

**CEDEFOP EXPERT WORKSHOP ON
"MAINSTREAMING ECVET TO PRACTITIONERS"**

Thessaloniki, Greece, 30-31 May 2011

BACKGROUND AND DRAFT AGENDA ⁽¹⁾

BACKGROUND

The European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) is aiming at enabling learning mobility for young and adult learners, as well as supporting lifelong learning and recognition of prior learning in Europe. It builds upon further European tools and principles such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET), or the European principles for validation of learning outcomes. Core elements to those tools are the learning outcomes approach and a strong role reference to qualifications.

In a large majority of countries, ECVET is meanwhile taken forward ⁽²⁾. Preparing for ECVET encompasses activities ranging from legal and regulatory updates to broad range test initiatives. The implementation of ECVET is not occurring on its own but is strongly related to policies on enhancing international learning mobility, to VET reforms at national, regional or local levels towards more permeability within and between systems and to the development of qualification frameworks. ECVET is expected to be gradually implemented by learning from projects, experimentations and tests. The transfer of good practices and knowledge of difficulties from tests and pilots to policy-making is part of the European framework for ECVET and stated in the European ECVET Recommendation.

The European database on the ECVET projects ⁽³⁾ reveals that 23% of the 110 registered projects deal with integrating ECVET in education and training, and that 32% are coordinated by VET providers. ECVET is being developed for qualifications located at EQF levels 3 to 6 in different fields of activities covering for instance construction and building, health care or transport and logistics. Further characteristics of ECVET

(1) By Isabelle Le Mouillour and Maria Todorova (Cedefop)

(2) For more details on ECVET implementation in Europe, see Cedefop (2010). The development of ECVET in Europe. Working paper, No 10. http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/6110_en.pdf

(3) Meanwhile the ADAM database includes a specific list for ECVET projects: <http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/thematicgroup/ECVET>

testing are the involvement of a large range of stakeholders and the regional dimension as support for mobility. This, of course, implies dedicated human and financial resources.

On that basis organising a Cedefop workshop on ECVET and practitioners might not be astonishing. The institutional environment in which ECVET operates is undergoing changes which lead to new definitions of responsibilities, of autonomy in decision making and practices, and decentralisation/regionalisation and mergers. In some countries, institutional autonomy also involves funding (Bulgaria, Germany, Austria) where VET providers can increasingly take independent budgetary decisions. In Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovakia state-owned VET schools have merged to optimise financial and human resources as well as to improve quality of, and accessibility to, VET (Cedefop 2010). The first ECVET surveys (ECVET Connexion, ECVET Reflector) underlined the importance of providers for ECVET implementation and their need for autonomy to experiment and develop ECVET. This autonomy while embedded into national laws and regulations and observing standards and quality assurance requirements would enable providers in taking responsibility for the training process (including design of learning process, assessment procedures, awarding qualifications, participating to the definition of standards) as well as for entering into partnerships for mobility.

Currently the tests and experimentations are focusing on the technical features of ECVET (writing the learning outcomes, defining the learning units, ascribing ECVET points, developing partnerships in using Memorandum of Understanding and Learning Agreements). First lessons from European ECVET pilot projects confirm the essential role of VET providers (as mentioned for instance in the preliminary final reports of the M.O.T.O or OPIR projects) ⁽⁴⁾. More generally, (too) little attention has been paid until now to providers and their administrative or teaching/training staff at European policy level.

Objectives of the workshop

This workshop is embedded in Cedefop ECVET activities and more particularly in on-going reflections on the necessary conditions for ECVET implementation in Europe. Cedefop carries out annual European ECVET monitoring⁵ and is currently preparing its 2011 issue.

The purpose of the present workshop is to identify the drivers for the involvement of providers and practitioners in ECVET implementation as well as to elaborate on the scope of actions that providers and practitioners take in ECVET implementation. It is expected to

- give the participants the opportunity to exchange their views and experiences and learn from each other;
- support ECVET further development in view of the 2012 and 2014 deadlines as set in the European ECVET Recommendation. This workshop is thus linked to the European agenda of ECVET activities led by the European Commission.

(4) See on those issues the ECVET magazine 4/2011:
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/DONWLOAD_ID_18073_ECVET_magazine_04.pdf

(5) See http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/6110_en.pdf

Participants come from different European countries and backgrounds. Most of them have been working for some time for/as/with VET providers and are much experienced in the field of European mobility of VET learners and ECVET. They are representatives of VET providers (schools, enterprises, training centres, private or public organisations providing and delivering education or training services at all levels of the EQF) and VET practitioners (teachers, trainers, counsellors, tutors, coaches, etc.), researchers and policy-makers. This workshop relies on experiences gained by the participants in numerous European projects and their commitments to progress with ECVET. The European Commission supports this event especially with inputs on ECVET features and challenges (information session on ECVET implementation).

The workshop sessions should lead to formulating answers to two questions:

- 1) Which are the drivers and obstacles to the involvement of providers and practitioners on ECVET implementation?
- 2) Which are the needs of VET practitioners when they engage in ECVET testing and implementing?

All participants are invited to contribute actively to the workshop and to formulate in written their views on one of these questions. These contributions and a summary of the discussion will be part of the workshop documentation.

ANNOTATED AGENDA

To sustain the exchanges and reflexions among the workshop participants, the workshop is organised in four main sessions:

- Session 1 on the state-of-the-art of ECVET in Europe;
- Session 2 on partnerships for ECVET (mutualising experiences and networking);
- Session 3 on solutions elaborated to deal with learning outcomes and competence-based approach to qualifications in their respective legislative and regulatory contexts;
- Session 4 on drivers and needs by practitioners and providers when they consider testing and implementing ECVET.

DRAFT AGENDA

Monday, 30 May 2011 (Europa room)

09:30 - 10:00	Registration
10:00 - 10:15	Welcome to the workshop Isabelle Le Mouillour, Maria Todorova (Cedefop)
Opening session	
10:15 - 10:45	The European policy context: ECVET as one of the European tools for mobility Erik Hess (European Commission)
10:45 - 11:15	Challenges for implementing ECVET, experiences from the ECVET network Richard Maniak (European ECVET secretariat)
11:15 - 11:45	<i>Tea/coffee break</i>
Workshop session on mutualising and networking <i>ECVET projects and experiences show that the partnerships are developing to something more: Which forms do partnerships for mobility take?</i>	
11:45 - 14:00	Introduction: Strategies for implementing ECVET Isabelle Le Mouillour (Cedefop)
	NetinVET, from partnership to network Sophie Salin (Confédération Française du Commerce Interentreprises, France) Improving networking among policy makers, providers and practitioners Manuela Bonacci, Marta Santanichchia (ISFOL, Italy) Developing ECVET with a national initiative Risto Virkkunen (Kainuu Vocational College, Finland) Summary of contributions and discussions: Gerald Thiel (DEKRA Akademie, Germany)
14:00 - 15:00	<i>Lunch</i>
Afternoon opening	
15:00 - 15:30	New institutions taking new role? The Swedish Agency for higher VET Pia Enochsson (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan / Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, Sweden) Discussant: Maria Todorova (Cedefop)

Monday, 30 May 2011 (Europa room)

Workshop session on ruling out ECVET technicalities among peers

ECVET projects and national initiatives are supportive of innovative and creative further development of ECVET technical features. Taking on board the European Recommendation, VET practitioners develop own solutions.

15:30 - 17:00	Introduction: What is so special about ECVET? Isabelle Le Mouillour (Cedefop)
	Learning outcomes and competence-based approach to qualifications Impact of learning outcomes on VET practices André Huigens (Wellantcollege, The Netherlands) From the notaries of knowledge to the architects of competences Massimo Maciocia (Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per la Campania, Italy) VET profiling vs. learning outcomes for ECVET Sibilla Drews (National Agency LdV at BIBB, Germany) Discussant: Stelina Chatzichristou (Foundation of Economic and Industrial Research, Greece)
17:00 - 17:15	<i>Tea/coffee break</i>
17:15 - 18:15	In search of flexibility, amidst regulations Dealing with assessment procedures and transparency of learning outcomes Markus Müller (Technische Universität München, Germany) Modularised approaches and the principle of occupational profiles - challenges and a potential solution Andreas Saniter (Institut Technik und Bildung, Universität Bremen, Germany) Discussant: Anne Potters (CINOP Internationaal Agentschap, The Netherlands)
20:00 - ...	<i>Dinner (optional) at a restaurant in Kalamaria</i>

Tuesday, 31 May 2011 (Europa room, Training Room B)

Workshop session on drivers and needs by practitioners and providers - 2 parallel working groups

This session consolidates contributions and discussions from the previous sessions and focus on two main issues: the drivers for involvement in ECVET and the needs of practitioners and providers.

10:00 - 10:30	Introduction - Engaging with ECVET, experiences from the Netherlands Gerit Janssen (Gilde Opleidingen, The Netherlands)
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Tuesday, 31 May 2011 (Europa room, Training Room B)

10:30 - 12:00	Group 1 - Focus on drivers and added value: Finnish and Bulgarian experiences Maarit Saarenkylä (The Joint Authority of Education in Espoo Region, Omnia, Finland) Iliana Taneva (Ministry of Education, Youth and Science, Bulgaria) Summary of contributions and discussions: Enrico Bressan (Fondazione Giacomo Rumor, Centro Produttività Veneto, Italy)
10:30 - 12:00	Group 2 - Focus on needs and expectations: Finnish and German experiences Juha-Ville Mäkinen (Vantaa Vocational College Varia, Finland) Claudia Ball (DEKRA Akademie, Germany) Summary of contributions and discussions: Rolf Kristiansen (Akershus University College and European Masters of Skilled Crafts, Norway)
Concluding session: Easy going, easy doing? panel and discussion <i>Statement by panel members; Brief summaries from working groups.</i>	
12:00 - 13:00	Leading questions: - Which are the drivers and obstacles to the involvement of providers and practitioners on ECVET implementation? - Which are the needs of VET practitioners when they engage in ECVET testing and implementing? Rob van Wezel (KCH International, The Netherlands) Grethe Haugoy (Cedefop) Michela Volpi (National Agency for LLP Leonardo da Vinci Sectoral Programme, Italy) Enrico Bressan (Fondazione Giacomo Rumor, Centro Produttività Veneto, Italy) Rolf Kristiansen (Akershus University College and European Masters of Skilled Crafts, Norway)
13:00 - 13:30	Wrap-up and closing session Isabelle Le Mouillour and Maria Todorova (Cedefop)
13:30 - 15:00	<i>Lunch</i>

Contact persons

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Workshop homepage:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/events/17992.aspx>
