional VET systems among mobility practitioners.	18%	16%	20%	37%	60%
Access to knowledge and skills, through geographical mobility, that might not be accessible locally.	7%	0%	10%	46%	50%
The development of mutual trust and a sharing of experiences among mobility practitioners and competent institutions, both nationally and internationally.	13%	16%	0%	46%	20%

Table 6: Added value of ECVET

Validation of Formal, Non Formal and Informal Learning

31 percent (Cyprus), 40 percent (Germany), 70 percent (Greece), 44 percent (Slovakia) and 40 percent (Spain) are familiar or quite familiar with the validation of Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Learning. It is important to note here that no VET provider has declared himself/herself as very familiar in any of the countries. The detailed results are presented in the table.

Country	Diagram “Validation procedures of Formal, Non Formal and Informal Learning”	Description
Cyprus	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	In Cyprus, 23 percent of VET providers are familiar with the validation and another 8 percent quite familiar, whereas 31 percent know little bit about it and 38 percent are not familiar with it.
Germany	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	In Germany, 10 percent of VET providers are familiar, 30 percent are quite familiar with the validation. However, 20 percent know a little bit about it and 30 percent are not familiar with the validation of Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Learning.

<p>Greece</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>20 percent of the Greek VET providers are familiar, another 50 percent are quite familiar with the validation of Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Learning. 20 percent of the VET providers know a little bit about it, whereas 10% are still not familiar with validation procedures of formal, Non-Formal and Informal Learning.</p>
<p>Slovakia</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>In Slovakia, 9 percent of respondents are familiar with the process of validation of Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Learning, 35 percent are quite familiar. 21 of the VET providers know a little bit about it, 34 percent are not familiar with it.</p>

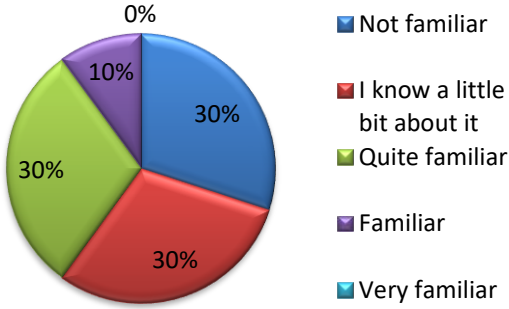
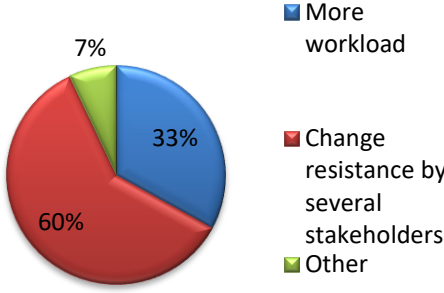
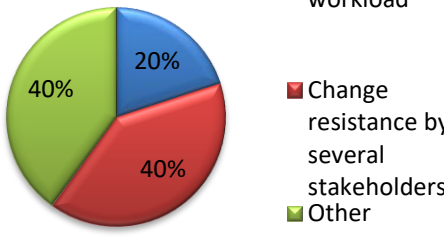
<p>Spain</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>In Spain, 10 percent are familiar with the validation of Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Learning and another 30 percent are quite familiar with it. 30 percent of the VET providers know a little bit about it and the same percentage (30%) are not familiar with the process.</p>
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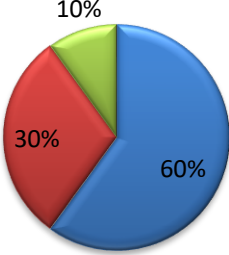
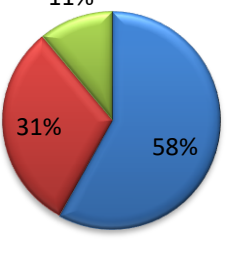
Table 7: Validation procedures of Formal, Non Formal and Informal Learning

Main obstacles in working with ECVET

The relevance of the main obstacles in working with ECVET is different in the partner countries.

The main obstacles and the percentage are listed in the table.

Country	Diagram	Description
Cyprus		<p>In Cyprus, the major obstacles seem to be the change resistance by several stakeholders which is stated by 60 percent of the VET providers as well as that the process requires more workload, stated by 33 percent of the VET providers. For “Other” the VET providers specified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are not well known • They are not well developed
Germany		<p>In Germany, 40 percent of the VET providers mentioned the change resistance by several stakeholders and another 20 percent the increase in workload. For “Other” the following answers were given:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know nothing about it • No Answer

<p>Greece</p>	 <p> ■ More workload ■ Change resistance by several stakeholders ■ Other </p>	<p>In Greece, the VET providers mentioned “more workload” with 60 percent as the main obstacle for ECVET, another 30% state the change resistance by several stakeholders.</p>
<p>Slovakia</p>	 <p> ■ More workload ■ Change resistance by several stakeholders ■ Other </p>	<p>In Slovakia, 31 percent of VET providers consider the change resistance by several stakeholders as a main obstacle, another 58 percent mention “more workload”. For “Other” the following issues were named:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECVET is very complicated, mostly when it comes to formulation of LO’s • Lack of relevant information at schools • No link to formal education system • The emphasis on „graduation“ in the current education system

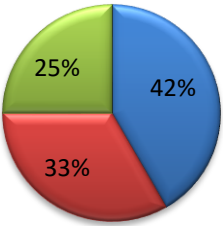
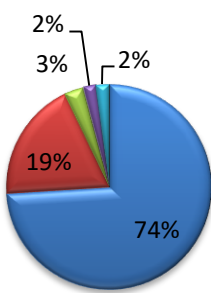
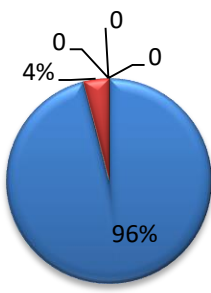
<p>Spain</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ More workload ■ Change resistance by several stakeholders ■ Other 	<p>In Spain, in total 42 percent of VET providers mention “more workload”, 33 percent the change resistance by several stakeholders. 25 percent of VET providers give other reasons: such as lack of information and different educational systems which offer resistance to change.</p>
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Table 8: Main obstacles in working with ECVET

Part 4 Evaluation of the data received from learners

Familiarity with EQF and NQF

Though the results of questionnaires demonstrate differences between the partner countries, more than 60 percent of the learners in all countries know nothing or a little bit about EQF and NQF.

Country	Diagram Familiarity with EQF and NQF	Description
Cyprus	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	In Cyprus, 74 percent of the learners are not familiar with EQF and NQF. 19 percent of learners know a little bit about it and 7 percent stated that they are quite familiar, familiar or very familiar with EQF and NQF.
Germany	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	The most of the learners (96%) in Germany are not familiar with either the European or National Qualifications Framework. Only 4 percent of the learners asked know a little bit about the Qualifications Framework. No learner has stated that he/she is quite familiar, familiar or very familiar.

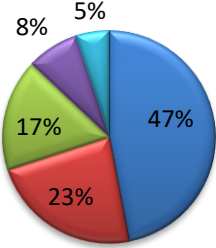
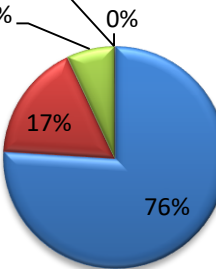
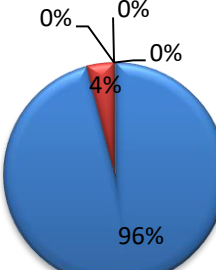
<p>Greece</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>In Greece, 47 percent of the learners are not familiar with EQF and NQF while 23 percent know very little about it. Only 13 percent are very familiar or familiar and 17 percent are quite familiar.</p>
<p>Slovakia</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>The most of the learners in Slovakia are either not familiar with EQF and SKKR (76%) or know only a little bit about it (17%). The rest of the respondents (7%) are quite familiar with EQF and/or SKKR. None of the learners are familiar or very familiar with it.</p>
<p>Spain</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar 	<p>In Spain, 96 percent of the interviewed learners are not familiar with EQF and NQF while 4 percent know little bit about it.</p>

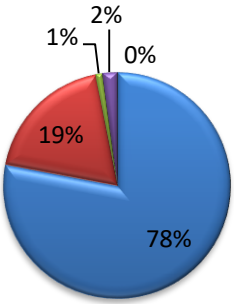
Table 9: Familiarity with EQF and NQF (Learners)

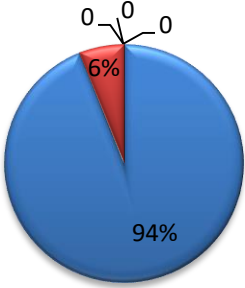
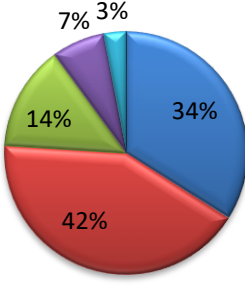
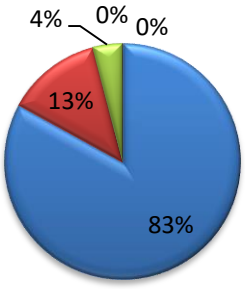
Motivation for selecting a programme as far as National Qualifications Framework is concerned

On this question, 87 percent of learners in **Cyprus** mentioned that by choosing the training program they do not take into account the specific level of the training according to the National Qualifications Framework. On the other hand, only 13 percent of learners mentioned that they take into consideration the specific level of the training according to the National Qualifications Framework. In **Germany** 79 percent of the learners did not answer this question. The answer “No” was given by the 21 percent of the persons asked to fill the questionnaire. In **Greece** very few learners are selecting a specific programme according to the National Qualifications Framework. The majority of them choose a programme depending on the level of connection with the labor market and the possibilities to find a job. Only 3 percent of respondents in **Slovakia** take EQF into consideration when selecting education program. Their positive answer is linked to possibility of increasing their chance for better job.

Familiarity with ECVET

Compared to the results of the first question, an even smaller percentage of learners is familiar with ECVET. The results are presented in the following table.

Country	Diagram	Description
Cyprus	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	78 percent of the learners in Cyprus are not familiar with ECVET. 19 percent of the learners know very little bit about it. 1 percent is quite familiar and 2 percent are familiar with ECVET.

<p>Germany</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar 	<p>94 percent of the learners in Germany are not familiar with the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). 6 percent of the learners being involved in the questionnaire replied “I know a little bit about it”. None the learners answered that he /she is quite familiar, familiar or very familiar with ECVET.</p>
<p>Greece</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>In Greece, 34 percent of learners are not familiar with ECVET. 42 percent of the learners know little bit about the ECVET. 24 percent are quite familiar, familiar or very familiar with ECVET.</p>
<p>Slovakia</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar ■ Familiar ■ Very familiar 	<p>In Slovakia, 83 percent of the learners are not familiar with ECVET while 13 percent know a little bit about it. Only 4 percent are quite familiar with it.</p>


Spain	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not familiar ■ I know a little bit about it ■ Quite familiar 	In Spain, none of the learners asked is familiar with ECVET.
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Table 10: Familiarity with ECVET (Learners)

Motivation for selecting a programme as far as ECVET is concerned

95 % of learners (**Cyprus**), 71 % (**Germany**), nearly 100 % (**Greece**), 96 % (**Slovakia**) of learners do not concern ECVET credits when choosing the programme or mobility for the training abroad.

Glossary

Here below are defined the key terms that are shared by EU Member States, EEA and candidate countries participating in the EQF. Those terms are recommended in order to share a common understanding of key concepts of EQF.

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

‘National Qualifications System’ means all aspects of a Member State's activity related to the recognition of learning and other mechanisms that link education and training to the labour market and civil society. This includes the development and implementation of institutional arrangements and processes relating to quality assurance, assessment and the award of qualifications. A National Qualifications System may be composed of several subsystems and may include a National Qualifications Framework.

‘National Qualifications Framework’ means an instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.

‘Learning Outcomes’ means statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

‘Knowledge’ means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.

‘Skills’ means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

‘Competence’ means 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.

In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning is described as a process of confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, Non-Formal or Informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with requirements of a validation standard (Cedefop, 2008; Cedefop, 2009).

References

Important links and sources to help you fill in this report:

[European Qualification Framework](#)

[European guidelines for validating Non-Formal and Informal Learning](#)

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/21311.aspx>

[EQF internet portal](#)

Appendix

National Report: Cyprus

National Report

Country: Cyprus

This report is part of Intellectual Output 1

**Comparative report on the situation of the
countries of the consortium as far as ECVET and
EQF is concerned**

Partners Responsible for the composition of this report:

M.M.C Management Center Ltd

Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Cyprus Certification Company

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Part 1 Desktop research

Development of the NQF in Cyprus

Latest facts on the development of NQF in Cyprus

The National Qualifications Framework in Cyprus is presented in the diagram in the next page.

It should be noted however that the NQF is considered by the stakeholders to be still under development and it is not yet operational. In general:

- CyQF includes all levels and types of qualifications from all subsystems of education and training, from primary to higher education qualifications.
- The following methodologies have been used:
 - Setting common standards of CyQF and EQF through Level Descriptors
 - An eight-level reference structure is adopted
 - All level descriptors are LO based
 - All Level Descriptors are generic in order to have a neutral point of reference that can be applied on all forms of education (formal/informal/Non-Formal as well as to all sectoral qualifications)
 - The Level Descriptors are more detailed than the EQF descriptors-this makes it more user friendly
 - They were simultaneously formulated for all levels so there would be clear progression from one level to the next.

THE CYPRUS QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

<u>NQF LEVELS</u>	<u>EDUCATIONAL/ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS</u>		<u>Professional/Vocational Qualifications</u>	<u>EQF LEVELS</u>	
8	DOCTORAL DEGREE			8	
7c	MASTER'S DEGREE		SVQ Level 5	7	
7b	POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA/POST GRADUATE CERTIFICATE				
7a	POST GRADUATE CERTIFICATES				
6	BACHELOR'S DEGREE/PTYCHION		SVQ <u>Level 4</u>	6	
5c	HIGHER CERTIFICATES AND DIPLOMAS (3 years or more)		SVQ <u>Level 3</u>	5	
5b	POST SECONDARY CERTIFICATES AND DIPLOMAS (2 years)				
5a	POST SECONDARY CERTIFICATES AND DIPLOMAS (1 year)				
4	UPPER SECONDARY GENERAL EDUCATION AND EVENING SCHOOLS CERTIFICATES (12th Class-or 12&13th for some private schools) – APOLYTERION	UPPER SECONDARY TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND EVENING TECHNICAL SCHOOLS CERTIFICATES (12th Class)- APOLYTERION	SVQ <u>Level 2</u>	4	
3	LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE 10th Class		NEW MODERN APPRENTICESHIP	SVQ <u>Level 1</u>	3
2	COMPULSORY LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE 9th Class		PREPARATORY PROGRAMME (NEW MODERN APPRENTICESHIP)		2
1	COMPULSORY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE (Elementary School Leaving Certificate, and/or graduates of 7th and /or 8th Class)				1

SVQ=SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Figure 1: The Cyprus National Qualifications Framework

The system of vocational qualifications being developed by the Human Resource Development Authority is an integral but distinct part of NQF.

Cyprus has submitted an updated referencing report to link the Cyprus national qualifications framework (CyQF) to the EQF (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015). The report provides **a clear and coherent description of the national education and training system, policy and provisions; to a lesser extent qualifications provision.** The development of the CyQF is part of an ambitious reform programme in the education and training system of Cyprus. The CyQF, with a detailed set of level descriptors and associated learning outcomes covering all levels, is presented in a clear way. However, the EQF AG members requested more detailed information on the referencing process and more documentation and evidence linked to referencing criteria; (Cedefop, 2015)

State of art referencing the national qualifications levels to the appropriate levels of the EQF

It is firstly noted that in accordance to the report of the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015) detailed level descriptors have been designed for each of the EQF 8 levels.

The level descriptors in the CyQF were developed on the basis of the following key concepts (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015):

- Qualifications
- Learning Outcomes
- Knowledge, skills and competences

Level descriptors are described in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

Knowledge means knowledge and understanding of a subject. It contains the following aspects:

- The type: knowledge about theory or knowledge about practice, knowledge of a subject or a field within a profession

- The complexity: the degree of complexity and how predictable or unpredictable the situation is in which this knowledge is mastered
- Understanding: the ability to place knowledge in a context- understanding is expected when one explains something to others

Skills mean what a person can do or accomplish. Described in the following aspects:

- The type: practical, cognitive or communicative
- The complexity: the problem solving skill to be applied and the complexity of the task
- Communication: the communication that is required; the complexity of the message; to which target groups and with which instruments

Competence is about responsibility and autonomy, and states the ability to apply knowledge and skills in a work situation or in a study-related context. Described in the following aspects:

- Space for action: the contexts in which the knowledge and skills are brought into play, and the degree of unpredictability and changeability in these contexts
- Cooperation and responsibility: the ability to take responsibility for ones own work and the work of others, and the complexity of the cooperative situations
- Learning: the ability to take responsibility for ones own learning and that of others

Additionally effort has been made to justify the alignment with each of the 10 criteria and procedures governing EQF. Short descriptions are presented in Appendix one.

It should be noted that in accordance to some stakeholders the referencing with EQF is still in progress

Bodies responsible for NQF in Cyprus:

The **National Committee** consists of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Culture (President of the Committee), the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance and the Director General of the Human Resource Development Authority, or their representatives (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015).

The **National Coordination Point (NCP)** was designated in October 2012, following the Decision of the Council of Ministers 541/2012. It comprises representatives from the Ministry of Education and Culture (Departments of Primary, Secondary General, Secondary Technical and Vocational, and Higher and Tertiary Education, the Pedagogical Institute and the Centre for Educational Research and Evaluation), the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance and the Human Resource Development Authority. The NCP is chaired by the Director of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, or his/her representative, and it is supported administratively by the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015)

Council of the CQF will be an advisory body with the following tasks:

1. Consulting with stakeholders regarding the development and implementation of the CQF, as well as establishing mutual trust between them;
2. Assessing the procedures of the CQF and advising the National Committee regarding its development, promotion and implementation, according to the European guidelines;
3. Disseminating information regarding the CQF to all stakeholders, as well as to the public in general.

The Council of the CQF will comprise representatives of all relevant public services, employers' organizations, trade unions, professional associations and the academic community.

State of art in the context of inclusion of Non-Formally and informally acquired skills in NQF (National Qualifications Framework)

In February 2013 the cabinet of Ministers approved the establishment of an interdepartmental Committee, which has the task to develop and see to the implementation (by 2018) of a comprehensive action plan for the validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning, in line with the Council Recommendation for the validation of the Non-Formal and Informal Learning. The Committee consists of representatives of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Coordinator), the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the General Directorate for European Programmes, Coordination and Development (the former Planning Bureau), the HRDA, and the Foundation for the Management of European Life Long Learning Programmes. In addition, the Commissioner of Volunteering and NGO Commissioner sits on the Committee. The Committee may expand to include others, according to the needs which will occur. The Committee will take into account the work that is already being done by the HRDA, so that it will be incorporated in a more comprehensive scheme, which will include the general and adult education sector as well as the Non-Formal learning that takes place within the volunteering and youth sector.

The Ministry of Education and Culture also runs a project co-funded by the European Social Funds (2014-2020) and the Republic of Cyprus, which aims to fill the gaps in the validation process mainly for educational purposes and/or other purposes. More specifically, the project includes:

- Mapping of the current situation in Cyprus with regards to the validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning
- Developing of the National Action Plan for the development of validation mechanisms
- Piloting phase of the mechanisms, which will focus on adult education, youth and volunteering (for obtaining educational qualifications)
- Assessment of the pilot phase

Nevertheless although specific efforts are under way, **there is no comprehensive national strategy in Cyprus for the validation of non formal and Informal Learning.** The HRDA has already initiated the process of developing and establishing a competence based system for vocational which will constitute an integral part of the National Qualifications Framework. The system of vocational qualifications is designed for the assessment and certification of the competence of a person to carry out a specific job in real and/or accepted simulated working conditions. Opportunity for access is provided to persons regardless of the way they have gained knowledge, skills and competence.

The Committee will take into account the work undertaken by the HRDA, that will be incorporated in a more comprehensive scheme which will include the general education sector, the adult education sector as well as the non formal learning

A lot of challenges still need to be met for establishing national mechanisms for the Validation on Non-Formal and Informal Learning such as the:

- Completion and operation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). It should be noted that the mechanisms for validation that will be developed through the aforementioned project will be lined to the NQF levels.
- Adoption of the National Action Plan – a committee is operating, chaired by the Director General of the MOEC (Coordination by the European and International Affairs Office)
- Interconnection and cooperation of all stakeholders who promote tools or validation projects/activities

State of the art in the implementation of ECVET in your country

Current Stage of Implementation

A working committee on ECVET development and implementation in Cyprus was set up in September 2011. It comprises stakeholders from the public and the private sectors, such as the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, the Planning Bureau, the Human Resources Development Authority, the Cyprus Productivity Centre, the Foundation for the management of the European lifelong learning programmes in Cyprus and private providers of VET.

In Cyprus, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is used in higher education and is linked to learning outcomes for the majority of the programmes. One needs at least 240 ECTS credits to obtain a first cycle degree. In this way, the mobility of higher education learners is promoted, especially regarding the Erasmus programme, where the performance of Cyprus is lower than the European average. However, universities do not provide full or partial qualifications through recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. In practice, Non-Formal learning is not recognised within higher education; but in some cases, Informal Learning/previous work experience may be taken into consideration. Nonetheless, it is considered a very unusual practice in the higher education institutions.

However, ECVET is not yet in place.

In accordance to a recent presentation made by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015) the current situation is summarised in the following points.

- The IVET system in Cyprus is mainly input-oriented (length of education and training programmes, quality of teachers) and does not utilize units or modules to qualifications or training programmes.
- School-leaving certificates (απολυτήρια) are awarded on successful completion of a VET programme.

- Successful completion of the course is a prerequisite for the award of the state-recognised certificate.
- Education and training providers validate achieved learning, while the responsible ministries and sectoral bodies validate and recognise it and issue the certificate.
- There are no situations of transfer of assessed learning between qualifications, or institutions.

In accordance to the same presentation (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015), the priorities of the ministry are:

1. To finalise, reference and establish NQF
2. To develop learning outcome based curricula
3. To develop a mechanism for the validation of non formal and Informal Learning.

In the last two years emphasis was placed on the training, preparation and professional development of the VET curriculum developers and teachers/ trainers on LOs, competence based curricula and assessment, EQF and ECVET. As from September 2015 a group of 20 VET curriculum developers was formed, aiming to develop the new IVET curricula which will be based on competences, LO and ECVET recommendations.

It is noted that no information was found from desktop research regarding memorandum of understanding, learning agreement and ECVET points

Based on the above, one could conclude that the ECVET system is planned to be developed in Cyprus with some elements of it to exist in the case of SVQ (Standards of Vocational Qualifications provided by the HRDA)

Activities that take place in Cyprus

Awareness raising events on ECVET have taken place and are planned in the short-term

Given that secondary vocational and technical education is under reform, ECVET is expected to be integrated in the new curricula. For this reason, pilot ECVET projects will be

implemented, designed by the ECVET European experts groups The completion of the NQF will allow for the gradual integration of ECVET and then the validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning into STVE (<http://www.erasmusplus.cy/uploadfiles/ecvet/events.html>)

Bodies responsible for ECVET and their role

A National ECVET Expert team has been established. Erasmus+ National Agency [VET] is the ECVET National Coordination Point and Contact Point for ECVET National Team

Examples of projects

1. ECVET for practitioners

The ECVET4Practitioners project aims to facilitate and promote student geographical mobility as a recognised and integrated part of Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification programmes within the hospitality sector.

The project aims to achieve this goal by developing a mobility network in hospitality which will utilize the European Credit transfer system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) – between VET providers in five countries: Finland, Cyprus, Netherlands, Spain and UK. The main deliverable of the project is a toolkit that provides practitioners from the hospitality sector with access to information on how to implement practicum and study mobility using the European Credits for Vocational Education and Training system (ECVET). The toolkit enables users to identify the opportunities and challenges associated with using the ECVET framework, and supports the implementation of a strategy to address these points with the use of forms and other such resources made available.

2. ECVET for Permeability and Transferability between the Non-Formal and Formal VET System (ECVET PERMIT)

The project ECVET for Permeability and Transferability between the Non-Formal and Formal VET System (ECVET PERMIT) aims to implement the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) methodology in the curricula of VET study programmes within the Non-Formal and formal VET system, at national and EU level, in an effort to increase the permeability and transferability of the learning outcomes achieved within different learning contexts.

Specifically, the project aims to apply the ECVET methodology for describing, assessing and validating learning outcomes in the VET study programmes of three Non-Formal technical specializations:

- Electrician
- Plumber
- Automotive Mechanic

in order to test the transferability of credits from the Non-Formal to the formal VET system, firstly within the national borders and secondly on a European level.

Part 2 Evaluation of data received from Stakeholders

Description of NQF

Cyprus is in the process of developing a NQF. CyQF will have 8 levels of qualifications. The Cyprus NQF is not in operation yet. Referencing with the EQF is in the process of being acquired in the National Plan. CyQF will have to be established by 2018.

Stakeholders responsible for EQF and ECVET

The Ministry of Education is responsible for the development of EQF in Cyprus. IDEP (Erasmus+) is responsible for the establishment of ECVET in Cyprus. In order the ECVET to be promoted and be developed the National focal point in Cyprus –IDEP- created a group of Cyprus ECVET experts. HRDA is also a stakeholder since it is the National Qualifications Body and it has established and operates the System of Vocational Qualifications in Cyprus. Technical and tertiary education are also stakeholders, along with VET provider in Cyprus. Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance is NQF and ECVET stakeholder providing its consultation.

EQF Stakeholders

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Ministry of Education & Culture	One of the departments of the ministry is the department of secondary technical and vocational education that is a key stakeholder for NQF and ECVET	http://www.moec.gov.cy/ Elias Margadjis, Director of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, margadjiselias@gmail.com Andreas Eleftheriou, First Class Education Officer aeleftheriou@schools.ac.cy

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance	The mission of the Ministry is the promotion of social justice within a free democratic system based on the pillars of social cohesion and social inclusion. The maintenance and continuous improvement of the standard of living and the quality of life of the working population and of society in general.	www.mlsi.gov.cy
Human Resource Development Authority	<p>The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) is the national agency responsible for human resource training and development. HRDA commenced its operations in 1979 under the name of Industrial Training Authority of Cyprus.</p> <p>HRDA's activities encompass five major areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The formulation of an integrated vocational training and human resource development policy in accordance with the priorities of national socio-economic policies, on the basis of which appropriate training activities are promoted and training 	<p>www.hrdauth.org.cy</p> <p>Ioannis Zenios, Senior Human Resource Officer</p> <p>i.zenios@hrdauth.org.cy</p>

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
	<p>costs are distributed,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The continuous assessment of the economy's needs for training on the basis of which an integrated training policy is formulated, 3. The modernization of the training system with the creation of the necessary infrastructure, the systematization and certification of training, and the introduction of standards of vocational qualifications, 4. The distribution of information to enterprises and the public in general, so as to raise their awareness to the need for continuing training and the provision of advisory services, 5. The analysis of the acquis communautaire in the training field and the promotion of actions for facilitating its adjustment and convergence to European systems and 	

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
	<p>practices.</p> <p>The Human Resource Development Authority has been designated as the competent Body for the promotion of a System of Vocational Qualifications. The purpose of this System is the upgrading of human resources through the Definition of Standards of Vocational Qualifications and the examination and certification of the competency of the interested persons to efficiently perform in a specific level of Vocational Qualification. The examination shall take place in Examination Centres (Training Institutions and Companies/Organisations), according to the approval of the Authority.</p>	

Table 1: EQF Stakeholders in Cyprus

ECVET Stakeholders

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
<p>IDEP- Foundation for the management of European Lifelong learning programmes</p>	<p>IDEP is responsible for the management of European funds to be used by Cypriots in the area of training and lifelong learning. IDEP is responsible for the management of ERASMUS +</p>	<p>ECVET NA Coordinator</p> <p>Dr Androula Papanastasiou</p> <p>Manager, Foundation for the management of European Lifelong learning programmes</p> <p>Email: apapanastasiou@llp.org.cy</p> <p>ECVET NA Contact Person</p> <p>Roula Kyrillou Ioannidou</p> <p>Coordinator Erasmus + - Key Action 1 and 2</p> <p>Email: rkyrillou@llp.org.cy</p>
<p>ECVET Experts</p>	<p>A group of ECVET experts (5) , The ECVET National Coordinator and the ECVET National Contact person</p>	<p>Constantinos Georgiou</p> <p>Inspector secondary Technical and Vocational Education</p> <p>Email: kgeorgiou@schools.ac.cy</p> <p>Demetris Englezakis</p> <p>Head of KES</p> <p>Email: denglez@cytanet.com.cy</p>

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
		<p>Dr. Elias Margadjis</p> <p>Head Secondary Technical and Vocational Education</p> <p>Ministry of Education and Culture</p> <p>Email: margadjiselias@gmail.com</p> <p>Dr. Stylianos Mavromoustakos</p> <p>CEO Intercollege</p> <p>Email: mavromoustakos.s@intercollege.ac.cy</p> <p>Dr. George Horattas</p> <p>First Class Officer, Cyprus Productivity Center</p> <p>Email: ghorattas@kepa.mlsi.gov.cy</p>

Table 2: ECVET stakeholders in Cyprus

Validation of formal and non formal learning

Two of the stakeholders mentioned that there is no strategy for the validation of non formal and Informal Learning. Only HRDA mentioned that there is a strategy probably because of the system of vocational qualifications where validation is possible which will be incorporated in the CyQF.

Generally, all stakeholders are participating / implementing EU projects which are linked directly or indirectly with the validation of formal a non formal learning, through European Social Fund and other EU programmes.

For example **HRDA** performed a study on the exact issue, which aimed at recognizing and validating Non-Formal and Informal Learning, within the context of the System of Vocational Qualifications. Four stages were identified (Counseling, identification, documentation, assessment), with suggestions for each stage. They are in the process of reviewing the results of the study and see how to best utilize the findings. The aim of HRDA is to develop a system of recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning and incorporating it in the System of Vocational Qualification in the new program period 2014-2020. The System of Vocational Qualifications already incorporates elements of prior learning recognition.

As far as the **Ministry of Education and Culture** is concerned it is mentioned that they have started working on a co-funded ESF project on the validation non formal and Informal Learning.

Current situation in ECVET

As far as question 6 is concerned <What is the current situation of Cyprus regarding ECVET?> the following were mentioned:

- Currently ECVET is promoted by the National Agency (ΙΔΕΠ Δια Βίου Μάθησης) IDEP which is the organisation that promotes life- long learning. There is also a National team of ECVET experts that promotes the implementation of ECVET.
- A number of stakeholders are developing their curricula according to ECVET principles. Each stakeholder works individually and the whole process is done **in a non- coordinated manner** (HRDA and Cyprus Productivity Center).The Ministry of Education and Culture mentioned that currently the curricula (technical and vocational education) are being transformed in accordance with ECVET.

As far as question 7 is concerned **<Is there a credit system in vet that allows accumulating and /or transferring learning outcomes of individuals>** two of the stakeholders replied negatively (Cyprus Productivity Center and HRDA). According to the Ministry there is a system but it does not operate in an organised manner in accordance to the suggestions of ECVET.

As far as question 8 is concerned **<please state which of the following situations applies the most>** the following were mentioned:

- Some components are still missing (2 out of the three stakeholders)
- Lack of expertise on ECVET (1 out of the three stakeholders)
- Other (1 out of the three stakeholders):
 - The standards of professional qualifications are written in the form of learning outcomes, with components of recognition of prior learning. The Qualifications of the System of Vocational Qualifications have not been developed according to ECVET principles yet. ECVET principles gained ground after the Qualifications were already developed, and there could not be any reviews or changes made, since we were limited to the fact that we were within program period 2007-2013 and the aim was to certify candidates. With the new program period, 2014-2020, the aim is to develop the standards of vocational qualifications according to ECVET principles, provided we have Board of Directors approval.

As far as question 9 **< please identify the current situation of the VET in the context of ECVET >** is concerned the stakeholders that have answered positively in the previous question mentioned that some ECVET technical components are tested through the use of pilot projects.

As far as question 10 **< Please provide information which of the following components of ECVET exist and in which phase of implementation: >** is concerned: Components of ECVET and phase of implementation it seems that ECVET is at an introductory stage. . Some ECVET

technical components are tested by ERASMUS+ Projects (eg. ECVET PERMIT). The following table summarises the findings of this question²⁴

	Already exists	Not existing	Is planned to be developed	Will be adapted (please put an x if it is planned to adapt it)	Will be introduced	Are currently in testing
Units of learning outcomes	√	√	√			
ECVET Points		√	√√			
Assessment of learning outcomes	√	√	√			
Validation of learning outcomes	√	√√				
Recognition of learning outcomes	√	√	√			
Learning agreement		√√	√			
Memorandum of		√√	√			

²⁴ Number of ticks indicate the number of replies

	Already exists	Not existing	Is planned to be developed	Will be adapted (please put an x if it is planned to adapt it)	Will be introduced	Are currently in testing
understanding						
Transcript of record (personal transcript)		√√	√			

Table 3: ECVET technical components in Cyprus

In general the replies of the HRDA are towards “existing” due to their experience of their own system (SVQ)

As far as question 11 is concerned <Does existing system allow learners to have their learning outcomes acquired in different learning settings> all stakeholders answered positively. One of the stakeholders mentioned that they offer a number of subsidizing schemes for the employed and the unemployed, in order for them to participate in VET training programmes and develop their knowledge, skills and competences. The schemes that HRDA offers are considered non formal learning. However as far as validation and recognition is concerned, one of the stakeholders mentioned that this happens to some extend e.g. the evening technical school formally recognises the learning (Ministry of Education and Culture) while two stakeholders mentioned the SVQ system of HRDA.

As far as question 12 is concerned <What is the current state of the system in context evaluation>

- One of the stakeholders considered that the System of Vocational Qualifications has been evaluated. There is overall satisfaction with the operation of the system so far, but there is room for improvement. The System had contributed in the improvement of

knowledge and skills of the participants. There needs to be more awareness and acceptance of the System of Vocational Qualifications (this stakeholder refers to SVQ).

- One of the stakeholders mentioned that the evaluation is planned
- Another stakeholder mentioned that they do not know the current state of the system in context of evaluation.

As far as the activities undertaken in Cyprus to promote ECVET the following have been mentioned:

- Seminars for ECVET awareness and implementation are organized, by HRDA, IDEP and ECVET experts.
- Projects are approved by EU for the development of ECVET.
- Finally stakeholders are developing their curricula according to ECVET principles.
- System is being converted from subject based to module based
- Promoting the possibility of mobility among the programmes

Part 3 Evaluation of the data received from VET providers

Familiarity with EQF

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	23%
I know a little bit about it	31%
Quite familiar	15%
Familiar	23%
Very familiar	8%

Table 4: VET providers' familiarity with EQF

Comments:

Regarding this question, over 50% of the VET providers are not familiar with or know very little about EQF. More than 30% are familiar or very familiar.

Practical Experience on EQF

In this question, 15% of VET Providers answered that they have practical experience on EQF; while 85% of VET Providers answered that they do not have any practical experience on EQF.

Added Value of EQF

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Attracting more students and better funding possibilities	3%
Raising attractiveness of training programmes & VET occupations/professions	28%
Increasing the quality of the training and of the teaching staff	35%
Increasing cooperation with other companies/networking	17%
Amplifying the possibilities of the European labour market for students	17%
Other (pls specify)	0%

Table 5: Added value of EQF for VET providers in Cyprus

In the case of "Other" please list the answers you have received indicating the frequency in which you have received some of these answers:

In general VET providers consider the increasing quality of the training and of the teaching staff as well as the attractiveness of training programmes and VET occupations/professions to be the added value of EQF.

Familiarity with NQF

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	38%
I know a little bit about it	23%
Quite familiar	23%
Familiar	8%
Very familiar	8%

Table 6: Familiarity with NQF

Comments:

The highest percentage (61%) are not familiar with or know a little about NQF while only 16% are familiar or very familiar.

Familiarity with ECVET

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	23%
I know a little bit about it	31%
Quite familiar	15%
Familiar	23%
Very familiar	8%

Table 7: Familiarity with ECVET

Comments:

Again in this question the majority (54%) declared that they are not familiar or they know a little bit about the European Model ECVET, while around 31% feel that they are familiar or very familiar with the European Model ECVET.

Familiarity with the ECVET developments in your country

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	43%
I know a little bit about it	29%
Quite familiar	7%
Familiar	7%
Very familiar	14%

Table 8: Familiarity with ECVET developments

Comments:

In this question 72% of VET providers mentioned that they are not familiar or that they know little bit about the ECVET developments in their countries.

Practical Experience with ECVET

On this question, 8% of VET Providers answered that they have practical experience on ECVET, while 92% answered that they do not have experience on ECVET.

Added Value of ECVET

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Use of learning outcomes provides greater flexibility in education and training, allowing learners to accumulate learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification or part-qualification	11%
Increased recognition of learning, including that achieved through geographical mobility	20%
Improved credibility for international mobility among learners and employers.	24%
Structured and quality-assured mobility provision leading to a reduced workload for mobility practitioners in the longer-term and making use of a common language for recognition in mobility.	7%
Improved understanding of different national or regional VET systems among mobility practitioners.	18%
Access to knowledge and skills, through geographical mobility, that might not be accessible locally.	7%
The development of mutual trust and a sharing of experiences among mobility practitioners and competent institutions, both nationally and internationally.	13%

Table 9: Added value of ECVET for VET providers in Cyprus

Validation procedures of Formal, Non Formal and Informal Learning

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	38%
I know a little bit about it	31%
Quite familiar	8%
Familiar	23%
Very familiar	0%

Table 10: Familiarity with validation procedures of formal, non formal and Informal Learning

Comments:

Here the highest percentage shows that VET Providers are not familiar or know little bit about the validation procedures of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in Cyprus.

Main obstacles in working with ECVET

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
More workload	33%
Change resistance by several stakeholders	60%
Other	7%

Table 11: Main obstacles in working with ECVET

In the case of "Other" please list the answers you have received indicating the frequency in which you have received some of these answers:

The greatest obstacles seem to be the change resistance as well as the workload.

In terms of other the following have been mentioned:

1. They are not well known
2. They are not well developed

Part 4 Evaluation of the data received from learners

Familiarity with EQF and NQF

Learner Response	Percentage of learners that have replied in this way
<i>Not familiar</i>	74%
<i>I know a little bit about it</i>	19%
<i>Quite familiar</i>	3%
<i>Familiar</i>	2%
<i>Very familiar</i>	2%

Table 12: Familiarity of learners with EQF

Comments:

The general picture that we get is that the learners are not at all familiar with EQF

Motivation for selecting a programme as far as National Qualifications Framework is concerned

On this question, 87% of learners mentioned that when they choose the training program they do not take into account the specific level of the training according to the National Qualifications Framework. On the other hand, only 13% of learners mentioned that they take into consideration the specific level of the training according to the National Qualifications Framework.

Familiarity with ECVET

Learner Response	Percentage of learners that have replied in this way
<i>Not familiar</i>	78%
<i>I know a little bit about it</i>	19%
<i>Quite familiar</i>	1%
<i>Familiar</i>	2%
<i>Very familiar</i>	0

Table 1: Familiarity of learners with ECVET

Comments:

As before 97% of learners are not familiar with ECVET.

Motivation for selecting a programme as far as ECVET is concerned

On this question, only 5% of learners answered that they take into consideration ECVET credits when they select a training program or mobility abroad. On the other hand, 95% of learners answered that they do not consider ECVET credits when they select a training program or mobility abroad.

Conclusion

Although there was significant progress in the development of CyQF with the development of an 8 level system that references EQF, this is still under development and it is not operational. At the moment curricula of education and training providers are being transformed according to ECVET principles and from subject based to module based. However, it seems that this process is being developed in a non - coordinated manner. ECVET is not place and for this to be achieved the completion of NQF is necessary. However several activities are being implemented to promote ECVET such as national schemes, pilot projects and workshops. A team of ECVET experts has been developed who have the responsibility together with the national coordinator and the national contact point to promote and implement ECVET.

As far as the VET providers are concerned the awareness on EQF and ECVET are still low although it seems that the situation is gradually improving with approximately 1/3 of the providers to be familiar or very familiar with EQF and recognising that EQF increases the quality of the training and of the teaching staff as well as the attractiveness of training programmes and VET occupations/professions.

VET providers (61%) are not familiar with or know a little about NQF while only 16% are familiar or very familiar (which is expected as NQF is not operational). More than half of the VET providers are not familiar or know a little bit about ECVET.

As far as the learners are concerned, Cypriot learners more than 70% of the learners are not familiar with EQF, NQF and ECVET. Moreover, they do not use the EQF and ECVET to decide about a training programme or a mobility.

Conclusively, there is still a lot of work to be done in order for Cyprus to be aligned with the European models, although in the last two-three years progress has been made.

Glossary:

Here below are defined the key terms that are shared by EU Member States, EEA and candidate countries participating in the EQF. Those terms are recommended in order to share a common understanding of key concepts of EQF.

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

‘National Qualifications System’ means all aspects of a Member State's activity related to the recognition of learning and other mechanisms that link education and training to the labour market and civil society. This includes the development and implementation of institutional arrangements and processes relating to quality assurance, assessment and the award of qualifications. A National Qualifications System may be composed of several subsystems and may include a National Qualifications Framework.

‘National Qualifications Framework’ means an instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.

‘Learning Outcomes’ means statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

‘Knowledge’ means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.

‘Skills’ means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as

cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

‘Competence’ means 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. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning is described as a process of confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, Non-Formal or Informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with requirements of a validation standard (Cedefop, 2008; Cedefop, 2009).

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Appendix one: Referencing of CyQF to EQF- use of criteria

Criterion 1: Clearly defined responsibilities of the relevant institutions

Several bodies have been formed or are planned to be formed (as described in section Bodies responsible for NQF in Cyprus). As far as the council is concerned there is no information on when it will be operational

Criterion 2: Clear and demonstrable link between EQF levels and national qualifications levels

The CQF should consist of two distinct pathways:

- Formal education – primary, lower and upper secondary, and higher and tertiary education and
- Informal and non formal learning (system of vocational qualifications and other training programmes).

The degree of connection between the various subsystems will have to allow the development of common structures and elements which will offer opportunities for combining and transferring credits.

At the first stages of the CQF implementation, the flexible approach will be adopted, since, for the time being, the existing National Qualifications System of Cyprus does not favour the adoption of the rigid approach. The CQF will be implemented gradually.

As far as additional policy measures are concerned it is mentioned in the report that Two pieces of work were undertaken. Firstly, to compare the basic concepts and language of the text used in the CyQF and the EQF and secondly a comparison of the actual descriptors. The detail provided was helpful and reinforced the links whilst outlining some of the additionally provided by the CyQF. The international experts spend considerable time analysing these

both on their own and then in discussion with each other, the CyQF team from the stakeholders. This included much discussion around the links between the different stages of level descriptors from general to sectoral. All CyQF Committee stakeholders along with all Ministry Directorates were included in that process as well. Refer to the meetings details for the CyQF Referencing Process.

EQF level descriptors have been taken as a starting point and further elaborated in the CyQF, with strong emphasis on problem solving, communication, cooperation, learning skills and understanding and application of knowledge. It would be interesting to know more about the development of national level descriptors, sources used, stakeholders involved and challenges encountered. The updated report makes reference to two pieces of work on comparison of level descriptors (p.92): the comparison of concepts and language in the CyQF and the EQF, and a linguistic comparison of actual level descriptors in both frameworks. EQF AG requested the documentation and evidence of this analysis to be included in the report.

Criterion 3: The principle of learning outcomes

The term learning outcomes does not have a uniform interpretation across all levels of the Cyprus Educational system. All translations in current use mean the same thing: what a student should know, should understand and should be able to do at the end of an educational program.

- Learning outcomes for all levels below Level 4 are set out in national core curricula. Core curricula set out learning outcomes which students should attain by the end of the corresponding level of education. They also establish a clear hierarchy between knowledge and skills.
- The orientation towards skills is further strengthened by the notion of key competences. The curriculum for primary and lower secondary education (as described in the level descriptors), recognizes five core competences: Learning, problem solving, communication, social and interpersonal interaction and work skills.

- Learning outcomes in tertiary education are used in a different sense. Distinctions are made among professional knowledge, professional skills and general competences.

The strengthening of the learning outcomes approach is clear in Cyprus' education and training system, with different interpretation across levels and subsystems. Below level 4, the learning outcomes are defined by national core curricula that have been recently revised with strong involvement of teachers and academics. The learning outcomes orientation is further strengthened by strong focus on specific skills and key competences that are increasingly required in the 21st century.

The Cyprus referencing report makes references to the importance of Non-Formal and Informal Learning on several occasions across the report. The new section 3.3.3.8 (p. 56) in the updated report provides additional information on the state of play on validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning and future plans.

Criterion 4: Transparent inclusion of qualifications in the educational and qualifications system

A preliminary determination of the level of qualifications was made by performing a detailed comparison of the required learning outcomes with the appropriate descriptors in the CyQF. The recognition and validation of qualifications, through the development and implementation of the CQF, ensures the upgrading of the quality of human resources and prevents the inclusion of unqualified individuals in a professional group. Furthermore, it ensures international recognition of qualifications through the European Qualifications Framework.

After implementing the new solutions enabling the integrated system to function, determining the CyQF level for qualification will be possible in two ways:

- The ministers qualifications (the ones awarded based on Cyprus laws) or institutions under their jurisdiction, assigning a CyQF level will occur when the

qualification enters into force. The minister or the institution will be responsible for determining the qualification in its authority.

- The remaining qualifications will have CyQF levels assigned to them according to strictly defined procedures as they are entered into the integrated qualification register. Standards will be set for describing qualifications submitted for entry into this register. Not only will LO be required but also its validation and QA processes. Procedures for entering qualifications into the integrated register will include a detailed review of the compatibility of LO with the CyQF level descriptors. A quality assurance system for these processes is anticipated, related to registering a qualification based on an application to the register by an entity.

Criterion 5 : Quality Assurance consistent with European principles

In accordance to the report prepared by the Cypriot Ministry of Education and Culture through the CQF, quality assurance can be promoted according to the following principles:

- Quality assurance policies and procedures should underpin all levels of the CQF
- Quality assurance should be an integral part of the internal management of education and training institutions
- Quality assurance should include regular evaluation of institutions, their programmes or their quality assurance systems by external monitoring bodies or agencies
- External monitoring bodies or agencies carrying out quality assurance should be subject to regular review
- Quality assurance should include context, input, process and output dimensions, while giving emphasis to outputs and learning outcomes
- Quality assurance systems should include the following elements:

- clear and measurable objectives and standards;
- guidelines for implementation, including stakeholder involvement;
- appropriate resources;
- consistent evaluation methods, associating self-assessment and external review;
- feedback mechanisms and procedures for improvement;
- widely accessible evaluation results.
- Quality assurance initiatives at national level should be coordinated in order to ensure overview, coherence, synergy and system-wide analysis
- Quality assurance should be a cooperative process across education and training levels and systems, involving all relevant stakeholders
- Quality assurance orientations at Community level may provide reference points for evaluations and peer learning.

The main Quality Assurance Body for all activities is the Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus

However although the principles are clearly presented no information was identified there is little information on how these principles are met. The only clear reference in the report to the quality assurance approaches in VET is about the awarding of vocational qualifications and refers to a verification of candidates' assessment by an assessment committee comprised of internal and external assessors.

Criterion 6: Agreement of the quality assurance bodies

Four independent bodies have been developed:

- the Council of the Educational Evaluation-Accreditation,

- the Advisory Committee for Tertiary Education,
- the Evaluation Committee of Private Universities and
- the Council for the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications of Cyprus.

According to new legislation these bodies will soon be replaced by the Agency of Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Recognition of qualifications in higher education which will be the new competent authority for quality assurance and recognition in Cyprus.

Criterion 7 Participation of international experts

The people who were selected are top European experts in their areas. Various meetings took place with the international and local experts on an individual team basis but also with video conferencing on a frequent basis.

Criterion 8: Writing of the referencing report and certification

The referencing report was written in cooperation with other stakeholders and it explains and justifies the procedures and results of the referencing process and describes the fulfillment of the criteria set by the EQF AG. This report is further published and presented to a wider audience of stakeholders for consultation. The proposed referencing report was presented in the CyQF committee on 30/5/2014. Once their comments were incorporated into the report, it was approved by the Minister of Education and Culture. After the approval of the referencing report by the EQF AG, the report will be posted on the government's official internet site.

Criterion 9: Publication of the report on the web

The final version of the referencing report will be presented in its English version to the EQF Advisory Group. It will then be available from the official EQF Platform. All details of the referencing, the Interim Report, the comments from various stakeholders can be viewed on the www.moec.gov.cy/cyqf

Criterion 10: Listing of EQF level on all diplomas and qualifications certificates

Following the referencing process, and in line with timelines set in the recommendation, all new qualification certificates, diplomas and Europass documents issued by the competent authorities shall contain a clear reference, by way of national qualification systems, to the appropriate European Qualifications Framework level. The Ministry of Education and Culture has decided that a reference to corresponding EQF Levels will be included on qualification certificates and diplomas upon approval of the Referencing Report by the EQF Advisory Group. Level rating of all courses provided by public education and training institutions will be agreed upon between these institutions and Ministry of Education and Culture (as NCP) and be formalized in protocols which will bind these institutions to indicate the level of the CyQF and EQF on all new transcripts and certificates issues by them. This procedure will follow with private education and training providers who shall also follow the same process as the public ones.

National Report: Germany

National Report

Country: Germany

This report is part of Intellectual Output 1

Comparative report on the situation of the countries of the consortium as far as ECVET and EQF is concerned

Partners Responsible for the composition of this report:

Volkshochschule im Landkreis Cham e.V.

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Part 1 Desktop research

Development of the NQF in Germany

For development and implementation of the Deutscher Qualifikationsrahmen (DQR), the National Qualifications Framework in Germany, the 10 referencing criteria to EQF were complied. The criterion 2: “there is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications framework or system and the level descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework”²⁵ shows to what extent the DQR and EQF are linked in the context of structure and concept.

DQR and EQF have both eight levels. However, the DQR levels are built differently, on the basis of 4 pillars, whereas the EQF is built on 3 pillars. In the DQR, the level descriptors describe the competences required to obtain a qualification, the main difference appears in categories of competence: professional and personal. The term competence in DQR is understood as “ability and readiness to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and methodological competences in work or study situations and for occupational and personal development.”²⁶

The DQR underlines the holistic understanding of competence, it forms the umbrella for all learning outcomes, in comparison to EQF competence exists alongside knowledge and skills. “The DQR refers the learning outcomes associated with a qualification to the professional and personal development of the individual and it clarifies the orientation of all achieved learning outcomes to acting in a competent manner under terms of defined structures of requirements”.

In comparison to the EQF, the DQR includes the defined structure of requirements.

²⁵ German EQF Referencing Report, June 2013, Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, PDF to download [https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/sites/eac-efq/files/German EQF Referencing Report.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/sites/eac-efq/files/German_EQF_Referencing_Report.pdf)

²⁶ (CEDEFOP, Development of national qualifications frameworks in Europe, October 2011, ISBN 978-92-896-0850-3)

Table: Structure of the EQF levels (source: European Commission 2008)

Each of the eight levels is defined by a set of descriptors indicating the learning outcomes relevant to qualifications at that level in any system of qualifications			
	Knowledge	Skills	Competences
Level x	In the European Qualifications Framework, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.	In the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (using logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments);	In the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Table: Structure of the DQR levels (source: DQR document 2011)

Level indicator			
Structure of requirements			
Professional competence		Personal competence	
Knowledge	Skills	Social competence	Autonomy
Depth and breadth	Instrumental and systemic skills, judgement	Team/leadership skills, involvement and communication	Autonomous responsibility/responsibility, reflectiveness and learning competence

Initiation work on the development of the DQR started 9 years ago, in March 2007. Through these years the following phases were carried out:

- Phase 1 drawing up a model of the DQR with a description of the learning outcomes
- Phase 2 piloting phase including testing of the developed matrix.
- Phase 3 to Dec 2012 – finalisation of the DQR, including allocation of formal qualifications from the German education system to DQR levels. In the phase also other important steps were undertaken: recommendations to include Non-Formally and informally acquired competences, manual on allocation of qualifications to DQR and referencing report to the EQF issued in June 2013.

- The last phase planned to January 2017, covers the following activities: referencing to EQF levels in all new qualification certificated issued, further activities to include Non-Formally and informally acquired competences, evaluation of DQR classification and allocations, eventual adjustments and allocation of school – based general education qualifications.
- It is worth to mention that the DQR has orientation character, no regulatory function. The system for eligibility in Germany does not change due to the DQR. The admittance provisions still apply to the qualifications, not the DQR levels. The attainment of a specific DQR level does not automatically entitle access to the “next level”.

State of art in the context of inclusion of Non-Formally and informally acquired skills in NQF (National Qualifications Framework)

As mentioned in the previous chapter the first activities to include Non-Formally and informally acquired skills have been already undertaken.

As stated in the recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) (23 April 2008), appropriate measure to include results of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in the development of the DQR are necessary. For this reason the experts workshop in 2010 was established, this workshop’s results showed that Germany has already a range of procedures to recognize informally acquired competences. The group of experts has tested how to integrate Non-Formal area. The working group of experts was to develop the criteria for inclusion of qualifications from the non- formal sector. 21 experts from the training practice, associations, research and policy have advised the working group on what needs to be placed on DQR assignments e.g.:

- How should be learning outcomes described?
- What documentation standards must be met?
- What are the requirements for the quality assurance?

The working group has met five times - on 26.04.2012 , 18.06.2012, 09.10.2012 , 12.04.2013 and 13.02.2014. Their recommendations of the working group for Non-Formal learning were presented to the Working Group of DQR and the federal-state coordination body DQR.

In Germany there is still no legal basis for validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in the NQF. There are a number of procedures associated with formal recognition or entitlement which are subject to different responsibilities.

- Examination for non-pupils in general education
The examination for non-pupils is offered in Germany and is linked to a minimum age, primary residence and evidence of appropriate examination preparation. Here adult education centres offer courses to prepare for the external students' examination.
- External students' examination in vocational education and training
Recognition of qualification can be also obtained by those who have not undergone the dual vocational education but can provide evidence of employment or training periods (Vocational Training Act, section 45, paragraph 2 and Handicrafts Code section 37, paragraph 2).
- Access to higher education for vocationally qualified persons
"In March 2009, the Standing Conference adopted standard criteria under which vocationally qualified applicants without a higher education entrance qualification obtained at school are admitted to higher education." This allows the admission to general higher education to master craftsmen, business management specialists etc.
- Crediting competences acquired at work to a higher education degree course
The Standing Conference created the basis for allowing credits to be acquired outside a higher education degree course (June 2002). There is the following procedure: the examination of the documents submitted by applicant to what extent existing qualifications are equivalent to the content and level of the degree course. The examination is carried out on a case-by-case basis. "The crediting of knowledge and skills can also take place by means of a placement examination. In these cases the level of knowledge of each individual applicant is tested in a formal

examination procedure regulated by examination regulations with the aim of placing the applicant in a higher semester of study, so that a specific study segment, which must be determined in each individual case, can be replaced by achievements from outside the higher education sector.”²⁷

State of the art in the implementation of ECVET in Germany

Current Stage of Implementation

The ECVET is mostly understood as an instrument of transnational mobility in vocational education and training, however the ECVET can be also apply beyond mobility activities e.g. transferability and definition of learning outcomes for various VET trainings. There is still need to extend the potential of ECVET among various target groups, according to the recommendation of ECVET experts, “the stakeholders in initial training are already aware of ECVET while other areas of education like continuing training are not.”

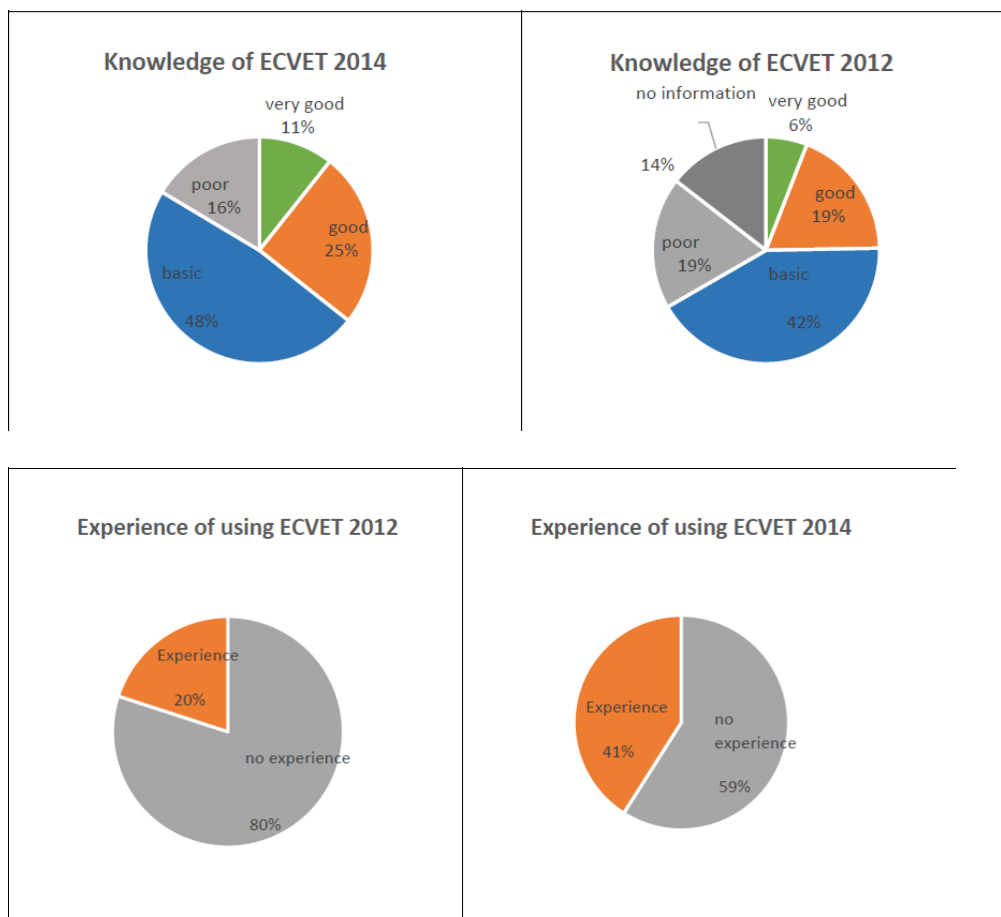
The ECVET experts together with the National Coordination Point organized workshops on formulation of learning outcomes in mobility contexts for ECVET practitioners in schools and companies. It is highly recommended to continue such workshops on a broader scale, e.g. integration of workshop into teacher in-service training as is already in some German Länder.

In the recommendation of ECVET experts the importance of raising visibility and application of ECVET in the context of Non-Formally acquired skills and competences was also highlighted. Also the process of recognition of ECVET on all levels of education can be achieved if all players responsible for policy VET system are engaged in this process.

According to the National Agency BiBB in the last round of the projects within the programmes ERASMUS+ more than 15 % of applicants declared using of ECVET elements.

²⁷ German EQF Referencing Report, June 2013, Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, PDF to download https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/sites/eac-ecq/files/German_EQF_Referencing_Report.pdf

Additionally according to the statistic of NA BIBB on the basis of survey with more than 240 respondents (representatives of education sector) the knowledge and use of ECVET is growing.²⁸



²⁸ Online Umfrage zu ECVET 2014, <http://www.ecvet-info.de/de/286.php>

Activities that take place in the country

Bodies responsible for ECVET and their role

The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has commissioned the National Agency Education for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (NA at BIBB) to set up the ECVET National Coordination Point (NCP-ECVET). The central task of the NCP-ECVET is to advise vet-providers and support them in the development of practical instruments and in the development of a common understanding of learning outcomes.

Since 2012, the ECVET National Experts have carried out more than 200 activities on dissemination and implementation of ECVET in Germany. Within those activities, events the Experts collected experiences and expertise on the current state of art of ECVET implementation in Germany. According to the ECVET experts ECVET can contribute to enhancing transfer opportunities within VET systems by supporting the recognition of learning outcomes of different educational pathways.

The ECVET experts together with the National Coordination Point organized workshops on formulation of learning outcomes in mobility contexts for ECVET practitioners in schools and companies. It is highly recommended to continue such workshops on a broader scale, e.g. integration of workshop into teacher in-service training as is already in some German Länder.

In the recommendation of ECVET experts the importance of raising visibility and application of ECVET in the context of Non-Formally acquired skills and competences was also highlighted. Also the process of recognition of ECVET on all levels of education can be achieved if all players responsible for policy VET system are engaged in this process.

In year 2014, the ECVET experts carried out 43 activities, e.g. counselling, workshops, presentations, conferences etc.

In years 2012 and 2013 the experts carried out 100 activities, among other 30 presentations about ECVET concept. The aim of the activities was to emphasize the added value of the ECVET among stakeholders, companies, schools, chambers, ministries.

Examples of projects

ICARE, the project dedicated to improving the mobility for the personal care and social workers, was one of the ECVET Pilot Projects of the second generation. This project implied the experimental application of the ECVET system for recognition of qualifications and career paths in the field of personal care and social work. As the result the recognition model was developed and validated in the countries participating in the project²⁹.

Another project concerning the field of social care is **Proper Chance**.

The project **Proper Chance** aimed to support professional permeability and mobility for workers in the field of health and social care by promoting the implementation of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). According to Proper Chance provides the usage of ECVET transparency and recognition of learning outcomes and qualifications, including Non-Formal and Informal Learning, which can significantly improve professional permeability and mobility within the sector of health and social care and fill in the gap between the provided and the needed qualified staff in this field. Implying ECVET the project **Proper Chance** provided the comparisons of the learning outcomes of several selected professions (social care nurse, family helper, helping nurse, housekeeper etc.) as well as of some extra qualifications (first aid assignment, base care in palliative cares etc.)³⁰.

Partners working on the project **TRIFT** (a Leonardo-da-Vinci-Transfer of Innovation-Project) elaborated a Competence Matrix (according to the VQTS-model) for the professional area 'foreign trade', which allows the mapping of competences into competence areas and competence development steps. One of the issues of the project was the allocation of credit

²⁹ <http://www.icareproject.eu/pages/news.html>

³⁰ http://www.proper-chance.eu/eng/project_outline.html

points according to the ECVET-process. As a result allows this project the distribution of ECVET-credit-points in the field of foreign trade³¹.

EREIVET is a network project which aimed to develop the strategies for the enhancement of learning cross-border mobility using the following instruments as ECVET and EUROPASS.

EREIVET developed the unit concerning Office administration which also ensures the compliance with ECVET principles³².

Name of the Unit:	Office administration	
Reference to the qualification:	Business, administration and services	
		EQF-level: 4
Knowledge	Skills	Competence
He/she knows - basic techniques of written and oral communication - basics about book keeping and invoice	He/she is able to - plan and organize administrative tasks - coordinate or participate in a project, meetings, travels etc. - prepare invoices under instruction	He/she is able to - prepare for salary payments - prepare projects, meetings, travels, etc
Social competences / Personal competences He/she is able to - insure intermediary mediation roles - work in a team		

³¹ <http://www.trift.eu/project.html>

³² <http://www.ereivet.net/index.php/en/>

Part 2 Evaluation of data received from Stakeholders

Description of NQF

All of the stakeholders answered that the national qualifications framework (NQF) had been set up. Stakeholders mentioned the main points about EQF and DQR: both EQF and DQR have eight levels of qualifications; the DQR is built on 4 pillars (instead of 3 pillars in EQF) to describe the learning outcomes in the German educational system. One of the stakeholders gave a detailed description of DQR in comparison EQF.

Levels and competences description

The DQR describes on eight levels of professional and personal competences to differentiate the qualifications received in general education, vocational education and training as well as higher education. All the levels have the same structure and describe the competences which are obligatory for the qualifications on the relevant level. The DQR differentiates between two competence categories: Professional Competence which is subdivided into Knowledge and Skills as well as Personal Competence which is Social competence and Autonomy.

Comparison DQR/EQF

The levels of the DQR have another structure than those of the EQF. The DQR uses more categories for characterisation. The categories and competence descriptions of the DQR further and concretise the EQF, which as a general framework is rather abstract. It emphasises that the German educational system has a holistic and consistent understanding of competences. In contrast to the EQF, the DQR provides a short text preceding the level descriptors, summarizing the requirement structure of the relevant level ("level indicator"). The four-pillar structure was selected in order to describe the competences including all aspects. The coordination point is the Federal Ministry of Education and Research [Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung – BMBF] and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (Kultusministerkonferenz). One of the stakeholders pointed out that the qualifications are

allocated, with the exception of the German so-called “Abitur” (general qualification for university entrance).

The stakeholders emphasise that the DQR is used for orientation and does not have a regulatory character. It is still not possible to speak about a transfer or recognition of the vocational training. The dual system keeps its vocational training programs, practical plans and exam regularities.

It is planned to allocate the qualification level to all new certificates starting in 2014. It is not possible to allocate the qualifications to certificates which were awarded before 2014. The admission system (e.g. university entrance) does not change with the DQR. Admission regulations are based on qualifications and not on DQR-levels.

Stakeholders responsible for EQF and ECVET

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung), the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (Kultusministerkonferenz) and the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (Bundesinstitut für berufliche Bildung – BIBB) as well as the relevant authorities of the federal states (Länder) were named as the main stakeholders for EQF and ECVET. Due to the federal system and the federal responsibility for professional exams in Germany, the working groups of ministries, experts and vocational trainings providers have no legislative power. They are acting as scientific discussion and expert panels.

EQF Stakeholders

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung)	At the German federal government level, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is responsible for scientific and academic matters ³³ .	Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung Kapelle-Ufer 1 D-10117 Berlin Tel.: +49 (0)30 18 57-0 Fax: +49 (0)30 18 57-5503 Email: information@bmbf.bund.de
The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs in Germany (Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (KMK))	The Standing Conference unites the ministers and senators of the Länder responsible for education, higher education and research, as well as cultural affairs ³⁴ .	Sekretariat der Ständigen Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland Presse- und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit Graurheindorfer Str. 157 53117 Bonn Tel.: +49 (0)228 501 611 Fax: +49 (0)228 501 763 Email: info@kmk.org
Social partners, Economic organisations, Chambers	The Chamber of Industry and Commerce for Munich and Upper Bavaria represents the interests of organisations in the field of industry, trade and services for Upper Bavaria.	Industrie- und Handelskammer für München und Oberbayern Balanstraße 55-59 81541 München Tel: 089 5116-0 Fax: 089 5116-1306 Email: ihkmail@muenchen.ihk.de

³³

https://www.academics.com/science/the_federal_ministry_of_education_and_research_30571.html

³⁴ <http://www.kmk.org/information-in-english/standing-conference-of-the-ministers-of-education-and-cultural-affairs-of-the-laender-in-the-federal-republic-of-germany.html>

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Ministries on national and federal states level (Länder)	Ministry of labour, social affairs, family and integration in Bavaria	Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, Familie und Integration Winzererstraße 9 80797 München Telefon: 089 1261-01 Telefax: 089 1261-1122
Experts of the working group DQR	The working group DQR is a council consisting of experts from the field of general education, higher education, vocational training and further education training.	https://www.dqr.de/kontakt.php
Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (Bundesinstitut für berufliche Bildung - BIBB)	The BIBB is engaged in a huge variety of programmes with practical focus. The BIBB conducts its own surveys in addition to processing external data. This provides the basis for evaluations and analyses, which then are included in publications such as the annual Data Report. ³⁵	Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) Robert-Schuman-Platz 3 53175 Bonn Tel: 0228 / 107 - 0 Fax: 0228 / 107 - 2977 Internet: www.bibb.de Email: @zentrale@bibb.de

³⁵ <https://www.bibb.de/en/25.php>

ECVET Stakeholders

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Forschung - BMBF)	At the German federal government level, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is responsible for scientific and academic matters ³⁶ .	Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung Kapelle-Ufer 1 D-10117 Berlin Tel.: +49 (0)30 18 57-0 Fax: +49 (0)30 18 57-5503 email: information@bmbf.bund.de
Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung BIBB / NKS at the NA-BIBB (from 2016 NA-BIBB))	The BIBB is engaged in a huge variety of programmes with practical focus. The BIBB conducts its own surveys in addition to processing external data. This provides the basis for evaluations and analyses, which then are included in publications such as the annual Data Report. ³⁷	Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) Robert-Schuman-Platz 3 53175 Bonn Tel: 0228 / 107 - 0 Fax: 0228 / 107 - 2977 Internet: www.bibb.de E-mail: zentrale@bibb.de
Social partners, Economic organisations, Chambers	The Chamber of Industry and Commerce for Munich and Upper Bavaria represents the interests of organisations in the field of industry, trade and services.	Industrie- und Handelskammer für München und Oberbayern Balanstraße 55-59 81541 München Telefon: 089 5116-0 Telefax: 089 5116-1306 email: ihkmail@muenchen.ihk.de

³⁶

https://www.academics.com/science/the_federal_ministry_of_education_and_research_30571.html

³⁷ <https://www.bibb.de/en/25.php>

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Departments for European Affairs on federal state (Länder) level: e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU Agency, Regional Authority Government of Cologne, - ISB State Institute for school quality and education research Munich 	They promote the participation in European projects and mobilities	EU-Geschäftsstelle - Wirtschaft und Berufsbildung - der Bezirksregierung Köln Bezirksregierung Köln 50606 Köln Staatsinstitut für Schulqualität und Bildungsforschung (ISB) Schellingstr. 155 80797 München
Vocational schools / education providers		

Validation of formal and Non-Formal learning

There is yet no strategy for the validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. Such a strategy is in the preparing stage. Following the Council Recommendation on validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning, the working group for validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning was formed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

For this field there are no scientific instruments for the validation of Informal or Non-Formal learning outcomes. Only by means of these instruments and their formal recognition the learning outcomes could be recognised, certificated or partly certificated. There is yet no coordinated strategy. The analyses and measuring of qualifications are well-known in social studies but they are not used for the quiet differentiated vocational training in Germany.

Current situation in ECVET

At present, there is no political support for the implementation of ECVET in the national vocational education system. One possible reason is the number of actors in the VET sector.

For the national VET policy, ECVET is used as an instrument for quality assurance in transnational mobility.

On the basis of the main principles, the instruments are to be developed to support the transparency between the levels of education. The number of projects which use the ECVET instruments in order to organize their mobilities has grown constantly, in 2015 15,8 % of all projects put them in place. ECVET is occasionally used in the formal field (for example in VET).

There are also pilot projects, however, some of them will not be supported in the future. ECVET is successfully used by 18% of all projects within Erasmus+ VET KA1. In Bavaria, the ISB recommends and promotes the concept in order to ensure a high level of quality of the mobility projects based on a well-defined communication structure. This is the reason why the majority of all KA1 application from vocational schools uses the three ECVET instruments and the ECVET principles. In a next step, first schools start to recognise qualifications that were acquired during the mobility phase. Although a credit system is used in a few professions, there is no overall credit system in Germany, which allows the validation and transfer of learning outcomes for individuals. Some reasons for this situation are:

- satisfaction with the current system,
- lack of trust among actors in the VET system,
- lack of resources/capacity,
- lack of a responsible institution
- lack of added-value of the ECVET principles for the decision-makers,
- lack of understanding of the ECVET system
- lack of expert knowledge for ECVET
- lack of some components.

There are single cases of recognition in ECTS-system. Credit points are not used because there is no complete system. Moreover, ECVET is used as an instrument for quality assurance for transnational mobilities as stated above.

A lot of projects in the German education system deal with ECVET (see [www.ecvet-info.de/ media/Implementing ECVET.pdf/](http://www.ecvet-info.de/media/Implementing_ECVET.pdf/)). Although, with the so-called “Ausbildungsbausteine” – “brick stones in VET education” some elements that could represent ECVET have been developed and tested, however, these are explicitly named as ECVET elements.

ECVET cannot be realized on a national level, but only on the European level. The systems of concepts and categories are not always completely comparable. Therefore it is not in all cases more transparent and more comprehensive, which leads to reformulation of undefined categories by new projects.

For the current situation of the VET in the context of ECVET it was mentioned that some ECVET technical components are being tested now. One of the stakeholders pointed out that no general characterisation corresponds with the current situation. There are single projects and single regions where the ECVET is implemented.

Results received from stakeholders:

	Already exists	Not existing	Is planned to be developed	Will be adapted (please put an x if it is planned to adapt it)	Will be introduced	Are currently in testing
Units of learning outcomes	1		1			1
ECVET Points		1	1			
Assessment of learning outcomes	1		1			1
Validation of learning outcomes	1		1			1
Recognition of learning outcomes	1		1			1
Learning agreement	2		1			
Memorandum of understanding	2		1			
Transcript of record (personal transcript)	2		1			

According to one of the stakeholders, the components of ECVET do not exist on the structural level. For the question whether the existing system allows learners to have their learning outcomes acquired in different learning settings, both, negative and positive answers were given. It is to emphasize that the Informal Learning in the working process plays an important role in the German dual vocational education. Additionally, the dual system makes possible comprehensive qualifications, in formal as well as in Non-Formal education because different concrete situations under real and/or simulated working conditions are given. However, a separate validation of Non-Formal and Informal competences does not take place. The formal vocational education system is solely responsible for the formal approved vocational qualification. However, in the dual system there are more key players involved (practical work – employers/chambers) and it is worth mentioning that there has started a communication on this issue between the different parties involved.

Concerning the current state of the system in the context of evaluation, two stakeholders noted that the system had been evaluated.

The kinds of activities undertaken in Germany to promote ECVET depend on single funding programs like Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus+ or public funding research programs. There are publications, bodies of experts and some posts in educational authorities which bear reference to ECVET. There was also the so-called “Nationale Koordinierungstelle ECVET”, which promoted ECVET as a quality assurance instrument for geographical mobility together with a national team of thirteen ECVET experts and in which educators are supported with recommendations, workshops, materials, practice-orientated materials and best practice examples.

From the 1.1.2016 there is no longer an independent ECVET Coordination Point. A Contact Point ECVET will be located directly at NA, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) in Bonn.

Part 3 Evaluation of the data received from VET providers

Familiarity with EQF

VET providers	Percentage of VET providers
Not familiar	0
I know a little bit about it	40%
Quite familiar	30%
Familiar	10%
Very familiar	20%

Comments:

20% of the VET Providers admit to be very familiar with EQF. 10% of the persons interviewed are familiar with the European Qualifications Framework and 30% - quite familiar. 40 % of VET providers know a little bit about this framework. For none of VET Providers was EQF unfamiliar.

Practical Experience on EQF

20 % of the VET providers have already had experience with EQF (description of the professional competences, experience from different projects and working group for envelopment of NQR in Germany in the field of health and care). 80 % percent of the VET providers have no practical experience on EQF.

Added Value of EQF

VET providers	Percentage of VET providers ³⁸
Attracting more students and better funding possibilities	14%
Raising attractiveness of training programmes & VET occupations/professions	22%
Increasing the quality of the training and of the teaching staff	9%
Increasing cooperation with other companies/networking	14%
Amplifying the possibilities of the European labour market for students	32%
Other (pls specify)	9%

In the case of "Other" please list the answers you have received indicating the frequency in which you have received some of these answers:

I cannot contribute anything – 4,5%

Creating concepts – 4,5%

³⁸ more than one answers was possible

Familiarity with NQF

VET providers	Percentage of VET providers
Not familiar	40%
I know a little bit about it	0
Quite familiar	40%
Familiar	20%
Very familiar	0

Comments:

More than half of the VET providers (60%) are familiar or quite familiar with NQF. 40% of the VET Providers being interviewed are not familiar the German Qualification Frame.

Familiarity with ECVET

VET providers	Percentage of VET providers
Not familiar	30%
I know a little bit about it	30%
Quite familiar	30%
Familiar	0
Very familiar	10%

Comments:

Although 30% of the VET Providers have some knowledge about the European credit system for vocational education, 30% are quite familiar and 10% - very familiar with ECVET, one third of the VET providers do not know anything about the system for recognition of qualifications and as a result can not apply it.

Familiarity with the ECVET developments in your country

VET providers	Percentage of VET providers
Not familiar	20%
I know a little bit about it	50%
Quite familiar	20%
Familiar	0
Very familiar	10%

Comments:

Similar to the answers for the question if the VET providers are familiarity with ECVET, 20% being asked, are not familiar with ECVET developments in her/his own country. 50% of the interviewed persons know just a little bit about the development of this system in Germany. One fifth of the VET providers are quite familiar with the establishing of the credit system. 10% are very familiar with the development of ECVET in Germany.

Practical Experience with ECVET

90% of the VET Providers have got no practical experience with ECVET. 10% of the VET providers were engaged in cooperation with expert group ECVET in Germany, talks on the topic, implementation of ECVET in Workshops.

Added Value of ECVET

VET providers	Percentage of VET providers ³⁹
Use of learning outcomes provides greater flexibility in education and training, allowing learners to accumulate learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification or part-qualification	16%
increased recognition of learning, including that achieved through geographical mobility	16%
Improved credibility for international mobility among learners and employers.	16%
Structured and quality-assured mobility provision leading to a reduced workload for mobility practitioners in the longer-term and making use of a common language for recognition in mobility.	5%
Improved understanding of different national or regional VET systems among mobility practitioners.	16%
Access to knowledge and skills, through geographical mobility, that might not be accessible locally.	0%
The development of mutual trust and a sharing of experiences among mobility practitioners and competent institutions, both nationally and internationally.	16%

No answer – 10%

I do not know – 5%

³⁹multiple answers were possible

Validation of Formal, Non Formal and Informal Learning

VET providers	Percentage of VET providers
Not familiar	30%
I know a little bit about it	20%
Quite familiar	30%
Familiar	10%
Very familiar	0

Comments:

Nearly one third of the VET providers are not familiar with the validation of formal, Non-Formal and Informal Learning. 40% of interviewed persons are quite familiar or familiar with the validation. One fifth of VAT providers knows a little bit about it.

Main obstacles in working with ECVET

VET providers	Percentage of VET
More workload	20%
Change resistance by several stakeholders	40%
Other	0 %
I know nothing about it	10%
No Answer	30%

In the case of "Other" please list the answers you have received indicating the frequency in which you have received some of these answers:

Part 4 Evaluation of the data received from learners

Familiarity with EQF and NQF

<i>Learners</i>	<i>Percentage of learners</i>
<i>Not familiar</i>	<i>96%</i>
<i>I know a little bit about it</i>	<i>4%</i>
<i>Quite familiar</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Familiar</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Very familiar</i>	<i>0</i>

Comments: The most of the learners (96%) are not familiar with either the European or National Qualifications Framework. Only 4% of the learners asked, know a little bit about the Qualifications Framework. For none of the learners the European and / or National Qualifications Framework is quite familiar, familiar or very familiar.

Motivation for selecting a programme as far as National Qualifications Framework is concerned

79 % of the learners did not give the answer for the question 2.

The answer “No” was given by the 21 % of the persons asked to fill the questionnaire.

Familiarity with ECVET

<i>Learners</i>	<i>Percentage of learners</i>
<i>Not familiar</i>	94%
<i>I know a little bit about it</i>	6%
<i>Quite familiar</i>	0
<i>Familiar</i>	0
<i>Very familiar</i>	0

Comments:

94% of the learners know nothing about the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). 6 % of the learners being involved in the questionnaire replied “I know a little bit about it”. None the learners answered that he /she is familiar with ECVET.

Motivation for selecting a programme as far as ECVET is concerned

One learner gave the positive answer for the question if the ECVET credits affect the decision by selecting a training programme or mobility abroad. The description followed is “The credit system functions for all EU abroad countries”. 71% of learners do not concern ECVET credits choosing the programme or mobility for the training abroad. 5% of the learners wrote a comment that they know nothing about ECVET credits.

Glossary:

Here below are defined the key terms that are shared by EU Member States, EEA and candidate countries participating in the EQF. Those terms are recommended in order to share a common understanding of key concepts of EQF.

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

‘National Qualifications System’ means all aspects of a Member State's activity related to the recognition of learning and other mechanisms that link education and training to the labour market and civil society. This includes the development and implementation of institutional arrangements and processes relating to quality assurance, assessment and the award of qualifications. A National Qualifications System may be composed of several subsystems and may include a National Qualifications Framework.

‘National Qualifications Framework’ means an instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.

‘Learning Outcomes’ means statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

‘Knowledge’ means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.

‘Skills’ means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

‘Competence’ means 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.

In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning is described as a process of confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, Non-Formal or Informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with requirements of a validation standard (Cedefop, 2008; Cedefop, 2009).

National Report: Greece

National Report

Country: Greece

This report is part of Intellectual Output 1

Comparative report on the situation of the countries of the consortium as far as ECVET and EQF is concerned

Partners Responsible for the composition of this report:

DIMITRA E.S. A.E.

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Part 1 Desktop research

Development of the NQF in Greece

Greece has developed a comprehensive Hellenic qualifications framework (HQF) for lifelong learning, aiming at a coherent and comprehensive system of qualifications from all parts and levels of education and training.

The framework has eight levels and is defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence. First stage development has focused on the range of qualifications awarded within the formal system but, in a long-term perspective, the plan is to accommodate Non-Formal and Informal Learning. An objective for the period of 2014-15 is to consolidate the HQF as the main lever for reforming the Greek education system.

From policy point of view, apart from responding to the European qualifications framework (EQF) initiative, the HQF work is directly linked to the country's efforts to develop a framework for further improving lifelong learning policies and practices, which will allow recognition and certification of all kinds of education and training.

Strengthening the learning outcomes dimension in all parts of education and training is considered a precondition for moving towards lifelong learning. This will provide the basis for a more transparent and open qualification system, and will allow individuals to have their learning validated and recognised throughout their lives. The framework is not yet operational.

HQF implementation is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Research and religious Affairs, with the National organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) as the main actor (see more below). A draft presidential degree on HQF has been prepared, which will clarify many operational aspects. The inclusion of qualifications in the framework is defined through qualification type specifications: title, level, awarding body, summary descriptor, volume of learning, purpose, education sector, learning outcomes, employment relevance and progression possibilities. The allocation procedures have been defined but still need to be tested in practice. The framework needs to be populated with qualifications based on learning outcomes and this is work in progress.

E.O.P.P.E.P. is the **National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance**, an all-encompassing statutory body investing on better quality and more efficient and reliable lifelong learning services in Greece.

The **National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (E.O.P.P.E.P)** is competent for creating and developing the Hellenic Qualifications Framework and for referencing it to the **European Qualifications Framework**, under the supervision and coordination of the Hellenic Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs.

It is addressed to anyone who can make use of its benefits: trainees, employees, unemployed, employers, providers of education and training, awarding bodies, vocational guidance counselors, vocational branches, social partners and any citizen holding a title of study.

E.O.P.P.E.P operates under the supervision of the Minister of Education, Research and Religious Affairs and is seated in Athens. It has derived from the amalgamation of three national bodies, all under the supervision of the same Ministry: the National Centre for the Accreditation of Lifelong Learning Providers (EKEPIS), the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications (EOPP) & the National Centre for Vocational Guidance (EKEP).

E.O.P.P.E.P is one of the first organizations of the broad public sector in Greece **Certified for Excellence**, according to the internationally recognized **EFQM Excellence Model** (The European Foundation of Quality Management). In particular, EOPPEP has been certified for the **1st Level of EFQM Committed to Excellence recognition**.

The newly established national authority, the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (**E.O.P.P.E.P**), corresponds to the pressing need of creating and maintaining a holistic and interrelated policy framework for the development of lifelong learning and certification of qualifications in Greece, linking with the open market and responding to the needs of the citizens, a central issue in EU policy.

Their mission is geared towards linking VET with labour market needs, upgrading people's occupational qualifications, reinforcing their employment perspectives and strengthening social cohesion.

Hellenic Qualifications Framework NQF

The development of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework ensures the existence of a single tool through which all qualifications awarded in Greece can be described and measured. The main objective is to create a coherent and comprehensive system of classification of qualifications, i.e. diplomas for the country's education.

At a later stage, a classification system of skills acquired through Non-Formal education and Informal Learning will be developed.

The design of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework takes into account current needs of the country and the relevant European and international developments. Its structure is determined by the following features:

❖ Levels

The architectural structure of the NQF is simple and includes 8 levels, which cover the entire range of qualifications from compulsory education up to highest education.

National Qualifications Framework - Levels

1. Primary education certificate
2. Gymnasium Certificate (high school , secondary school)
3. Specialized degree of business, education and training (awarded to graduates vocational training school after certification - SEK)
4. A) Degree EPAS (Certificate Vocational Lyceum (Equivalent to the Certificate General Lyceum) (administered to graduates of the last grade of Vocational Lyceum after exams organized in the school) B) Degree EPAL C) Baccalaureate (awarded to graduates of general lyceum (G.E.L.) after exams organized in school)
5. A) Specialized degree of business, education and training (awarded to graduates after certification from EPAL B) Diploma in specialized training, education (awarded to IEK students after certification C) Diploma / Degree of force school (higher education)
6. Highest Education Degree (University / TEI)
7. Skilled Graduate Diploma M.Sc.
8. Doctoral Diploma, Ph.D.

❖ **Learning outcomes**

The Hellenic Qualifications Framework, skills are in the form of learning outcomes and classified into levels. The learning outcomes, i.e. what the person knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, categorized into knowledge, skills and abilities.

❖ **Descriptors Indicators**

The learning outcomes relevant to qualifications of a specific level identified by descriptors, which are composed of qualitative and quantitative classifications of knowledge, skills and competences.

❖ **Types of Qualifications**

Apart from its levels, the Hellenic Qualifications Framework takes a number of Qualifications Types. Types Qualifications represent groups of titles with similar characteristics. The use of Qualifications Types facilitates the classification of titles which are classified in the same level.

The Hellenic Qualifications Framework provides the basis for the classification - the levels of - of all titles issued by the Greek educational system and matching them to the levels of the European Qualifications Framework.

E.O.P.P.E.P' s principal fields of activity and responsibility are:

Providers and Educational Framework:

1. Accreditation/Licensing of Providers of Non-Formal education (Free Studies Workshops (EES), Private Vocational Training Institutes (IIEK), Vocational Training Centers (KEK), Special Centers for vulnerable social groups)
2. Accreditation of Occupational Profiles
3. Accreditation of Curricula (in terms of standards and specifications)

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

- National Reference Point for **ECVET**
- National Centre for **EUROPASS** in Greece
- Equivalencies & Occupational Rights for VET education title holders

Certification of Qualifications:

- Development of the National System for the Certification of Qualifications
- Accreditation of Vocational Training & Certification of Vocational Training Institutes (IEK) graduates
- Certification of qualifications of "Trainers for candidates for car & motorcycle driver's license"
- Certification of teaching qualification of Trainers for Adults of Non-Formal education
- Certification of private security personnel
- Licensing of Providers for the certification of qualifications & Providers for computer skills certification

Vocational Guidance and Counseling

- Scientific and technical support of vocational guidance and counseling services
- Networking of providers and vocational guidance professionals
- Career development for youth & adults
- National Centre of Euroguidance
- National delegate in the European Lifelong Learning Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN)

State of art in the context of inclusion of Non-Formally and informally acquired skills in NQF (National Qualifications Framework)

The National Qualifications Framework for Non-Formal and Informal Learning in Greece, is being supervised and managed by the state and especially by the Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. The Ministry, as mentioned above, is the body responsible for the creation of the National Qualifications Framework and of a National LLP

Network pursuing qualitative upgrading of Lifelong Learning in Greece, streamlining the system of recognition and certification of qualifications and the establishment of an overall "learning culture with citizen-centric and their needs".

E.O.P.P.E.P undertakes the assignment of qualifications, i.e. the knowledge, skills and competencies of citizens acquired through formal and Non-Formal education (IEK-Institutes, Vocational Training, HPC-Vocational Training Centers, KEME-Centers, Post-secondary Education, CSP-Free Workshops Studies, etc.), but also for Informal Learning (work experience, experiential learning).

For Greece, this is a new concept; the unstructured seminars, certificates and diplomas were not recognized, but today the ultimate objective is the identification and certification of these qualifications in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework. Responsible for this, is **E.O.P.P.E.P** and the Greek Ministry of Education.

The first process on certification of qualifications from EU and Third countries which have been acquired through professional experience or learning in a vocational school abroad.

The second procedure concerns the certification of professional skills acquired by insured or uninsured work. Responsible for this process is each individual Region of the Country, which oversees the entire process.

E.O.P.P.E.P accredits and licenses Providers of **Non-Formal** education encompassing initial and continuing vocational training upon legislated criteria for infrastructure, trainers & curricula, as well as enacted specifications for the organization and operation of the provider, employed staff and provided services.

E.O.P.P.E.P licenses Free Studies Workshops (EES), which provide services of Non-Formal education in a wide spectrum of learning options.

Additionally, **E.O.P.P.E.P** licenses Private Vocational Training Institutes (IIEK), which provide services of initial vocational training in a broad range of specialties, aiming at the integration and reintegration of learners into the labor market, their professional mobility and development, as well as their personal development.

E.O.P.P.E.P accredits Vocational Training Centers (KEK), which provide services of continuing vocational services complementing, updating and/or upgrading knowledge, skills and

competencies of the labor force aiming at the integration and reintegration of learners into the labor market, job security and professional as well as personal development.

E.O.P.P.E.P accredits Special Centers, which provide comprehensive services of training and support to social vulnerable groups and especially, to people with disabilities and ex-drug addicts, aiming at their social and professional integration.

Accreditation of Occupational Profiles & Curricula standards:

E.O.P.P.E.P accredits occupational profiles with the active contribution of the social partners in the process of their development. An occupational profile is defined as the job functions and the required knowledge, skills and competencies for exercising an occupation or specialty.

Based upon accredited occupational profiles, EOPPEP is planning to develop standards and specifications for modularized curricula with credits.

The distribution of 202 professional profiles in Greece is:

- 126 technicians and related processing occupations
- 23 relates in the tourist sector
- 12 refer in agricultural occupations
- 12 relates in the Green Economy
- 29 various other occupations

There is a need for a total 200 new job profiles in the Greek market according to EOPPEP.

The Commission operating in E.O.P.P.E.P. has responsibility for examining the requests for Technical qualifications and vocational education, other than higher education.

There is an Application Form, Questionnaire and Head Statement (available online) and provide basic school-leaving certificate education, vocational school diploma and analytical studies in vocational school.

In cases of incomplete attending vocational school, the Commission divides the parties concerned to attend operating schools to complete their education or attend an exam and receive rate after successful results.

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

As mentioned in the first part of this report, **E.O.P.P.E.P** is the statutory body for the development and implementation of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework (NQF) in correspondence with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Additionally, **E.O.P.P.E.P** is the **National Coordination Point for EQF in Greece (NCP)**.

The structure of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework is simple:

Levels - Learning outcomes - Descriptors - Qualification types

The current needs of the country as well as the relevant European and international developments were taken into account when designing the Hellenic Qualifications Framework. The actions taken by **E.O.P.P.E.P** under the supervision of the Hellenic Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs were focused on the following:

- Determination of its architectural structure.
- Registration and analysis of “former” and “existing” qualifications.
- Design and implementation of methodological tools for the classification of formal education qualifications in its levels.
- Its referencing to the European Qualifications Framework

Certification of Qualifications

E.O.P.P.E.P's current fields of responsibility are the certification of the qualifications listed below and the licensing of awarding bodies, as follows:

- **Development of a National System for the Certification of Qualifications**

Designing and developing a national system for the certification of qualifications is EOPPEP's principal policy priority in the field of lifelong learning (LLL), comprising the following key areas of responsibility:

- Development of a model system for the accreditation of outputs and setting the respective legal framework. Designing a system for the recognition and certification of qualifications acquired via Non-Formal and Informal Learning and establishing the framework for licensing awarding bodies.

- Inspection, monitoring and evaluation of awarding bodies.
- Implementation of certification processes by **E.O.P.P.E.P.**

The National System for the Certification of Qualifications aims at:

- certifying those qualifications for which a state interest is attested and those which reinforce employment,
- assuring the certified qualification corresponds to the specifications set in the respective accredited occupational profile and the accreditation/certification process is in compliance with set standards and criteria,
- providing equity and open access to qualifications, irrespective of the learning pathway and regardless of the way learning outcomes have been acquired.

Accreditation/Certification procedures:

- **Accreditation of Vocational Training & Certification of Vocational Training Institute (IEK) Graduates**

The accreditation of vocational training and the certification of the vocational training institutes (IEK) graduates embed a national accreditation exam procedure conducted at national and regional level and based on the vocational training exam regulation framework per specialty. **E.O.P.P.E.P** organizes at national level the accreditation examinations for IEK graduates of all specialties. Upon successful examination results, IEK graduates are awarded the Vocational Training Diploma recognized both in Greece and in EU member states (for lower secondary education graduates) or the Certificate Level I (for upper secondary education graduates).

- **Certification of the teaching qualification of Trainers for Adults of Non-Formal education**

Trainers for adults are required to possess a teaching qualification awarded upon accreditation in order to fulfill eligibility conditions for public funded Non-Formal education programs, pursuant to Law 3879, article 19.3 (GOG 163/A/21.09.2010) on “*Development of Lifelong Learning*”.

Developing and implementing a comprehensive and innovative accreditation system for the teaching qualification of "Trainers for Adults of Non-Formal education", including the

unification of registers in operation, responds to new social, economic and educational needs:

- gearing the education system to learning outcomes,
 - linking education content to labor market & reinforcing social partners' role in human resources development,
 - expanding trainers' field of activity into initial & continuing vocational training as well as Non-Formal education, including adult education,
 - updating knowledge, skills and competencies of trainers for adults.
- **Certification of 'Private security personnel' in cooperation with the Centre for Security Studies (KEMEA).**

E.O.P.P.E.P is in close cooperation with KEMEA for the certification of "private security personnel". In this direction, the new specialty for "Private security personnel" has been legislated (Government Official Gazette 1715/17-05-2012) and is addressed to compulsory education graduates (lower secondary education graduates) and entails a six-month vocational training programme attendance accompanied by the accreditation exam procedure for the certification award.

Additionally, the regulatory framework pertaining to the certification of professionals who do not possess a recognized occupational title has been enacted (Government Official Gazette 2160/18-07-2012).

▪ **Accreditation of Awarding Bodies**

E.O.P.P.E.P currently accredits Awarding Bodies certifying computer skills upon legislated criteria and specifications. The accredited awarding bodies conduct the evaluation procedure in examination centers via an automated exam system and award the certificate for computer skills.

EOPPEP plans to develop a system for the accreditation of awarding bodies certifying knowledge & skills in additional areas of expertise.

State of the art in the implementation of ECVET in your country

Current Stage of Implementation

Status of ECVET policy decision

Three laws establish the development of a credit system in line with ECVET (units of learning outcomes, credit points and partnerships) and create the necessary legal and regulatory framework:

- (a) Law 3879/2010 (Official Gazette 163/A/21.9.2010, Article 11, Paragraph e);
- (b) Law 4115/2013 (Official Gazette 24/A/30.1.2013, Article 14);
- (c) Law 4186/2013 (Official Gazette 193/A/17.9.2013, Articles 13-29).

The most recent (4186/2013) considers the development of curricula for the EPAL and the IEK using the learning outcomes approach and in line with ECVET (Articles 10 and 18 respectively), taking into account the existing national occupational profiles.

It also regulates all issues in relation to the management and operation of EOPPEP and confirms that **E.O.P.P.E.P** will be the ECVET NCP and the body in charge of implementing a national credit system for VET.

The laws are not yet being put into practice and, in parallel, Greece is testing different ECVET technical components within Leonardo da Vinci projects for geographic mobility.

Structure of qualifications, transfer, assessment and certification: IVET

The Greek education and training system needs to be reformed to adopt the learning outcomes approach fully. The IVET system in Greece is mainly input-oriented but there are courses in which the curriculum follows a learning outcomes format, as the corresponding national occupational standards apply a learning outcomes approach.

However, the training follows traditional modes, applying a close fit between learning outcomes and learning processes and the requirement to sit examinations at the end of training schemes.

School leaving certificates are awarded on successful completion of a VET course. A qualification is awarded to a person who has obtained all the competences required for the qualification and set out in the relevant standards, after a final assessment exam.

The Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs and the national agencies are in charge of final assessment and certification. It is not possible to move out of the training scheme before the final assessment.

There is no framework that supports transfer of assessed learning outcomes between qualifications, or institutions. However, there are cases when learning (semesters) is recognised, avoiding double assessment. This is the case with recognition by the IEK of studies in professional lyceum (EPAL). The graduate of an EPAL similar course or specialisation moves directly to the third semester of IEK (having two out of four semesters recognized / transferred).

Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning

Greece has a legal framework, which aims at treating validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in a systemic way; however, this framework has not yet been put in place through lack of political support. There is still a need to create the necessary conditions for validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning, bringing together all stakeholders and agreeing on measures, terms, objectives and commitment.

Cross-country mobility is supported by the (former) LLP

There are no situations of automatic validation and recognition of learning outcomes obtained in other countries; all learning outcomes achieved are reassessed at national level (double assessment). Learners undertaking short mobility periods abroad have the option to skip the part of the course already taken, though this is never equivalent to a whole semester/course.

Activities that take place in the country

Stakeholders on the basis of voluntary and optional participation to meet the terms of cooperation and understanding, forming procedures for the recognition of learning outcomes and homogenized certification practices accumulation and transfer credits of vocational education and training. When talking to stakeholders these include:

- government agencies and organizations that are VET providers

- lifelong learning (EPAL-EPAS, IEK, KEK,)
- the social partners (GSEE, ADEDY, SEV, GSVEE, ESEE etc.) with the supporting agencies and organizations providing vocational education,
- training and lifelong learning
- scientific associations in adult education, training and life
- Universities and Technological Institutions offering professional
- regions, municipalities and so on KDVM whose function is expected
- teachers and adult educators
- students, learners and trainees in DDVM

Most of them promote ECVET through several events, which take place in the implementation stage of European projects they are involved in, such as:

- ECVET-STEP Final Conference (24-Nov-2015)
- ECVET-STEP online services Public Consultation (20-Oct-2015)
- CEDEFOP/DG EAC Conference “Building European VET – Time to move on” (30-Aug-2014)

These indicative activities are only a few between many, but are not taking place under the auspices of the national point for ECVET and EQF. Unfortunately, not many activities have been organized in cooperation with EOPPEP and/or Cedefop in Greece. In fact, only few official events have taken place in the previous years. These are:

1. A consultation meeting with social partners organised by the Greek national organisation for the certification of qualifications and vocational guidance (**E.O.P.P.E.P**) and Cedefop’s Head of Area Enhanced Cooperation in VET and lifelong learning, on "The mapping of NQF with the European Qualifications Framework", on the 24th of January 2014 at the premises of Cedefop in Thessaloniki.
(http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/articles/22359.aspx?WT.mc_id=NL38)

2. On Wednesday, July 10, 2013, E.O.P.P.E.P. organized a Conference with two topics: 'National Qualifications Framework' and 'Professional rights of graduates of Secondary Vocational Education".
(http://www.eopep.gr/images/Anakoinwseis/final_progr_NQF.pdf)
3. State Scholarships Foundation organised a Thematic Conference on "Implementation of the European Credit Transfer Tool ECVET in Greece: Challenges and Opportunities" on December 9, 2013. (*<https://www.iky.gr/anakoinoseis-llp/item/1264-09-12-2013-i-efarmogi-tou-evropaikoy-ergaleiou-metaforas-pistotikon-monadon-ecvet-stin-ellada-prokliseis-kai-efkairies-leonardo-da-vinci>*)

Bodies responsible for ECVET and their role

In the case of Greece E.O.P.P.E.P is the main institutional body whose main mission is the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework which will correspond to the European Qualifications Framework. (n. 3879/2010). As part of its institutional operation, E.O.P.P.E.P, in cooperation with all social partners, is involved in the activities related to the implementation of ECVET **both at national and regional level.**

In particular, however, its institutional involvement focuses on:

- standards and instruments for the recognition and certification of skills independent of the learning path followed prior;
- the recommendation to formulate the relevant regulatory implementation and application framework;
- the development of a unified system of certification of learning outcomes on the basis of knowledge, skills and competences.

At the same time, it is obvious that in the Greek case, the application of ECVET cannot be seen separately from wider institutional adjustments. In other words, the creation and implementation of the Greek National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is the crucial point which will contribute to the promotion of ECVET in the field of vocational education and training, and will define the future of beneficial and effective implementation.

In that matter, E.O.P.P.E.P has launched actions and initiatives which, despite the considerable delay, gradually open the path to the realisation and application of key development processes.

The implemented actions and initiatives include:

- the monitoring and collection of the study on the creation of a Methodology certification (matching EQF) based on learning outcomes;
- the study on the creation of a single framework for quality improvement of initial - continuing training and adult education with the ultimate goal of shaping the National Strategy and the institutionalization of the National Quality Assurance Framework;
- the launch of the methodological guide for creating working groups that will develop the descriptors;
- the launch of the National Consultative Committee in order to support the development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework as provided by Law. 3879/2010;
- the ongoing process of recording titles, diplomas and certificates obtained in the context of Lifelong Learning;
- the proposal adopted by the Ministry of Education (and the contribution of the National Advisory Committee for the National Qualifications Framework) to create the eight reference levels in order to classify qualifications in relation to the formal education system (July 2013).

In particular, however, E.O.P.P.E.P in the state of implementation of ECVET plays a key role as:

- it is responsible for the design and implementation of ECVET, under n.3879 / 2010,
- it is working with key stakeholders such as the National Institute of Labour and Human Resources or the State Scholarships Foundation engaged on European programs and tools like ECVET

- it is in cooperation with European Agencies such as CEDEFOP or the ETF benefiting from their expertise and scientific competence (keeping the experience of previous actors like OEEK and EKEPIS)
- it constitutes the body that ensures the vertical and horizontal mobility at national, regional, local, sectoral sector in the light of the overall policy on Lifelong Learning in the country.

Examples of projects

1. **Short Title:** ECVET-STEP

Full Title: ECVET for Strengthening Training to Employment Pathways

Year: 2014

Web site: ecvet-step.eu

ECVET STEP focused on the development of an ECVET Capability Maturity Framework (CMF) which will allow VET-related organizations and individual actors across Europe, starting from the agricultural domain but ranging to other domains and sectors, to understand and reap the benefits of ECVET from their perspective as well as to track their performance and to assure and control the quality of the integration of the ECVET system into their existing processes and workflows.

2. **Short Title:** Be-TWIN

Full Title: Be-TWIN 2 ECTS-ECVET: building bridges and overcoming differences

Year: 2012

Web site: www.be-twin2.eu

Be-TWIN 2 intended to respond to EU policies by setting the overarching aim to facilitate a common implementation of ECVET and ECTS for improving learner's and workers' mobility, linking the benefits of both credit systems, fostering mutual understanding and promoting the transferability and recognition of qualifications in Europe.

3. Full Title: Highlight the Competences: European cooperation for a system of credit transfer for VET-ECVET, relating competence and professional needs of the cooperative enterprises working in the services sector

Year: 2007

Web site: www.highlightcompetences.eu

In particular, the aim of the project was to promote transparency and comparability of qualifications, transferability, validation and recognition of learning outcomes achieved by individuals in different learning contexts (formal, Non-Formal and informal), in different countries and at sectoral level, through the transfer of previous innovative contents and results for the development of a European cooperation process based on the four implementation stages of ECVET - European Credit Transfer System for VET. The main objectives were: identification and analysis of the targeted user requirements, analysis and selection of the previous innovative contents to meet these requirements, analysis of the feasibility of transfer, adaptation in the specific contexts and transfer and use in the new sector and target groups, including piloting it in public and private training structures.

Implementing ECVET in Greece: Challenges and Opportunities

Within Europe, the disparate nature of vocational education and training, the large number and diversity of those involved and the differences in the national or sectoral systems of qualification, constitute one of the major challenges that ECVET is facing.

It is clear that the implementation of ECVET in Greek reality is not so simple. However, it is an important challenge for the Greek society given that the European perspective of the country is not only crucial but imperative due to the existing socio-economic conditions.

At the same time, factors such as the financial crisis, the European and global economic crisis, the rapid changes in economic and social structures, the increased unemployment, changes in demand occupations and qualifications are important parameters which we have to look carefully at.

The affiliation of Greece in the financial dead-end, the prolonged recession phase and the specter of the debt crisis, at first sight create an unfavorable environment for the flourishing of alternative policies in the field of educational policies. However, the crisis and the problems of the country can be a historic opportunity for the redefinition of the educational policy.

Clearly, the need for national initiatives and reforms is objectively imperative in the mindset of such adverse conditions; the European perspective needs to be seen positively. This means that it is necessary to avoid negativism and whatever associates with introvert initiatives, innovations, active policies, and groundbreaking tools.

The overall attitude is to be consistent with critical assimilation and promotion of all the tools that can strengthen the Greek educational system, employment, social cohesion, reducing inequalities, European integration on the basis of equity and social solidarity.

It is necessary to focus on issues that are endemic within the Greek society and targeted to combat any distortions or irrationalism prevalent, aimed at maturity of social and political consciousness in the field of reforms and active tools.

In particular the challenges for ECVET in Greece are:

- The existent national deficit of understanding of the European strategy in which the national education policy is today compared with the European developments;
- The significant deficit of knowledge and information about the tools of European education policy.

However, several opportunities and important issues are pending which in addition to technical characteristics are broader perspectives in a criticism being held around ECVET in Greece.

Such issues are:

- The fragmentary and often ineffective nature of the up to today attempted actions and reforms in education, training, lifelong learning;
- The need to evaluate, map, analyze and understand the existing situation;

- The need to overcome the frustration or disbelief from a large part of our fellow citizens for European initiatives, especially now that the country is beset by the financial crisis;
- The risk of "disintegration" of the qualification and the fragmentation of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are incoherent;
- The "inflationary" and stressful tendency to demand certified qualifications especially in an economy where they do not correspond to job placements;
- The "ambiguity" that distinguishes the term 'learning outcomes'. A more detailed description of what marks the term "learning outcome" is needed, especially in the Greek society;
- The risk of lack of transparency in the certification and recognition of learning outcomes;
- The fear of a potentially hegemony from the private sector in the area of certification of qualifications, without control from the government and the protection of the public interest;
- Inflation of qualifications and the small recognition of the certifications in addition with the creation of "certification industry";
- The importance of the labor mobility and how it will be strengthened;
- The support policies for employment (sectoral, local, national, peripheral) through vocational education / training and life lifelong learning;
- The need to strengthen and upgrade the qualifications of workers and mainly of those socially and economically disadvantaged or those which in danger of poverty, unemployment and social exclusion.

A lot of work has already been done while other is in progress. Member States, Greece being on them, are currently working on implementation strategies for ECVET, but the most effective way is to work in two ways: practical experiments, supported by strategic actions for implementation at policy level. If policy and practice do not meet each other, the implementation will be very difficult.

Part 2 Evaluation of data received from Stakeholders

Description of NQF

Greece has not developed a national qualifications framework according to the stakeholders.

Stakeholders responsible for EQF and ECVET

EQF Stakeholders

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
EOPPEP	EOPPEP is the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance , an all-encompassing statutory body investing on better quality and more efficient & reliable lifelong learning services in Greece	www.eoppep.gr

ECVET Stakeholders

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
EOPPEP	EOPPEP is the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance , an all-encompassing statutory body investing on better quality and more efficient & reliable lifelong learning services in Greece	www.eoppep.gr

Validation of formal and non formal learning

The validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning through the development of a national and easily understood system, based on occupational standards, is still remaining a promising issue for the social dialogue than a concrete operational reality for the national policy agenda in Greece.

As a matter of fact, the national legal/institutional framework to regulate procedures for the accreditation and recognition of qualifications acquired through prior learning or work experience, has not been yet finalised.

Nevertheless, there is a general consent that the question of the recognition of qualifications, regardless of the way they have been acquired is urging. The coming years will show whether the positive intentions almost unanimously expressed in this area will be translated into concrete operational practices which actually affect and serve individuals and enterprises according to the stakeholders.

Current situation in ECVET

In Greece, some people undertake learning activities outside their country. The interest for this kind of mobility is limited by several factors, most notably by the lack of provisions for the transfer, validation and recognition of learning outcomes achieved in foreign countries. The same applies to the transition from one vocational education and training system to another or from an Informal Learning situation to a formal training context. The ECVET thus aspires to be an information exchange tool designed to help individuals take full advantage of learning acquired, in particular as a result of transnational mobility, whether the context was formal, Non-Formal or informal. According to the findings, in Greece the idea is still in the beginning and at a very early stage.

Credits are used in a small range of learning outcomes although the Hellenic credit system is trying to adapt to ECVET. A new credit system is being developed.

In regards to question 11 to 13 there is a belief that the existing system allows learners to acquire learning outcomes in different learning settings and the current state of the system in context of evaluation has been planned.

The activities which are undertaken in Greece in order to promote ECVET are several events, conferences and workshops mostly organized by EOPPEP and VET providers or the Ministry of Education.

Part 3 Evaluation of the data received from VET providers

Familiarity with EQF

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	20%
I know a little bit about it	50%
Quite familiar	10%
Familiar	
Very familiar	20%

Most of the participants know only a little about it.

Practical Experience on EQF

The majority of the people who answered the questionnaire do not have practical experience on EQF.

Added Value of EQF

Despite the fact that they do not have practical experience, 50% of VET providers believe that EQF attracts more students and better funding possibilities.

On the other hand, only the 10% truly believe that EQF increases cooperation with other companies and networking.

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Attracting more students and better funding possibilities	50%
Raising attractiveness of training programmes & VET occupations/professions	

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Increasing the quality of the training and of the teaching staff	20%
Increasing cooperation with other companies/networking	10%
Amplifying the possibilities of the European labour market for students	20%
Other (pls specify)	

Familiarity with NQF

50% are quite familiar, 20% know a little bit about it and the other 10% are either not familiar or very familiar.

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	10%
I know a little bit about it	20%
Quite familiar	50%
Familiar	10%
Very familiar	10%

Familiarity with ECVET

40% are quite familiar, 20% know a little bit about it and 20% are not familiar at all.
10% are familiar and very familiar.

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	20%
I know a little bit about it	20%

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Quite familiar	40%
Familiar	10%
Very familiar	10%

Familiarity with the ECVET developments in your country

40 % are not familiar at all, 20% know a little bit about it, 30% are quite familiar and 10% are familiar

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	40%
I know a little bit about it	20%
Quite familiar	30%
Familiar	10%
Very familiar	

Practical Experience with ECVET

Most of the people do not have experience with ECVET.

Added Value of ECVET

The majority (40%) answers that the use of learning outcomes provides greater flexibility in education and training, allowing learners to accumulate learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification or part-qualification.

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Use of learning outcomes provides greater flexibility in education and training, allowing learners to accumulate learning outcomes	40%

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
with a view to achieving a qualification or part-qualification	
increased recognition of learning, including that achieved through geographical mobility	5%
Improved credibility for international mobility among learners and employers.	20%
Structured and quality-assured mobility provision leading to a reduced workload for mobility practitioners in the longer-term and making use of a common language for recognition in mobility.	5%
Improved understanding of different national or regional VET systems among mobility practitioners.	20%
Access to knowledge and skills, through geographical mobility, that might not be accessible locally.	10%
The development of mutual trust and a sharing of experiences among mobility practitioners and competent institutions, both nationally and internationally.	0%

Validation of Formal, Non Formal and Informal Learning

Half of VET providers answered that they are quite familiar with the validation of Formal, Non Formal and Informal Learning.

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	10%
I know a little bit about it	20%
Quite familiar	50%
Familiar	20%

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Very familiar	0%

Main obstacles in working with ECVET

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
More workload	60%
Change resistance by several stakeholders	30%
Other	10%

Part 4 Evaluation of the data received from learners

Familiarity with EQF and NQF

<i>Learner Response</i>	<i>Percentage of learners that have replied in this way</i>
<i>Not familiar</i>	<i>47%</i>
<i>I know a little bit about it</i>	<i>23%</i>
<i>Quite familiar</i>	<i>17%</i>
<i>Familiar</i>	<i>8%</i>
<i>Very familiar</i>	<i>5%</i>

Comments:

According to the results of question 1 we could say that most of the learners are not familiar with EQF and NQF.

Motivation for selecting a programme as far as National Qualifications Framework is concerned

Very few learners are selecting a specific programme according to the National Qualifications Framework. The majority of them choose a programme depending on the level of connection with the labor market and the possibilities to find a job.

Familiarity with ECVET

<i>Learner Response</i>	<i>Percentage of learners that have replied in this way</i>
<i>Not familiar</i>	<i>34%</i>
<i>I know a little bit about it</i>	<i>42%</i>
<i>Quite familiar</i>	<i>14%</i>
<i>Familiar</i>	<i>7%</i>
<i>Very familiar</i>	<i>3%</i>

Motivation for selecting a programme as far as ECVET is concerned

Almost all of the participants answered that they do not have any motivation for selecting a programme as far as ECVET is concerned.

The key factors of their decision are: country, town, university or VET provider, cost, time, language, topic etc.

Conclusion

The results of the questionnaire from the stakeholders in the progress of Greece in terms of EQF and ECVET showed that the current credit system is being adjusted to correspond with ECVET but there is still a lack of trust and extroversión. In regards to the awareness and practical experience of VET providers in EQF and ECVET, most of them are not familiar and in some cases it only seems as more workload. Finally, the learners do not have a clear awareness of EQF or its structure; they are not familiar with the National Qualifications Framework or ECVET and when they choose a training programme they do not take account of the specific level of the training according to the National Qualifications Framework. The same applies to selecting a training programme or mobility abroad.

Given that the EU does not directly intervene within the national education and training systems by imposing the implementation of the educational policy measures, possibilities and prospects of internalization and development of the general principles governing the common tools are left at the discretion of each Member - State. It is therefore clear that the development of ECVET is an important issue for the Greek reality since, admittedly, there has been a considerable delay for modernization and consolidation of such innovation and customization tools. Furthermore, the implementation of such an agenda can not in any circumstances constitute a unilateral concern of a closed group of experts or a sealed network of organizations and institutions of formal centralized bureaucratic structure.

It requires broad and expanded political and social consensus of all stakeholders since this "project" is not only of technical nature. On the contrary it rests on the commonly accepted and horizontal political conviction, of how the united Europe on the basis of the coordinates set by the Treaty of Lisbon in 2000, would become the most competitive economy in the global labor market using knowledge and learning as a vehicle (based knowledge society).

Glossary:

Here below are defined the key terms that are shared by EU Member States, EEA and candidate countries participating in the EQF. Those terms are recommended in order to share a common understanding of key concepts of EQF.

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

‘National Qualifications System’ means all aspects of a Member State's activity related to the recognition of learning and other mechanisms that link education and training to the labour market and civil society. This includes the development and implementation of institutional arrangements and processes relating to quality assurance, assessment and the award of qualifications. A National Qualifications System may be composed of several subsystems and may include a National Qualifications Framework.

‘National Qualifications Framework’ means an instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.

‘Learning Outcomes’ means statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

‘Knowledge’ means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.

‘Skills’ means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

‘Competence’ means 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. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning is described as a process of confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, Non-Formal or Informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with requirements of a validation standard (Cedefop, 2008; Cedefop, 2009).

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NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE, CEDEFOP, European Centre for the development of vocational training (Cedefop), 2015

National Report: Slovakia

National Report

Country: Slovakia

This report is part of Intellectual Output 1

Comparative report on the situation of the countries of the consortium as far as ECVET and EQF is concerned

Partners Responsible for the composition of this report:

Orbis Institute

Národný ústav celoživotného vzdelávania / National Lifelong Learning Institute

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Part 1 Desktop research

Development of the NQF in Slovakia

Slovak Qualification Framework (SKKR) has been developed. It has been finalized in 2015. The Slovak version of our **Referencing Report of the Slovak Qualifications Framework** towards the EQF was submitted to the Slovak Government on 7th October 2015 and presented to the European Commission in December of 2015. The Referencing Report introduces the first phase of the SKKR implementation process in 2009–2015 and explanation of its relation to the EQF. It also presents the tasks for the next period in the light of its anticipated influences on the Slovak qualifications system, mainly in the area of recognition of prior learning, strengthening the position of Non-Formal learning and support of recognition of Informal Learning. The process of SKKR development goes hand in hand with **the development of the National register of qualifications (NQR)** that lists all identified and recognised qualifications in the Slovak Republic.

In the coming period, steps for a further review of SKKR following its full implementation are expected in Slovakia. Unresolved issues include the division of SKKR into subframes, learning outcomes database for tertiary education and further education and the relationship between sectoral/international qualifications, etc..

Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak republic (MESRaS SR) is the Owner of EQF implementation process, **ŠIOV (State Vocational Education Institute)** is the National coordination point for EQF. Various stakeholders participated in the process of the development of SKKR, such as: Sector Councils (coalitions, trade unions, employers' representatives – small, medium and big, state administration, self-governing bodies, education providers etc.), as well as representatives of all directly governed organizations of MESRaS SR, all resort ministries, local governments and other agencies.

SKKR is partially operational, due to the fact that it exists only for a very short period of time. The SKKR together with the NQR is included into our existing law on lifelong learning within §21 of the act no 568/2009.

The plan for the development of the National Qualifications Framework of the Slovak Republic was adopted by the Government Resolution No. 105/2009 and was based on the Recommendation of the European Parliament and Council No. 2008/C 111/EC. Based on this decree, the **National Coordination Point for EQF (NCP)** was created, which was, at the very beginning (2009 - 2011) under the responsibility of the **Ministry of Education SR**. In 2009 the **first version of the NQF** was designed with a simple linking to EQF (1:1). Its strong affinity to formal education later led to the need for revision. In 2011 – 2014, **NCP moved to NILL (National Lifelong Learning Institute – NUCZV)**. During this period, the activities of NCP focused on the development of EQF Glossary and the dissemination of the idea of NQF in the form of conferences and seminars. On 3rd February 2014, **NCP was transferred to ŠIOV**, the coordinator of the national project the Development of the National Qualifications Register. It has also been involved in other European initiatives such as EQAVET, ECVET, ReferNet etc. The scope of tasks and responsibilities of NCP are specified in the description of the Criterion 1 (see Annex 2 of this report).

At the end of 2014, the revision of the SKKR grid and the Methodology for linking qualifications to SKKR levels was completed. Its objective was to set a transparent and simple method of the analysis of learning outcomes defined in a qualification standard and their comparison with national descriptors. The methodology was used for levelling 1000 qualifications⁴⁰. This process can be considered as the pilot with further possibilities to adjust the methodology of levelling.

The implementation of the SKKR has the following **expected benefits**:

- Increased transparency of the education system both for individuals and employers, as well as for international comparison;
- increased transparency of qualifications, which are described in terms of learning outcomes rather than in terms of inputs
- reorientation of the education system from "supply-oriented" to "demand-oriented"
- developing general principles for validation and recognition of qualifications;

⁴⁰ The NQR can be found at www.kvalifikacie.sk

- modernisation of education through the application of quality principles in the process of acquiring qualifications and increased quality of verification and recognition of qualifications.

Purpose and objectives of the Slovak Qualifications Framework

- communication role - to inform in a transparent, clear, understandable way about national qualifications, their characteristics and relationships;
- transformation role - to revise and change gradually the system of recognition and validation; also in terms of better coordination of LLL;
- regulatory role - to monitor the process of identification and description of qualifications in the form of standards, levelling to SKKR and to monitor and regulate the system of recognition and validation of qualifications, including the institutions performing validation and recognition of qualifications.

Based on the consensus, SKKR is aimed at promoting lifelong learning. Another element, which SKKR focuses on, is support of mobility, not only that of pupils, students and teachers, but also of the labour force. The qualifications framework, however, represents also an opportunity to improve the quality of lifelong learning, as well as VET and tertiary education. Accreditation of programmes of further education, study programmes of higher education must all stem from qualifications.

Principles of the Slovak Qualifications Framework development

- contains a list of recognized qualifications in the SR in the form of the SKKR Catalogue;
- fully covers the education system in Slovakia, i.e. formal school education, and Non-Formal (further) education and Informal Learning;
- qualifications are based on learning outcomes;
- the description of qualifications are prepared in consultations and in agreement with the stakeholders; they include government authorities, professional employers' associations, employee interest groups, NGOs as well as the representatives of educational institutions on different levels of education;

- recognition of prior learning in terms of awarding a partial or full qualification, equivalent to the qualification which is awarded at the given level of the education system of formal education;
- framework levels are described with descriptors, which characterise knowledge, skills and competences at a certain level (see details in Annex 3 of this report);
- the structure of the qualifications framework levels is simple, clear, easy to understand and shows clear relationships between qualifications.

The SKKR architecture consists of two parts:

1. a grid describing eight reference levels of knowledge, skills and competences through descriptors;
2. the catalogue of qualifications, which contains qualifications placed at each reference level according to significant characteristics:
 - a list of full qualifications, including the code and name of a full qualification, a level of education in case of the qualifications acquired in formal education, SCBE, ISCED-11, a length of training, a certificate of education; all qualifications include a formal evidence of qualification award, a title, SK ISCO-08, SK NACE rev. 2; in case of tertiary education also ECTS points;
 - a list of partial qualifications (PQ) which contains the above mentioned information, as well as a code and name of a full qualification to which it belongs

The main purpose of the development of NQR and SKKR is to enable the separation of the classification framework for the needs of assessment of levels and types of acquired qualifications from pathways of achieving learning outcomes corresponding to a relevant level and type of the qualification. This enables placing of existing and newly created curricula and courses comparable with the level and type of a particular qualification to SKKR as well as levelling and recognising qualifications acquired in other countries. The recognition refers to all paths and forms of education and learning.

Principles of levelling qualifications to SKKR

Levelling to SKKR is based on so-called “best fit” method (the method of the most appropriate choice). The method consists of the following ideas:

- an interpretation of descriptors is contextual

- a qualification does not have to contain the reference to every single descriptor
- a qualification may contain learning outcomes at various levels, while difference within the sub-category must not exceed more than 2 levels and the difference between categories must not exceed more than 1 level.

The qualification will be placed on the level that prevails.

Difference of SKKR levels and EQF levels descriptors

Level 1 - Descriptors of both frameworks match.

Level 2 - SKKR level 2 expresses the growth in the category general knowledge from remembering to understanding. Both levels indicate stable conditions and work or study under substantial supervision. The holder of a qualification shows understanding of his/her responsibility but does not assume it.

Level 3 - SKKR level 3 expresses the growth in the category general knowledge from understanding the simple concepts to deeper understanding the relationships between the concepts. Slovak descriptors underline the changing conditions and the basic autonomy at work or study. Contrary to the EQF level descriptors, this SKKR level brings out the creativity and ability of self-reflection. Creative solutions appear at EQF level 5. However, holders of qualification at the SKKR level 3 are entitled to apply for trading licence. Therefore, an individual has to possess some level of creativity to carry out the activities as a small trader.

Level 4 - The differences represent only detailed information on the content of descriptor that does not influence an overall understanding of the level.

Level 5 - Both SKKR and EQF levels emphasise specialisation and ability to find and to propose and evaluate problem solving. Contrary to EQF, SKKR descriptors bring out the ability of information transfer.

Level 6 - Both SKKR and EQF levels emphasise a shift to decision-making, unpredictability of the situation and field-specific problem solving. SKKR includes the artistic field and emphasises creativity. Furthermore, it adds the necessity not only to master the specialised field of work or learning, but besides the transfer of information to others, it highlights the increase in the descriptor towards appropriateness of such transfer (accommodation to situation).

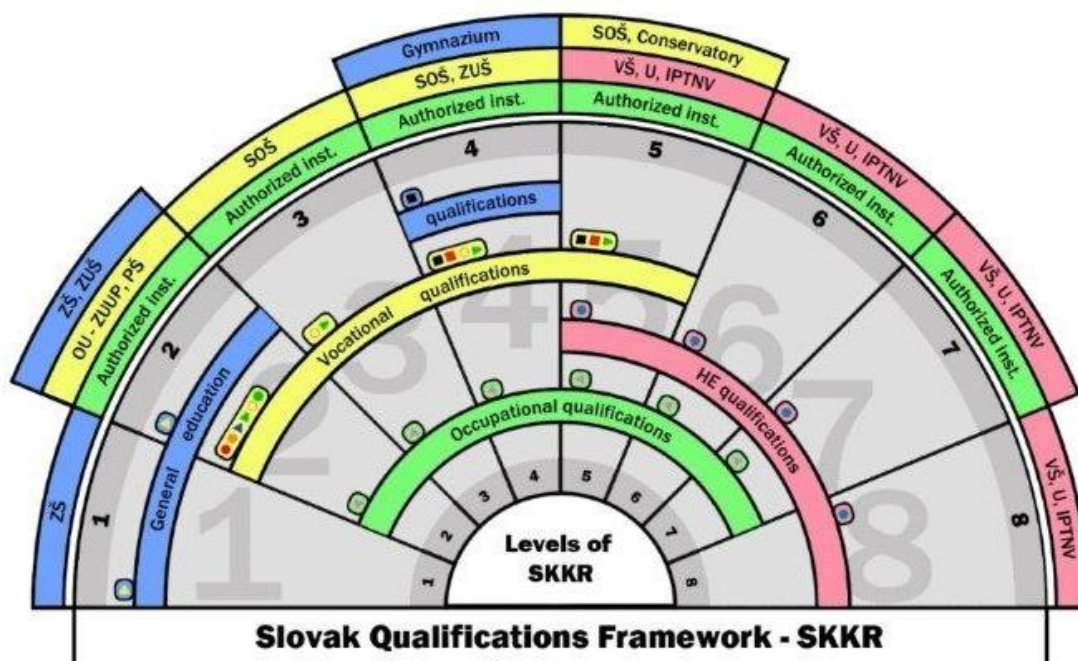
Level 7 - Both SKKR and EQF levels emphasise specialisation and innovative approaches to problem solving. Furthermore, they point out the contribution to the development of a field of study, research or work and their cross-boundary character. The difference in SKKR levels' descriptors just accentuate the dimension of implementation and creativity.

Level 8 - Both SKKR and EQF levels emphasise the highest level of mastering the knowledge and skills, interdisciplinary character and leadership competences of a holder of such qualification. Contrary to SKKR, the concept of synthesis appears at the level 6 of SKKR. It results from the analysis of taxonomy where the growth of demandingness starts at passive remembering through understanding, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

Types of qualifications

For the purpose of SKKR the qualification is defined as “a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to a given standard”. SKKR presumes that regardless the learning pathway, a qualification achieved from formal education and the one achieved by Non-Formal or Informal Learning are not only comparable, but also in fact identical.

However, there is difference between the qualifications. Formal education prepares graduates for broad range of positions within an occupation or cluster of related occupations and the qualification recognised from other source (e.g. by working experience) is usually tailored to labour market needs and reflects the particular job position.



Legend:

- | | |
|---|---|
|  | Certificate of final exam |
|  | Vocational certificate |
|  | Diploma |
|  | Certificate with supplement |
|  | Certificate of qualification achieved |
|  | Matura certificate |
|  | Certificate of final post - secondary exam and graduate diploma |
|  | Certificate of training |
|  | Certificate of learning course |
|  | Learning certificate |
|  | Report card |

Abbreviations:

- ZŠ = Primary school
- VŠ = High school
- IPTNV = Tertiary non – university institutions
- SOŠ = Secondary VET schools
- U = University
- ZUUP = Specially adapted curricula
- PŠ = Practical School
- ZUŠ = Primary art school
- OU = Apprentice School
- HE = Higher education

The visual reflects four learning pathways and thus four types of qualifications:

- **Qualifications awarded in general education** are rather a proof of achieved level of education.
- **Qualifications awarded within a formal secondary VET (vocational qualifications)** are also closely linked to level of education and represent the first qualification an individual can achieve in formal education.

- **Tertiary education** also provides both with level of education and with a qualification (HE qualifications).
- **Occupational qualifications** that are awarded outside the formal (school) system – by courses, by working experience etc. = non formal and informal

Analysis of levelling of QC against SKKR opens the way for a debate on the creation of up to 5 sub-frames, so the last one (Occupational qualifications) should be divided into:

- **Non-Formal learning pathways** (qualifications acquired through adult learning, further education or learning outcomes achieved by other ways);
- **international/sectoral qualifications** (in the future it will be ready for the possibility of their integration into the national system of qualifications).

National Occupations Register

NOR is national single information system of descriptions of standard labour market demands for particular jobs. It specifies requirements for professional skills and practical experience necessary to carry out work activities in jobs on the labour market. The development and update of NOR in line with the developments of the labour market is realised by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (MLSAF SR). The development of NOR represents a comprehensive analysis of job profiles in the form of national occupational standards (NOS). At the same time, NOR provides the information on actual employers needs structured according to the sectors of the national economy, sector-structured prospects for the development of manpower demand, etc.

NOR is the basic structure framework for the development of National Qualifications Register. The close linking of qualification standards set in NQR with requirements on professional skills and practical experience necessary for performing working activities at the labour market covered by NOR, are the reasons for the necessary synchronisation of two tools.

National Qualifications Register

NQR is a public register containing description of partial and full qualifications recognized and distinguished in Slovakia, required for the performance of work activities for a given profession in the form of qualification standards and assessment standards. Its development was carried out by ŠIOV and coordinated by MESRaS SR. The NQR contains identified qualifications in form of so-called qualification cards (QC) as main units of the system. Each qualification has four main parts:

- general information on the qualification (how to acquire it, relation to an occupation, relation to education, evidence of an acquired qualification, a SKKR level);
- a qualification standard which contains categories and sub-categories of knowledge, skills and competences;
- assessment standard containing information on assessment criteria, methods and tools;
- a methodological guidance referring to requirements for exams for validation of a qualification.

NQR creates a basis for the recognition and validation of qualifications achieved in formal (school) education, as well as Non-Formal and Informal Learning. It also enables quality assurance at all LLL levels by setting and implementing a logical method for:

- defining the system of validation and recognition of learning outcomes within further education, in connection with the system to formal education in schools,
- transparency of a professional qualification,
- development of qualification and assessment standards,
- rights and duties of further education participants,
- and, in the end, also for defining the scope of responsibilities of central and regional authorities in the field of validation and recognition of prior learning.

In accordance with this approach and in case of regulated professions, SKKR and NQR do not regulate the system of recognition of professional qualifications. The task of both tools is only to support the unified description of professional qualifications in the language of learning outcomes and by the structure of qualification and assessment standards. It is the

responsibility of the institutions in charge of recognition of professional qualifications within their competences. In this case, the role of SKKR and NQR is only informative, not regulative. The recognition on base of professional practice refers only to the recognition of evidence of education; professional practice is recognised by a competent body according to the Trade Act that defines conditions under which it is possible to recognize prior performance of the professional activities listed in the annex to the act.

State of art in the context of inclusion of Non-Formally and informally acquired skills in NQF (National Qualifications Framework)

In the Slovak Republic, we register a very low level of participation of the population in lifelong learning (less than 4 %) in the long term. Surveys show three main reasons for this low interest: finances, availability, and acceptance of certificates. An equally important factor is a low level of linking of further and initial education. Comprehensive system of assessment and recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning and quality assurance system of education are still missing.

Despite its name, the Act on Lifelong Learning (568/2009) deals only with its one part, further education (“Non-Formal learning” is understood as “further education”). It includes continuing VET in terms of specialisation, increasing a qualification or obtaining a new qualification, retraining. It also includes interest-based and civic education, but it concerns the recognition of qualifications acquired through Non-Formal education as well, primarily through the work experience and recognition of practice

Further education is carried out in two subsystems:

- **in the formal subsystem** of education in schools and providing a second opportunity to receive education to those who for various reasons could not get it during education at primary or secondary school. The Higher Education Act allows also HEIs to carry out further education. Since 2006, 13 HEIs implemented education within the University of the Third Age, which offers programmes of interest-based education for seniors based on the full-time study programmes.

- **in the Informal subsystem** of education, education activities for adults are organised, in addition to schools, by out-of-school facilities: private education institutions, education establishments of companies, directly managed institutions in sectors and others.

Further education at secondary schools and HEIs focuses mainly on the content that forms the content of formal education, while changing only its scope (there are mainly short courses). After successful completion of the study, the graduate is awarded a certificate of full or partial qualification. The certificate of full qualification usually does not increase the level of education; it mainly serves as a document used when applying for a trade license in a respective field.

In the field of further education in the Slovak Republic, we must state low and unstructured level of its linking with the initial VET. An integrated system of validation and recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning is still missing. Further education institutions issue certificates of completion to graduates of their courses and other education activities. Certificates of completion indicate eligibility of a graduate to assert in the areas and scope according to the objective of the course/activity. However, acceptance of a certificate is upon an employer; there are not yet established criteria for assessing the results of courses of different orientation and scale. Some professional associations created their own evaluation (certification), which applies only within the scope of this association. The courses accredited by MESRaS SR are concluded by a final exam. The certificates awarded to the graduates of educational activities/courses accredited by MESRaS SR pursuant to Act on lifelong learning, have a nationwide validity, but their acceptance also depends on the particular employer.

It should be noted here that in early 2015 the process of amending the Act started. The aim of the amendment is reflection of needs and trends in this area, terminological unification and above all, enhancement of participation and interest of the adult population in the further education. This process might even result in 2 Acts, one of which will focus especially at recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. However discussion has only started and no particular outcomes have been officially announced.

State of the art in the implementation of ECVET in your country

Current Stage of Implementation

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports in Slovakia did not yet adopt any official measures for ECVET implementation in the Slovak VET system as it does not see the added value. The VET credit system (in terms of ECVET points) that would allow accumulation and/or transfer of the learning outcomes of individuals does not exist in Slovakia. ECVET implementation in the future will be based on the Learning Outcomes evaluation and validation.

The ECVET in Slovakia is exclusively used as an instrument of transnational mobility in VET. As far as other various elements of ECVET are considered, Units of learning outcomes are planned to be developed – some already exist as part of the NQR. Assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes have been developed. Learning agreement, Memorandum of understanding, Transcript of record (personal transcript) – are being used in mobility projects. ECVET initiative is implemented on bottom-up principle – currently there are dozens of projects which already used the tools and ECVET methodology.

Activities that take place in the country

The most activities to promote ECVET in Slovakia are organized by the National agency Erasmus+ for education and training fields. These activities and events are aimed at implementation of the ECVET tools and principles in the geographical mobility under Erasmus+ programme. The project promoters are trained in preparation of project using this methodology, the external evaluators of the submitted projects are trained in evaluation of the ECVET strategies in projects and the best practice projects are published and presented to other people interested in ECVET. Seminars and workshops are planned not only for VET providers, but also for a wider spectrum of stakeholders. The key components of all projects are the learning outcomes, units of LO, their evaluation, validation and recognition.

Bodies responsible for ECVET and their role

The owner of the ECVET implementation process is the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak republic, the National contact point for ECVET has been

set up at National Institute of Vocational Training (ŠIOV), SAAIC – National Agency for Erasmus+ programme for education and training fields is responsible for project on implementation of ECVET in Slovakia financed by the EC, has established the National team of ECVET experts in 2012. This team provides training, consultations and other activities helping the schools interested in the ECVET implementation in mobility projects financed under Erasmus+ programme. It is composed of experts who deal with problems of ECVET and its practical use whether at school level or at the level of national institutions and employers. It is their role to provide advice in the preparation of various elements of ECVET to use in practice, whether in a project or everyday activities of organizations devoted to this issue. Among other things, the National Agency along with a team of experts implement ECVET technical seminars on issues of ECVET. The results of the work of national experts for ECVET team were presented in national setting on a conference that took place on 09.12.2014 with title “Implementing ECVET and learning outcomes”. The aim of the conference was to present the main methodology in preparing and defining learning outcomes as a key element of ECVET.

National Reference Points main tasks are:

- cooperation in the development of vocational education and training (VET) and the development of lifelong learning (LLL) in the Slovak Republic in defining learning outcomes and their recognition, accumulation and transfer,
- cooperation in preparing the SKKR and promoting transparency and comparability of qualifications,
- promoting national and international mobility of learners,
- cooperation with the relevant elements of Ministry for recognition of the acquired learning outcomes and obtained qualifications with regard to information on ECVET
- providing advice to individuals and institutions on the use of tools and documents of ECVET,
- making recommendations on the recognition of education and qualifications in VET and lifelong learning for the implementation of ECVET in Slovakia,
- informing and strengthening understanding of ECVET experts and the general public in the Slovak Republic and abroad,

- cooperation on linking ECVET to other European initiatives and instruments (notably EQF and EQAVET),
- cooperation with stakeholders,
- preparing opinions, methodological guidance and advice in the field of ECVET,
- carrying out research tasks in relation to ECVET and VET, LLL, SKKR and other related

Examples of projects

CREDCHEM Project No: 147782-LLP-1-2008-1-DE-ECVET

www.credchem.eu

Project was included in to an EU-wide pilot testing of ECVET, implemented in the years 2008-2011. It was aimed at implementation of ECVET principles capitalising on a German initiative called DE ECVET. It brought a valuable experience in formulation of learning outcomes and design of units related to qualification and practical training of laboratory professionals in the chemical sector.

Methodology of developing units of learning outcomes necessary for mastering typical work tasks was similar to other project under the German lead SME Master Plus.

Nine units of learning outcomes have been identified, all learning outcomes of a unit were generalised in a matrix. Learning outcomes were described in terms of knowledge, skills and competences with three levels of competences (1. To follow working instruction; 2. Carrying out problem oriented task; 3. To optimise methods / procedures). Examination tasks corresponding to learning outcomes were also elaborated.

The CREDCHEM project has not focused on credit points allocation, only very simple operational framework was adopted: 100 points are allocated to the qualification as a whole per definition, while respective units equal in total 100 points (in fact percentage distribution was applied). Significantly, project major contribution related to learning outcomes analysis accompanied by examination tasks and to mobility technique. With regard to mobility, the project offers concrete examples of important documents (memorandum of understanding, learning agreements and Europass Mobility documents).

Ecvet Tour II - Transfer of VET innovation in the field of gastronomy and hotel management

Project no: 2012-1-SK1-LEO05-04196

<http://www.ecvettour2.eu>

The project ECVET Tour II is one of six projects which were supported by the National Agency of the Lifelong Learning within the Leonardo da Vinci - Transfer of Innovation - with financial support from the European Commission at the end of 2012.

Project focused on the modernization of two branches of study/profession: COOK and RECEPTIONIST, because experience with the quality of services in the gastronomy and hotel industry in Slovakia show that this sector is often unjustly underrated. The project involved partners from three EU countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia). Competence matrices were transferred and adapted to SK and CZ condition and environment through feedback-loops during the workshop, which was attended not only by representatives of secondary vocational schools but also by employers from the field of gastronomy and hotel management and other VET institutions. Matrices represented an overview of knowledge, skills and competences of graduate of the profession cook and receptionist, understandable even for future employers.

The first official project outcome was a Needs analysis, which included not only description of the current situation of secondary vocational education in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, but also insights and opinions of employers on the employability of VET graduates. Based on the Methodology of transfer of innovation and signing of the Memorandum of Understanding the ECVET Tour II project helped to create partnerships between VET institutions in Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Austria.

Learning outcomes descriptions, defining what learners are expected to learn during their period of mobility – were developed jointly by the cooperating schools and the project partners. The competence matrices were used as a basis for this work.

To test the applicability of established learning units in different environments, pilot student mobilities were organised in the ECVET Tour II project. These periods of mobility helped to promote cross-border cooperation of VET schools and other institutions specializing in VET. An overview of all materials and a summary of organizational processes that were used in the preparation and subsequent implementation of mobilities is described in the document

„How to organize a successful student mobilities. Tools adapted for the environment in Slovakia“ The ECVET Tour II project highlight was organization of the international conference In November 2014, to convey the best practice of the current project, talk about the current state of secondary vocational education and to motivate the participants to the organization and support of student mobility.

Part 2 Evaluation of data received from Stakeholders

Description of NQF

Slovak Qualification Framework (SKKR) has been developed and finalized in 2015 and accepted by Slovak Government in October of 2015. The referencing report was presented to the European Commission in December of 2015. It consists of 8 levels corresponding to the EQF and uses knowledge, skills and competencies as indicators. It is composed of four sub- frameworks, reflecting the pathway of acquiring the qualification (general, formal VET, HE, Non-Formal and informal). SKKR is partially operational, due to the fact that it exists only for a very short period of time. The whole process of the levelling (1000 qualifications⁴¹) can be considered as the pilot with further possibilities to adjust the methodology of levelling. The SKKR together with the Slovak Qualification System is included into our existing law on lifelong learning within § 21 of the act no 568/2009. Since it has not been ready at the time the law was published, this part is not visible in real life situations. This will be changed when the national project results will be incorporated into the official system of further education in Slovakia.

According to one of the stakeholder (representative of the engineering association), NQF has not been developed in Slovakia. This response may be related to the fact that the EQF is not yet visible in real life situations as stated above.

Stakeholders responsible for EQF and ECVET

Various stakeholders participated in the process of the development of SKKR, such as: Sector Councils (coalitions, trade unions, employers' representatives – small, medium and big, state administration, self-governing bodies, education providers etc.), as well as representatives of all directly governed organizations of Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of Slovak republic, all resort ministries, local governments and other agencies.

⁴¹ The results can be found on www.kvalifikacie.sk

EQF Stakeholders

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak republic	Owner of EQF implementation process	<p>http://isdv.iedu.sk/Contacts.aspx</p> <p>Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu Slovenskej republiky Odbor celoživotného vzdelávania Stromová 9 813 30 Bratislava 1 Slovakia</p> <p>Ildikó Pathóová Phone: 00 421 2 59 374 661 E-mail: ildiko.pathoova@minedu.sk</p>
ŠIOV - State vocational education institute	National coordination point for EQF	<p>http://www.siov.sk/index.php/sk/</p> <p>Štátny inštitút odborného vzdelávania Bellova 54/a 837 63 Bratislava Slovakia</p> <p>Alexandra Junášková Head of the department of contact and reference points Phone: 00 421 2 547 767 78 E-mail: alexandra.junaskova@siov.sk</p>

ECVET Stakeholders

Participation on the implementation of ECVET reflects the current state-of-play which is limited to mobility project. However, we have recorded an increased interest in ECVET on the part of employers, e. g. Federation of employers' associations of the Slovak Republic or Union of mechanical engineering industry.

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak republic	Owner of ECVET implementation process	<p>http://isdv.iedu.sk/Contacts.aspx</p> <p>Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu Slovenskej republiky Odbor celoživotného vzdelávania Stromová 9 813 30 Bratislava 1 Slovakia</p> <p>Ildikó Pathóová Phone: 00 421 2 59 374 661 E-mail: ildiko.pathoova@minedu.sk</p>
ŠIOV - National institute of vocational training	National contact point for ECVET	<p>http://www.siov.sk/index.php/sk/</p> <p>Štátny inštitút odborného vzdelávania Bellova 54/a 837 63 Bratislava Slovakia</p> <p>Alexandra Junášková Head of the department of contact and reference points Phone: 00 421 2 547 767 78</p>

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
		E-mail: alexandra.junaskova@siov.sk
SAAIC - Slovak academic association for international cooperation	National Agency for Erasmus+ programme for education and training fields, responsible for project on implementation of ECVET in Slovakia	http://www.saaic.sk/ Slovenská akademická asociácia pre medzinárodnú spoluprácu Križkova 9 811 04 Bratislava Slovakia Irena Fonodová Director Phone: 00 421 2 209 222 01 E-mail: irena.fonodova@saaic.sk

Validation of formal and Non-Formal learning

The official document of strategy for validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning does not exist in Slovakia. It is under process and should be a part of a new law that is being prepared on further education. There are also movements for a special law to be prepared, that would cover the topic of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in the context of lifelong learning process.

In the existing law on lifelong learning (Act. 568/2009)⁴² some elements giving possibility for validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in selected fields can be found, but the link to real life situations is not clear.

Since January 2013 the Ministry of Science, Research and Sports of the SR started the process of verification of professional competence for individuals interested in a certain area

⁴² http://isdv.iedu.sk/Documents/Zakon_568_2009.pdf

of crafts. The certificate of full qualification does not increase the level of qualification, mainly serves as a document to be used when applying for trade license. This also only applies to certain qualifications listed.⁴³

Current situation in ECVET

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports in Slovakia did not adopt any measures for ECVET implementation in the Slovak VET system⁴⁴. Moreover, there was presented a clear rejection of its implementation in the formal VET system and allowed it only for no formal education (It is planned to be used for a part of the qualifications to be put in the SKKR in the category of “Occupational Qualifications”). Some elements of ECVET are however being used, such as EUROPASS CV and ECVET is predominantly aimed at support of VET students and teachers mobility projects.

National Agency for Erasmus+ for education and training fields, responsible for implementation of special ECVET project financed by the EC, has established the National team of ECVET experts in 2012-2013. This team provides training, consultations and other activities helping the schools interested in the ECVET implementation in mobility projects financed under Erasmus+ programme. Shortly, the ECVET initiative is implemented on bottom-up principle – currently there are dozens of projects which already used the tools and ECVET methodology in their projects.

The VET credit system which would allow accumulation and/or transfer of the learning outcomes of individuals does not exist in Slovakia.

The following number of answers for question 8 were given as the reason by stakeholders:

- satisfaction with the current system – 1
- decision-makers do not see the added value of ECVET principles – 3
- ECVET concept remains unclear – 2
- lack of resources/capacity – 1

⁴³ <http://isdv.iedu.sk/Eligibility.aspx>

⁴⁴ In Slovakia, term VET refers only to Formal Secondary VET schools

- lack of trust among actors in the VET system – 1
- lack of expertise on ECVET – 0
- lack of responsible institution – 0
- some components still missing – 3
- other (please specify) : Responsibility for basic (level 1,2) and secondary education incl. VET (3,4,5) – local governments, while state is responsible directly for higher education it is almost impossible to reach consensus

For the current situation of the VET in the context of ECVET all stakeholders mentioned that some technical components are tested. One of the stakeholders pointed out, that in Slovakia, it is not planned to implement the credit system (meaning credit points). ECVET implementation is and will be based on the Learning Outcomes evaluation and validation.

The following table was filled by only 3 respondents, one did not have enough information on the ECVET components. The discrepancy in the answers is caused by the fact that the various components exist formally, but are not in use yet, or they have been partially developed.

	Already exists	Not existing	Is planned to be developed	Will be adapted (please put an x if it is planned to adapt it)	Will be introduced	Are currently in testing
Units of learning outcomes	X		X X			
ECVET Points		X X	X			
Assessment of learning outcomes	X X		X			
Validation of	X X				X	

	Already exists	Not existing	Is planned to be developed	Will be adapted (please put an x if it is planned to adapt it)	Will be introduced	Are currently in testing
learning outcomes						
Recognition of learning outcomes	X X		X			
Learning agreement	X X		X			
Memorandum of understanding	X X		X			
Transcript of record (personal transcript)	X		X		X	

For the question, whether the existing system allows learners to have their learning outcomes acquired in different learning settings, both negative and positive answers were given, due to the fact that the question was not formulated properly. In further questioning, they clarified that the learning outcomes can be acquired in formal vet and Non-Formal programmes, but not informally in the working place. As was mentioned before, tools for the Informal Learning validation do not exist in Slovakia.

Concerning the current state of the system in context of evaluation, all stakeholders responded that the evaluation is planned.

The team of national experts for ECVET was set up the first results of their work were presented in national setting on a conference in 2014, lot of small projects are running in order to test the system elements.

The most activities to promote ECVET in Slovakia are organized by the National agency Erasmus+ for education and training fields. These activities and events are aimed at implementation of the ECVET tools and principles in the geographical mobility under Erasmus+ programme. The project promoters are trained in preparation of project using this methodology, the external evaluators of the submitted projects are trained in evaluation of the ECVET strategies in projects and the best practice projects are published and presented to other people interested in ECVET. Seminars and workshops are planned not only for VET providers, but also for a wider spectrum of stakeholders. The key components of all projects are the learning outcomes, units of LO, their evaluation, validation and recognition. Currently it seems to be the most promising way of ECVET implementation in Slovakia due to problems mentioned above.

Part 3 Evaluation of the data received from VET providers

List of VET providers that have been involved in the research

In Slovak Education system, term “VET provider” refers only to “formal VET education providers”, however, since the term VET in this project has broader understanding, other types of education institutions such as private training and consulting companies have been questioned as well.

Familiarity with EQF

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	11%
I know a little bit about it	26%
Quite familiar	50%
Familiar	10%
Very familiar	4%

Comments: As much as 64% of providers are quite familiar, familiar or very familiar with EQF and only 11% are not familiar with it.

Practical Experience on EQF

20% of VET providers have already had practical experience with EQF, such as:

- cooperation on creation of National Qualifications Register
- participation in Erasmus+ mobility projects
- design of education programs – to be in accordance with EQF (for mobility projects)

80% of VET providers have no practical experience on EQF.

Added Value of EQF

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Attracting more students and better funding possibilities	17%
Raising attractiveness of training programmes & VET occupations/professions	40%
Increasing the quality of the training and of the teaching staff	49%
Increasing cooperation with other companies/networking	37%
Amplifying the possibilities of the European labour market for students	69%
Other (pls specify)	-

In general, VET providers consider the amplification of the possibilities of the European labour market for students as well as the increase in the quality of the training and the teaching staff to be the most significant added value of the EQF. On the other hand, only 17% of the VET providers consider attracting more students and better funding possibilities to be an added value of the EQF. This is in correspondence with the funding system that currently exists in Slovak education system (money per capita) and the long decreasing attractiveness of technical fields of education among young learners.

Familiarity with NQF

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	25%
I know a little bit about it	25%
Quite familiar	34%
Familiar	10%
Very familiar	6%

Comments: Only 16% of VET providers are either familiar or very familiar with SKKR, as much as 50% of VET provider are not familiar at all or know only a little about it.

Familiarity with ECVET

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	16%
I know a little bit about it	20%
Quite familiar	35%
Familiar	30%
Very familiar	-

Comments:

30% of VET providers claim to be familiar with ECVET compared to 16% not to be familiar with ECVET at all.

Familiarity with the ECVET developments in your country

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	21%
I know a little bit about it	34%
Quite familiar	28%
Familiar	17%
Very familiar	-

Comments: In comparison to the answers of the previous question, even less of the VET providers are familiar with the ECVET development in Slovakia than they are familiar with the ECVET in general.

Practical Experience with ECVET

46% of VET providers questioned, claim to have practical experience on ECVET:

- Working on Erasmus+ KA2 and KA1 and mobility projects
- Incorporating ECVET components into education program (Learning agreement, Memorandum of understanding, Transcript of record) for students and teachers mobilities
- Taking part in ECVET training or conference

Added Value of ECVET

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Use of learning outcomes provides greater flexibility in education and training, allowing learners to accumulate learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification or part-qualification	57%
increased recognition of learning, including that achieved through geographical mobility	86%
Improved credibility for international mobility among learners and employers.	31%
Structured and quality-assured mobility provision leading to a reduced workload for mobility practitioners in the longer-term and making use of a common language for recognition in mobility.	29%
Improved understanding of different national or regional VET systems among mobility practitioners.	37%
Access to knowledge and skills, through geographical mobility, that might not be accessible locally.	46%
The development of mutual trust and a sharing of experiences among mobility practitioners and competent institutions, both nationally and internationally.	46%

Most of the VET providers (87%) agrees that the main added value of ECVET lies in increased recognition of learning, including that achieved through geographical mobility and also (57%) see the use of learning outcomes beneficial as it provides greater flexibility in education and training

Validation of Formal, Non Formal and Informal Learning

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	34%
I know a little bit about it	21%
Quite familiar	35%
Familiar	9%
Very familiar	-

Comments: Only 9% of respondents are familiar with the process of validation of formal, non formal and Informal Learning. This is in accordance with the current state of play in this field as the process of validation of Non-Formal education is still somehow unclear and validation of Informal Learning does not practically exist.

Main obstacles in working with ECVET

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
More workload	58%
Change resistance by several stakeholders	31%
Other	

No answer: 11%

In the case of "Other" please list the answers you have received indicating the frequency in which you have received some of these answers:

- ECVET is very complicated, mostly when it comes to formulation of LO's (1)
- Lack of relevant information at schools (1)
- No link to formal education system (1)
- The emphasis on „graduation“ in the current education system (1)

Part 4 Evaluation of the data received from learners

Familiarity with EQF and NQF

<i>Learner Response</i>	<i>Percentage of learners that have replied in this way</i>
<i>Not familiar</i>	<i>76%</i>
<i>I know a little bit about it</i>	<i>17%</i>
<i>Quite familiar</i>	<i>7%</i>
<i>Familiar</i>	<i>0%</i>
<i>Very familiar</i>	<i>0%</i>

Comments:

The most of the learners are either not familiar with EQF and SKKR (76%) or know only a little bit about it (17%). The rest of the respondents (7%) are quite familiar with EQF and/or SKKR. None of the learners are familiar or very familiar with it.

Motivation for selecting a programme as far as National Qualifications Framework is concerned

Only 3% of respondents take EQF into consideration when selecting education program. Their positive answer is linked to possibility of increasing their chance for better job.

„I am interested, if it provides higher level of qualification than my existing one.“

“I only choose courses that are officially accredited and provide a valuable certificate.“

Familiarity with ECVET

<i>Learner Response</i>	<i>Percentage of learners that have replied in this way</i>
<i>Not familiar</i>	<i>83%</i>
<i>I know a little bit about it</i>	<i>13%</i>
<i>Quite familiar</i>	<i>4%</i>
<i>Familiar</i>	<i>0%</i>
<i>Very familiar</i>	<i>0%</i>

Comments: Compared to the result of question 1, even smaller percentage of learners are familiar with ECVET.

Motivation for selecting a programme as far as ECVET is concerned

Only 4% take ECVET into consideration when selecting a programme.

“If that can help me in my further study or when I would like to change an employer in the future I might take ECVET into consideration”.

Conclusion

Slovak Qualification Framework (SKKR) has been developed and finalized in 2015. The Referencing Report of the Slovak Qualifications Framework towards the EQF was presented to the European Commission in December of 2015. SKKR is composed of four sub-frameworks, reflecting the pathway of acquiring the qualification (general, formal VET, HE, Non-Formal and informal). The process of SKKR development went hand in hand with the development of the National register of qualifications (NQR) that lists all identified and recognised qualifications in the Slovak Republic. In the coming period, steps for a further review of SKKR following its full implementation are expected in Slovakia. Unresolved issues include the division of SKKR into subframes, learning outcomes database for tertiary education and further education and the relationship between sectoral/international qualifications, etc.

The official document of strategy for validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning does not exist in Slovakia and comprehensive and integrated system of validation and recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning and quality assurance system of education are also missing. Further education institutions issue certificates of completion to graduates of their courses and other education activities. Certificates of completion indicate eligibility of a graduate to assert in the areas and scope according to the objective of the course, however, acceptance of such a certificate is upon an employer; there are not yet established criteria for assessing the results of courses of different orientation and scale. It should be noted that the process of amending the Act on Lifelong learning has already started. The aim is reflection of needs and trends in this area, terminological unification and above all, enhancement of participation and interest of the adult population in the further education.

The ECVET in Slovakia is exclusively used as an instrument of transnational mobility in VET. ECVET initiative is implemented on bottom-up principle – currently there are dozens of projects which already used the tools and ECVET methodology. The VET credit system which would allow accumulation and/or transfer of the learning outcomes of individuals does not exist and is not planned for Slovakia.

According to the results of the research, about half of the VET providers questioned are quite familiar or familiar with EQF or ECVET and 46% of them claim to have practical

experience on ECVET. Such a high number might have been caused by the fact that perhaps of all the VET providers that have been asked to participate in the research only those that have knowledge or experience with EQF/ECVET decided to participate.

On the other hand among learners, there is very little information about the EQF, SKKR or ECVET. Since SKKR has been operational in Slovakia only for a short period of time and ECVET is not clearly linked to formal education system, such results could be expected. This calls for increased activity in promoting both, EQF and ECVET in Slovak Republic.

Glossary

Here below are defined the key terms that are shared by EU Member States, EEA and candidate countries participating in the EQF. Those terms are recommended in order to share a common understanding of key concepts of EQF.

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

‘National Qualifications System’ means all aspects of a Member State's activity related to the recognition of learning and other mechanisms that link education and training to the labour market and civil society. This includes the development and implementation of institutional arrangements and processes relating to quality assurance, assessment and the award of qualifications. A National Qualifications System may be composed of several subsystems and may include a National Qualifications Framework.

‘National Qualifications Framework’ means an instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.

‘Learning Outcomes’ means statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

‘Knowledge’ means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.

‘Skills’ means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

‘Competence’ means 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. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning is described as a process of confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, Non-Formal or Informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with requirements of a validation standard (Cedefop, 2008; Cedefop, 2009).

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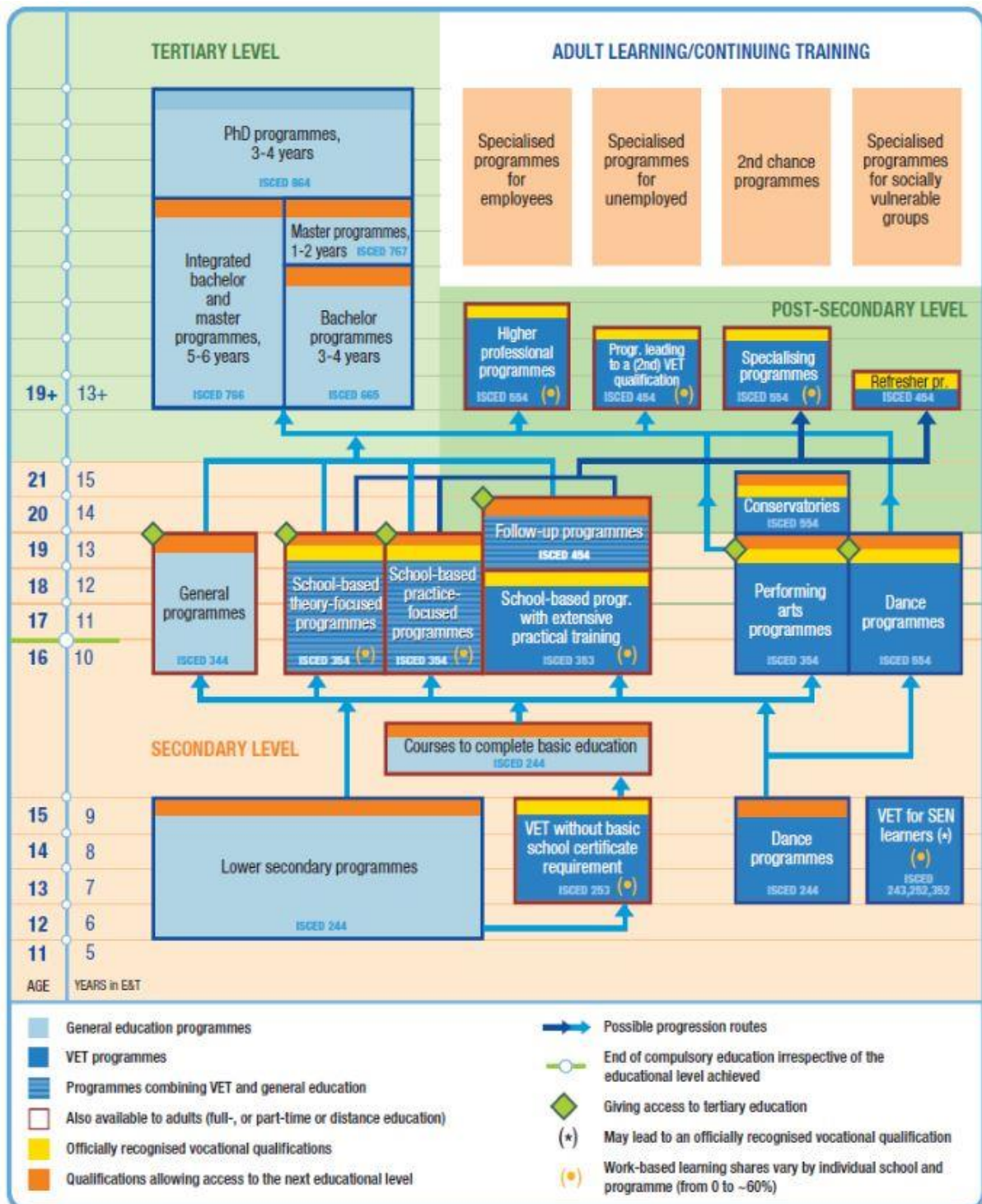
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http://www.alkp.sk/subory/Z%C3%A1kon_o_celo%C5%BEvotnom_vzdel%C3%A1van%C3%AD_568_2009.pdf

Annex 1 – VET in Slovak education system



Annex 2 - Information on selected criteria of the Referencing Process in Slovakia

Criterion 1 - Competence of a relevant body

Main tasks and competences of **National Coordination Point**, in line with the Recommendation are:

- coordination of the development of documents relating to the development and implementation of SKKR in individual phases of its implementation,
- assurance of the transparency of all processes in field of the development and implementation of SKKR, cooperation on the development of qualifications, their levelling to SKKR, monitoring of relating processes,
- cooperation with relevant authorities on establishing conditions for the recognition of prior education,
- cooperation on supporting the usage and definition of learning outcomes for the needs of SKKR and descriptions of qualifications, development of curricula and similar documents,
- development of recommendations for the recognition of education and qualifications in the fields of VET and LLL,
- cooperation in preparing relevant legislation in the field of LLL, NQR and SKKR,
- promotion of SKKR among professional and general public in the Slovak Republic, as well as abroad,
- promotion of the position, functions and provision of VET and LLL in the Slovak Republic,
- linking SKKR to other European initiatives and tools (especially ECVET and EQAVET),
- providing information on the state of the SKKR implementation to the European Commission,
- preparation of opinions, methodological leadership and providing guidance in the field of SKKR.

To fulfil these tasks and to ensure the social dialogue during consultation and implementation process. the **National Expert Group** was established, composed of representatives from directly managed organisations of MESRaS SR and employees of MESRaS SR, and representatives of social partners.

National Council for Education and Qualifications (NCEQ) was established for monitoring and approving of processes of the development of NQR as well as SKKR. It is a trans-sectoral national authority established on base of nominations of professional and employers'

organisations, all sectoral ministries and representatives of state and regional administration and associations of schools. NCEQ monitors activities of subsidiary bodies (except of Sector Councils) directly participating in the development of qualifications, as well as in the revision of the national qualifications framework:

- Working group for the development of the SKKR – its main activity is to create the matrix of SKKR and the development of national descriptors.
- The working group for the analysis of school curricula and study programmes of higher education institutions – it develops the groundwork for Sector Councils and their sectoral groups. Its task is also the assessment of developed qualification cards that are submitted to NCEQ for an approval. .
- The working group for the analysis of the completion of education focuses on the methods of examination and verification of acquired learning outcomes. Its task is also the assessment of developed qualification cards that are submitted to NCEQ for an approval
- The working group of Expert guarantors involves experts whose task is to prepare opinions on qualifications with assigned levels of SKKR. The opinions are the main indicator for NCEQ for approval or disapproval of a submitted qualification.

Criterion 2 - Linking between SKKR and EQF

SKKR consists of **eight levels** and **three categories (knowledge, skills, and competences)**. Each level and category are characterised by “descriptors” described in terms of general (generic) requirements for learning outcomes. In other words, a descriptor represents generally approved understanding of expected learning outcomes as a reference, comparative point.

Contrary to EQF, SKKR categories were further fragmented into subcategories. The descriptors represent:

- **knowledge**
This category represents familiarity of facts (declarative knowledge) as well as deep understanding and ability of explaining and reasoning (operational knowledge). Therefore, this category is divided to:
 - a) general knowledge,
 - b) vocational knowledge.
- **skills**
This category is based on knowledge and developed by the application of knowledge. They are manifested by a particular (manual) performance or by presentation of intellectual activities. Therefore, this category is divided to:

- a) cognitive skills (logic, creative and intuitive thinking, reflection);
- b) practical skills.

- **competences**

They represent an individual potential for satisfactory performance of tasks. Along with the categories responsibility and autonomy, the working group decided to take into account other characteristics. These characteristics refer to values, attitudes and social interaction of individuals. Therefore, this category is divided into:

- a) responsibility,
- b) autonomy,
- c) social competences.

The levels follow the hierarchical principle. Full understanding of a specific level requires “horizontal and vertical reading”. An increase of requirements on descriptors at particular levels relates to:

- complexity, scope and deepness of knowledge and their understanding;
- the degree of necessary support for performing activities or during learning;
- the degree of required integration, independency and creativity;
- the range and complexity of application of knowledge or practice;
- the degree of transparency and dynamics of situations within the practice or during learning.

The descriptors reflect increase of the mentioned characteristics from the lowest (1) to the highest level (8):

- the dimension of knowledge increases from factual, declarative level to conceptual level.
- the dimension of skills takes into account simple imitation of activities at the lowest level, mechanical performance and adaptation to concrete conditions. The highest levels of SKKR represent individualised, creative activities.
- the dimension of competences comprises receiving impulses, passive reaction to impulses up to creation of own attitude system and involvement in the development of value system of others.

Annex 3 – Descriptors of Slovak Qualification Framework

Descriptors of the Slovak Qualifications Framework						
Level		KNOWLEDGE		SKILLS		COMPETENCES
EQF	SKKR	General	Professional	Cognitive	Practical	Responsibility, autonomy, social competences
		The individual has:		The individual can:		The individual is characterized by:
1.	1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> basic general working knowledge at the level of remembering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reproduce basic knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perform simple repetitive tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> performance of simple working activities under supervision in familiar and stable conditions
2.	2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> basic general knowledge at the level of understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> basic professional knowledge at the level of remembering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> practically use information in specific situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perform complex repetitive tasks use simple methods, tools and materials in familiar conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> performance of simple working activities under supervision with some autonomy perception of his/her share of responsibility
3.	3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> broader general knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> professional knowledge of concepts, methods, procedures and standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use common technical, non-technical and technological documentation, standards and standards in a respective field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> apply general and professional knowledge to solve simple problem tasks use common procedures, methods, tools and materials when carrying out activities in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> independent and creative work in standard, rarely changing conditions accountability for his/her performance evaluation of his/her work

Descriptors of the Slovak Qualifications Framework						
Level		KNOWLEDGE		SKILLS		COMPETENCES
EQF	SKKR	General	Professional	Cognitive	Practical	Responsibility, autonomy, social competences
		The individual has:		The individual can:		The individual is characterized by:
4.	4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deepened general knowledge at the level of application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of regularities, principles, processes, standards and general concepts in a broader context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use practical information of general nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> apply deepened general and professional knowledge use technical documentation apply complex procedures, methods, tools and materials when carrying out activities in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> independent solving of problem tasks in foreseeable changing conditions responsibility for work in foreseeable changing conditions responsibility for management of a smaller team evaluation of the results of his/her work and the work of others
5.	5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deepened general knowledge at the level of analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specialized professional knowledge in the field of work or education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> monitor, analyze, plan, organize and evaluate specific working procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implement specific working procedures identify what constitutes a problem in the application of a chosen procedure propose specific working procedures and solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> taking responsibility for the management, evaluation and development of activities in changing conditions a high level of autonomy creative work the ability to transfer information and skills to others

Descriptors of the Slovak Qualifications Framework						
Level		KNOWLEDGE		SKILLS		COMPETENCES
EQF	SKKR	General	Professional	Cognitive	Practical	Responsibility, autonomy, social competences
		The individual has:		The individual can:		The individual is characterized by:
6.	6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> general knowledge at the level of synthesis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> practical and methodological knowledge of key areas in the field, which serve as the basis for practice, research or artistic creation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> propose solutions to methodical, professional, artistic or practical problems modify general and professional knowledge to solve specific professional problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implement solutions to methodical, professional, artistic or practical problems use creative methods, tools, equipment and materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> autonomy in solving specific problems in changing environment planning his/her own education autonomy and responsibility in decision-making ability to present his/her opinions appropriately and professionally creative and flexible thinking
7.	7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> general knowledge at the level of evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> professional and methodological knowledge in several areas of the field or practice, serving as a basis for innovation and originality in practice, research or arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> propose and evaluate solutions for methodical, professional, artistic, practical or scientific problems in various areas of the field or practice formulate recommendations for the development of scientific, working or artistic field establish scientific or practical assumptions for problem-solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implement and evaluate solutions for methodical, professional, artistic, practical or scientific problems in various areas of the field or practice create tutorials, projects of implementation and evaluation procedures for activities in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a high level of autonomy and predictability in known and unknown environments initiative and responsibility for managing work of a work team innovative, creative thinking professional presentation of the results of his/her own study or practice

Descriptors of the Slovak Qualifications Framework						
Level		KNOWLEDGE		SKILLS		COMPETENCES
EQF	SKKR	General	Professional	Cognitive	Practical	Responsibility, autonomy, social competences
		The individual has:		The individual can:		The individual is characterized by:
8.	8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general knowledge at the level of evaluation • knowledge of the priorities necessary for the development of the society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • professional and methodological knowledge in several areas of the field or practice, serving as a basis for innovation and originality in practice, research or arts necessary for planning of research and development, or the development of an area of professional practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create and formulate new hypotheses, judgments and strategies for further development of science or field of work • evaluate theories, concepts and innovations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply his/her own findings based on theoretical analysis and scientific research of comprehensive and/or interdisciplinary nature • design, validate and implement new research and working procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critical, autonomous and analytical thinking in unpredictable, changing conditions • taking into account social, scientific and ethical aspects in the direction for further development of the society • the ability to present results of research and development to professional community • responsibility for leadership in a given scientific or professional field • planning his/her own development and development of the society in the context of scientific and technical progress

National Report: Spain

National Report

Country: Spain

This report is part of Intellectual Output 1

Comparative report on the situation of the countries of the consortium as far as ECVET and EQF is concerned

Partners Responsible for the composition of this report:

CIPFPM

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Part 1 Desktop research

Development of the NQF in [your country]

Spain is a decentralized country. It also applies for education purposes. It is in that sense than regional authorities have the main competences about education. However, the Spanish Ministry of Education still holds the main competences about qualifications. Accordingly, VET qualifications are almost the same in the whole country, with a common national core curricula, while some differences can be present in regions within non-core curricula.

National Institute of Qualifications (INCUAL) is responsible for the Spanish Qualifications Framework. However, “The development work includes a wide range of other stakeholders such as social partners (unions, Spanish Confederation of Employers’ Organisations, Spanish Confederation of Small and Medium Enterprises), institutional coordination bodies (e.g. Sectoral Conference of Education, General Conference for University Policy), consultative bodies (State School Council, Vocational Training Council, Arts Education Council, University Council), agencies for evaluation and others (professional corporations and associations).” (CEDEFOP, 2013)

As stated in a CEDEFOP inform (CEDEFOP, 2014) “The national system for qualifications and vocational training forms the umbrella for VET programmes leading to formal qualifications awarded by them. The General Vocational Training Council is the national government’s advisory body on VET policy. It comprises representatives of national and regional public authorities and social partners, such as enterprise organisations and trade unions. Stakeholders were involved in developing occupational standards and creating a national register (Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales, CNCP), which serves as a reference for education and employment authorities when designing VET qualifications and programmes to ensure they are relevant to labour market needs.”

A professional qualification is defined as a set of professional competences significant in employment which can be acquired through vocational education and training (VET) modules or any other kind of learning structure as well as through work experience.

There are 26 professional families and 5 levels of professional qualification.

The Spanish Qualifications Framework has a similar structure to the European Qualifications Framework. In Spain Higher VET matches Level 5 EQF.

EQF	MECU
8	8
7	7
6	6
5	5
4	4
3	3
2	2
1	1

State of art in the context of inclusion of Non-Formally and informally acquired skills in NQF (National Qualifications Framework)

Generally speaking, in Spain formal vocational qualifications are mostly regulated by the Ministry of Education while professional qualifications/certificates are regulated by the Ministry of Labour. However, there is a link between both systems.

In Spain, a challenge is to put procedures in place for recognising Non-Formal learning and to reduce early school leaving (18-24 age group) (Cedefop ReferNet Spain, 2010, pp. 17-18; European Commission, 2011, pp.138-143)

“The NQF aims to reinforce the link to validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. In July 2009, the new Royal decree for the recognition of professional competences (1224/2009) was adopted; this regulates the procedures for validating professional competences acquired through Non-Formal and Informal Learning and professional experience. The national catalogue of professional qualifications is used as a standard for validating Non-Formal learning as well as for official diplomas on vocational training.” (CEDEFOP, 2013)

Further ahead, in 2011 (Orden PRE/910/2011, de 12 de abril) was created an inter-ministries commission to evaluate professional competences. In Spain “professional certificates” certify the occupational skills and competences acquired.

In Spain, as stated in a CEDEFOP inform (CEDEFOP, 2014) “Two different qualifications systems have been developed under the remit of education and labour authorities. They share the same consultation bodies but the governance and objectives of their VET qualifications and programmes differ. As the occupational standards in the CNCP apply to both qualifications systems, mutual recognition of some parts of the training is possible. There are also common regulations for recognising skills acquired through work experience”

In Spain, the regions have the competence to do the calls. Accordingly, in 2009 a pilot project to evaluate professional competences was the starting point to develop the program in some regions.

In 2011 a national mass media campaign presented the whole system.

At the same time, some courses were launched to teach evaluators.

The Ministry of Education launched a website to give information about the process: “@credita”.

In the period 2010-2013 62 calls were developed to evaluate competences. In this period, till august 2013, the calls included 64,083 places for evaluation.

The process has three compulsory phases: advice+evaluation+accreditation.

Auto evaluation questionnaires have been developed for the advice phase. In this phase assessors give a negative or positive feedback. However, attendants with a negative feedback can still follow the evaluation phase. In that sense, in the period 2010-2013 12% of attendants with a negative feedback followed to the second phase.

The evaluation phase has 4 tools to evaluate competences:

1. Exams
2. Personal interview
3. Work simulators.
4. Job shadowing

Evaluators tend to use Unit content guides “Las guías de evidencias de las unidades de competencia (GEC)” to assist them within the whole evaluation process.

In the period 2010-2013, counting all participants, 82% had a whole positive evaluation, 9,5% had a partial positive evaluation, and the rest were rejected.

After the accreditation phase, attendants can ask a validation of some subjects within the formal VET education system.

CEDEDOP (2014): Spotlight on VET Spain

CEDEFOP (2013): European Inventory on NQF 2012. SPAIN

INCUAL (2013): Datos recogidos sobre el procedimiento de reconocimiento de competencias adquiridas por experiencia laboral

State of the art in the implementation of ECVET in your country

Current Stage of Implementation

“One of the main objectives of developing a Spanish qualifications framework for lifelong learning compatible with the EQF and the QF-EHEA is to make Spanish qualifications easier to understand by describing them in terms of learning outcomes; it should also clarify relations between them. It is expected that this will improve the extent to which stakeholders are informed about national qualifications, raising trust and making mobility easier. The NQF aims to support lifelong learning, link IVET and CVET, and improve access and participation for everyone, including the disadvantaged. Through the NQF – it is expected – it will be easier to identify, validate and recognise all kinds of learning outcomes (including Non-Formal and Informal Learning), regardless of the way they were acquired. It will support better use of qualifications at national and European level.”

Spanish VET system is output oriented and the qualifications are expressed in terms of learning outcomes. This element will foster the further integration within the ECVET system. However, the SQF is not yet finished. Accordingly, finishing it is the priority. When the NQF will be finished, we could benefit greatly the ECVET system and boost its use. This will increase the mobility of students and workers.

“Policy initiatives on ECVET implementation within IVET are currently on hold, pending the final approval of NQF. Once the policy-decision is taken, it will be easy to bring the existing credit system closer to ECVET”

Activities that take place in the country

This is a summary of the present situation in Spain.

EQF	SQF	MECES- QF-EHEA	Possible future scenario
8	8	4- Doctorate	
7	7	3- Master's Degree	
6	6	2- Bachelor's Degree	
5	5	1- Higher Technician (VET)	Occupational Aptitude Certificate
4	4		Technician (VET), Occupational Aptitude Certificate
3	3		Basic VET Degree (operator), Occupational Aptitude Certificate
2	2		Compulsory education certificate
1	1		School leaving certificate

Bodies responsible for ECVET and their role

Bodies responsible for ECVET in Spain: El Comité Técnico para la Formación Profesional, el Consejo General de Formación Profesional, el Consejo Escolar del Estado y la Conferencia Sectorial sobre Educación.

Both Ministry of Education and Labour Ministry (Ministerio de Educación y Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración) will be responsible for ECVET within initial VET, and Labour Ministry (Ministerio de Trabajo) will be responsible for ECVET within continuous VET. The Spanish National coordination point is the VET Department at the Ministry of Education (El Punto de Coordinación Nacional es la Dirección General de Formación Profesional del Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deportes)

Examples of projects

EU Project "BUILD UP Skills Spain"

"Build Up Skills" is an EU Project integrated by 20 countries: España, Austria, Bélgica, Bulgaria, Chipre, Dinamarca, Estonia, Finlandia, Alemania, Hungría, Irlanda, Italia, Lituania, Noruega, Países Bajos, Polonia, Portugal, Rumania, Eslovenia, Suecia y Reino Unido.

This project is focused on the building sector, which is quite important in Spain. There are some Spanish institutions involved on it, including INCUAL: la Fundación Laboral de la Construcción (FLC), Instituto Nacional de las CUALificaciones (INCUAL), la Subdirección General de Innovación y Calidad de la Edificación y el Instituto Tecnológico de la Construcción (AIDICO). Con la colaboración de entidades como el Instituto para la Diversificación y Ahorro Energético (IDAE), la escuela de Ingeniería de la Edificación de la Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, la Confederación Nacional de la Construcción (CNC), la Federación Metal Construcción y Afines MCA-UGT, la Federación de la Construcción FECOMA-CCOO, DAIKIN AC SPAIN, VIESSMANN S.L., TERMIGO SLU, SILIKEN, S.A. ETRES-Consulting, entre otras.

Other Projects:

CENTRAL is a European project defining competence and educational standards according to ECVET principles for 2 professional profiles: the warehouse operator and the freight forwarding agent, providing a better response to the needs of training bodies, employees and employers.

ProfDRV: Professional driving - more than just driving!

The ProfDRV project investigated the opportunities offered by the EQFs learning outcomes approach and the overall EQF approach in order to improve comparability and transparency of professional driver qualifications in Europe with a special focus on the implementation of EC Directive 2003/59/EC on the qualification of professional drivers in Europe. Among others it developed an EQF learning outcomes based profile for "professional drivers (road freight transport)" and EQF-compatible quality standards for the implementation of related qualification structures in the EU Member States. The project and its results contributed to the evaluation of the Directives implementation in 2013 with its results and recommendations.

KNOW-IN: The European Road Transport Manager

The KNOW-IN project created the new professional figure for the road freight transport sector based on the EQF approach: the European Road Transport Manager (EU-RTM) who will have the management skills, tools and interventions needed to overcome the challenges the sectors faces, enabling them succeed and to be competitive. The EU-RTM concept differs from the one regulated by Regulation (EC) No. 1071/2009, which regulates access to the profession of transport operators. While the competences are similar the perspective is different. KNOW-IN is all about the actual daily practices of a RTM; the competences imposed by daily work, the skills one needs to carry out this position and the knowledge the field requires.

NETINVET

NETINVET is a European network of training centers and companies, where mutual trust has been established in order to provide young people with mobility opportunities during their training pathway based on ECVET. It pertains to training programs in the field of international trade, but it is inclined to extend to other training courses within the trade and services sector. The network's coverage today extends to 9 countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain.

TRIFT

TRIFT elaborated a Competence Matrix (according to the VQTS-model) for the professional area 'foreign trade', which allows the mapping of competences into competence areas and competence development steps. This competence matrix has been tested within ECVET initial VET mobility pilots in the framework of internships between the partner's countries. The increase of competences has been proven by outcome-orientated methods of assessment and the students' success will be recognised by a certificate.

EUCOLOG - European Competence Standards in Logistics

The Eucolog project developed among others EQF Learning Outcomes based standards for a number of logistics qualifications: foreman in the warehouse, warehouse supervisor and dispatcher in forwarding/ shipping.

Part 2 Evaluation of data received from Stakeholders

Description of NQF

Please summarize the findings of questions 1,2 and 3

Two assessors did not know about NQF. The third one pointed that it has been developed for VET intermediate and advanced.

It is important to remark that recently there has been a government change. Accordingly, those assessors are new in their position. However, all of them have a long career in the educational field.

Stakeholders responsible for EQF and ECVET

EQF Stakeholders

All three assessors pointed the Spanish Ministry of Education without pointing any special department.

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Spanish Ministry of Education		www.mecd.gob.es

ECVET Stakeholders

Stakeholder Name	Short Description of stakeholder	Stakeholder Website and Contact Details
Spanish Ministry of Education		www.mecd.gob.es

Validation of formal and non formal learning

All assessors pointed that there isn't a strategy for the validation of Non formal and Informal Learning in VET.

Current situation in ECVET

Due to the lack of information about ECVET all assessors answered with “I do not know” to all questions from 6 to 13.

Part 3 Evaluation of the data received from VET providers

Familiarity with EQF

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	20%
I know a little bit about it	30%
Quite familiar	20%
Familiar	30%
Very familiar	-

Comments: Generally speaking, head of studies have more information than normal teachers as they do some special courses.

Practical Experience on EQF

Nobody had practical experience on EQF

Added Value of EQF

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Attracting more students and better funding possibilities	20%
Raising attractiveness of training programmes & VET occupations/professions	70%
Increasing the quality of the training and of the teaching staff	70%
Increasing cooperation with other	90%

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
companies/networking	
Amplifying the possibilities of the European labour market for students	60%
Other (pls specify)	

In the case of "Other" please list the answers you have received indicating the frequency in which you have received some of these answers:

Familiarity with NQF

50% were not familiar with NQF while another 50% were quite familiar with it.

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	50%
I know a little bit about it	
Quite familiar	50%
Familiar	
Very familiar	

Familiarity with ECVET

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	30%
I know a little bit about it	40%
Quite familiar	20%
Familiar	10%
Very familiar	

Familiarity with the ECVET developments in your country

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	70%
I know a little bit about it	10%
Quite familiar	10%
Familiar	10%
Very familiar	

Practical Experience with ECVET

Only one head of teachers had experience with ECVET: “There are students from Poland in an Erasmus + mobility for studies. We have tried to adapt our curriculum in order to give them the possibility to validate the studies in their countries of origin. Although meeting difficulties we have tried to reformulate some contents and reorganize schedules and credit number”

Added Value of ECVET

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Use of learning outcomes provides greater flexibility in education and training, allowing learners to accumulate learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification or part-qualification	40%
increased recognition of learning, including that achieved through geographical mobility	60%
Improved credibility for international mobility among learners and employers.	40%
Structured and quality-assured mobility provision leading to a reduced workload for mobility practitioners in the longer-term and making use of a common language for recognition in mobility.	50%
Improved understanding of different national or regional VET systems among mobility practitioners.	60%
Access to knowledge and skills, through geographical mobility, that might not be accessible locally.	50%
The development of mutual trust and a sharing of experiences among mobility practitioners and competent institutions, both nationally and internationally.	20%

Validation of Formal, Non Formal and Informal Learning

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Not familiar	30%
I know a little bit about it	30%
Quite familiar	30%
Familiar	10%

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
Very familiar	-

Main obstacles in working with ECVET

VET provider Response	Percentage of VET providers that have replied in this way
More workload	50%
Change resistance by several stakeholders	40%
Other	30%

In the case of "Other" please list the answers you have received indicating the frequency in which you have received some of these answers:

20% pointed a lack of information and 10% "Different educational systems which offer resistance to change"

Part 4 Evaluation of the data received from learners

Familiarity with EQF and NQF

<i>Learner Response</i>	<i>Percentage of learners that have replied in this way</i>
<i>Not familiar</i>	96.2%
<i>I know a little bit about it</i>	3.8%
<i>Quite familiar</i>	
<i>Familiar</i>	
<i>Very familiar</i>	

Comments: We did the study with advanced VET students. Accordingly, they should have more information than other VET students.

Motivation for selecting a programme as far as National Qualifications Framework is concerned

Familiarity with ECVET

<i>Learner Response</i>	<i>Percentage of learners that have replied in this way</i>
<i>Not familiar</i>	100%
<i>I know a little bit about it</i>	
<i>Quite familiar</i>	
<i>Familiar</i>	
<i>Very familiar</i>	

Conclusion

Please include here a short summary of your report (approximately one A4 page)

While the SQF is still unfinished, the ECVET connexion will come after it. However, the connexion will be easy because the SQF and EQF have a similar structure, and the SQF is output oriented.

Generally speaking, there is a lack of information about EQF and ECVET. However, there is also some lack of information about SQF, probably due to a new Spanish law and recent changes.

Generally speaking, we can say that head of teachers and assessors have more information about EQF and ECVET than normal teachers because they follow some specific courses. At the same time, we can point that head of teachers engaged on European projects have more information about both EQF and ECVET.

It is possible to say that in Spain we have too many changes regarding education laws and norms. Sometimes, we have at the same time two or three different education laws “active” at the same time. It is in that sense that Spanish teachers, and also some politicians, are always complaining about “too many changes”. Accordingly, being difficult to follow those changes, European tools as EQF or ECVET become “too much”.

At the same time, Spanish teachers have a low English level. This element is also a mental barrier when European affairs are in concern.

On the other hand, students have a lack of information about EQF and ECVET that is close to zero. There are no differences between normal VET students and advanced VET students about this point. At the same time, older students, which are generally working, have the same information level.

Glossary:

Here below are defined the key terms that are shared by EU Member States, EEA and candidate countries participating in the EQF. Those terms are recommended in order to share a common understanding of key concepts of EQF.

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

‘National Qualifications System’ means all aspects of a Member State's activity related to the recognition of learning and other mechanisms that link education and training to the labour market and civil society. This includes the development and implementation of institutional arrangements and processes relating to quality assurance, assessment and the award of qualifications. A National Qualifications System may be composed of several subsystems and may include a National Qualifications Framework.

‘National Qualifications Framework’ means an instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.

‘Learning Outcomes’ means statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

‘Knowledge’ means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.

‘Skills’ means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

‘Competence’ means 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. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning is described as a process of confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, Non-Formal or Informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with requirements of a validation standard (Cedefop, 2008; Cedefop, 2009).

