COPCHAVET Project: “Coping with Challenges on Vocational Education and Training

“The implementation of the European Credit System in Vocational Education (ECVET) in some countries”
SUMMARY

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Presentation

EUROPEA is a network of over 1000 schools and institutions involved in agricultural (green) vocational education and training in Europe. From 2009 to 2011 EUROPEA has executed the project CHAVET that permitted to know about the challenges that agricultural (green) VET schools in Europe were facing.

Two of these challenges had been considered especially relevant: 1- “Cooperation school-enterprise-community” and 2- “Agriculture-environment-Climate Change” and to know more about these challenges and how agricultural VET schools and farms/firms are coping with these challenges, we decided to apply for a new Leonardo da Vinci partnership project. This project named COPCHAVET “Coping with Challenges on Vocational Education and Training in Agriculture (green) Sector” run from 2011 to 2013 and permitted to find out good examples and practices in: 1- “Cooperation school-enterprise-community and how to teach entrepreneurial competences” and 2- “Environmental friendly farming practices and adaptation and mitigation to the Climate Change”. Additionally the project analyzed the implementation of the European Credit System in Agricultural (green) Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) in the partners’ countries.

This document contains basic information about the ECVET and how the partners’ countries are implementing it.
Introduction to COPCHAVET project

The objectives of the project were:

1- To enhance awareness among the European green (agricultural) VET schools and institutions about the new challenges related to:
   a- Changes in farms and firms and the relationship school-enterprise
   b- Environmental issues and Climate Change that affect farming
   c- ECVET and the application in green (agricultural) sector

2- To improve knowledge, skills and competences of teachers and managers of green (agricultural) VET schools and other stakeholders of the trade about the challenges indicated above

3- To encourage innovative thinking and entrepreneurial behavior of students

4- To strengthen the cooperation among the partners (EUROPEA net)

The activities carried out were:

1-Phase: Dissemination of the results obtained in CHAVET project (green VET schools, Authorities, ...).

2-Phase: Study / research of good examples in “Cooperation school-enterprise and how to teach entrepreneurial competences”. Sharing and collecting information during some different meetings (Open School for experts and professionals, Student Meeting for students and Thematic Seminar for teachers and principals). To elaborate a “Repertoire”.

3-Phase: the same as explained in phase 2 but for the “Good environmental farming techniques and how to cope with Climate Change in Agriculture”. To elaborate a “Repertoire”.

4-Phase: Study of the implementation of European Credit in agricultural (green) VET in some European countries. To elaborate a “Report”.

5-Phase: Dissemination of all products and tools among European green VET schools and Authorities. Websites of EUROPEA-International (www.europea.org), and national ones. In Spain the EUROPEA-España Website is www.europeaespana.es but other ways of communication were used.

Evaluation during and at the end of the project (forms)
The European Credit System in Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)

RECOMMENDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)

ECVET is a technical framework for the transfer, recognition and, where appropriate, accumulation of individuals’ learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification. ECVET tools and methodology comprise the description of qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes with associated points, a transfer and accumulation process and complementary documents such as learning agreements, transcripts of records and ECVET users’ guides.

ECVET is intended to facilitate the recognition of learning outcomes in accordance with national legislation, in the framework of mobility, for the purpose of achieving a qualification. It should be noted that ECVET does not imply any new entitlement for citizens to obtain the automatic recognition of either learning outcomes or points. Its application for a given qualification is in accordance with the legislation, rules and regulations applicable in the Member States.

In ECVET, units of learning outcomes achieved in one setting are assessed and then, after successful assessment, transferred to another setting. In this second context, they are validated and recognised by the competent institution as part of the requirements for the qualification that the person is aiming to achieve. Units of learning outcomes can then be accumulated towards this qualification, in accordance with national or regional rules. Procedures and guidelines for the assessment, validation, accumulation and recognition of units of learning outcomes are designed by the relevant competent institutions and partners involved in the training process.

Credit transfer based on ECVET and applied to learning outcomes achieved in formal learning contexts should be facilitated by establishing partnerships and networks involving competent institutions, each of which is empowered, in their own setting, to award qualifications or units or to give credit for achieved learning outcomes for transfer and validation.

For applying ECVET to learning outcomes achieved in a non-formal and informal learning context or outside the framework of an MoU, the competent institution which is empowered to award qualifications or units or to give credit should establish procedures and mechanisms for the identification, validation and recognition of these learning outcomes through the award of the corresponding units and the associated ECVET points.
ECVET points provide complementary information about qualifications and units in numerical form. They have no value independent of the acquired learning outcomes for the particular qualification to which they refer and they reflect the achievement and accumulation of units. To enable a common approach for the use of ECVET points, a convention is used according to which 60 points are allocated to the learning outcomes expected to be achieved in a year of formal full time VET.

In ECVET the allocation of points usually has two phases: ECVET points are allocated first to a qualification as a whole and then to its units. For a given qualification, one formal learning context is taken as a reference and, on the basis of the convention the total number of points is assigned for that qualification. From this total, ECVET points are then allocated to each unit according to their relative weight within the qualification.

For qualifications which do not have a formal learning pathway reference, ECVET credit points can be allocated through estimation by comparison with another qualification which has a formal reference context. To establish the comparability of the qualifications, the competent institution should refer to the equivalent EQF level or, possibly, NQF level, or to the similarity of the learning outcomes in a closely related professional field.
AUSTRIA
In Austria, the **European Credit System in Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)** is formulated by the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, Department International and multilateral affairs.” ...as an instrument to increase transparency and improve the planning of mobility periods. Actually the number of ‘mobile’ learners at vocational education and training (VET) establishments is rather low. In Austria mobility periods of apprentices and schoolchildren at VET schools and colleges are also the exception rather than the rule. Longer-term stays abroad - those exceeding two or three weeks’ duration - in particular are comparatively rare. This may be due to many reasons: The age of learners may play a role here as well as lacking structures (a central mobility coordination office, for example) or linguistic and financial barriers. Furthermore, one important impediment is insufficient understanding of foreign education systems, programmes and content. The diversity of VET in Europe, which is an expression of the individual countries’ different cultures and traditions, makes the comparability of education offers difficult and has the result that young people hardly seize the opportunity of spending a short-term period of learning abroad. Such a stay would be highly valuable for young people, however, because it would possibly contribute to their personal development and also enhance their opportunities on the labour market”. (Guidelines for the application of ECVET, Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, march 2012)

In Austria ECVET is still very rarely implemented. Actually there exist some projects mainly in the touristic education sector. In the agricultural sector, the Vineyards and orchards school of Krems started the project **EQWine** together with 8 European countries .

In the last years, a considerable number of students from agricultural schools pass their practical training - as a compulsory part of their education - abroad. This kind of mobility is mostly documented by the **Europass Mobility** document.

The following picture shows the Austrian initial and continuing education and training system; with the corresponding NQR / EQR level in the vocational education.
Österreichische Schülerinnen und Schüler oder Lehrlinge möchten während ihrer Ausbildung ein paar Wochen im Ausland verbringen, um dort ihre fachliche Ausbildung fortzusetzen, aber auch um ihre Fremdsprachenkenntnisse zu vertiefen.

Austrian students or apprentices like to spend a few weeks abroad during their training, to continue their professional education, but also to develop their knowledge of foreign languages.

Auf Basis einer strukturierten Beschreibung (in für die Mobilität wichtigen Teilen) der Qualifikationen in Einheiten von Lernergebnissen (inklusive numerischer Zusatzinformationen in Form von EVCET-Punkten), ist es möglich, die Kenntnisse, Fertigkeiten und Kompetenzen, die im Ausland erworben werden sollen, festzulegen, sodass das Gelernte kompatibel ist mit der österreichischen Qualifikation.

Based on a structured description of qualifications (for important parts for the mobility) defined as credits or units of learning outcomes (including numerical Additional information in the form of EVCET points), it is possible to establish the knowledge, skills and competencies to be acquired abroad, so the results of learning process abroad are compatible with the Austrian qualification.

source: www.ecvet-info.at/en/node/196 (Guidelines for the application of ECVET, Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, March 2012)
Conditions to force the ECVET-system:

- Willingness of the Students to pass a (longer) part of the education in other countries
- Better comparability between the education systems in the different countries
- Implementation of modular units in the curriculum (similar modules can be attended and graduated more easily abroad)
ECVET in the Netherlands, by André Huigens for EUROPEA NL.
The Netherlands is having a National Qualification Framework which is providing VET education in eight levels. This system is based on the Irish- and Scottish Framework and focusing on Life Long Learning. Important is the connection between formal-, informal- and nonformal-learning.

The agricultural sector is just one month ready with the development of the curricula for the sector which is completely outcome-based learning described. This curricula is the common framework for the school programs which have to be developed by the AOC’s (Agricultural Educational Centres). The way this should be done is based on the structure which can be seen in the curricula for all programs. This is a different approach from how it was organised in the past.

There might be a problem appearing in the Netherlands as most people who are involved in the development process of the new educational programs are hardly informed about the background of the EQF and the instruments connected to. This is essential to understand what outcome based education is. Despite the fact the Netherlands is on Strategically level aware of the consequences of the implementation of the EQF, it’s not a guarantee our education will be outcome based. The Dutch do have a system which is based on competence based learning but competence based
learning is not the same as outcome based competencies! This is a mistake not only made in the Netherlands!

In my observation of the situation in VET institutions, most policy makers and boards of directors of these organisations are hardly aware of the consequences of the implementation of the outcome based approach of EQF in their educational system. In a way most educational institutions on VET level assume that the National Coordination Point or the ministry will tell them what EQF level they ought to print on their present certificates, and what they are supposed to change in their learning style and learning way.

I talked to school leaders in many European countries and the situation is the same everywhere, even in Finland, which is considered the top in European education. There are NCP’s in all countries and they are doing their work, but most of them get limited or no feedback and relevant questions concerning these issues from the work floor. It’s much more complicated than we assume.

Most educational institutions are not aware of this paradigm shift and what is needed to become a modern educational organization which is aware of the needs of the present European economy. The real connection to lifelong learning is “learner-centered” thinking. The consequences of this paradigm shift in education asks for changes in organizations and that is under provision of policymakers and boards of directors.

Focussing on ECVET.

ECVET units are supposed to be outcome based developed and that is a different approach. Working with ECVET units based on the learning outcomes approach includes a change in our educational dimension. It is a paradigm shift and it asks for more than investigating present qualification systems creating units of the present systems and sticking EQF levels on them. Most educational institutions are not aware of this paradigm shift and what is needed to become a modern educational organization which is aware of the needs of the present European economy. The real connection to lifelong learning is “learner-centered” thinking based on the process of learning and in case of a study abroad related with the added value of this mobility. The consequences of this paradigm shift in education asks for changes in organizations and that is under provision of policymakers and boards of directors.

The implementation strategy needs to pay attention to these aspects as it is crucial for building the bridge between our VET education and the needs of the labor market. Most of the units which are developed are based on the so called ‘dual learning system’ which requires the participation of companies of the labour market. They are part in the process. In that case it makes sense that we ask ourselves the question “What is the added value for the companies to host students from other countries?”
ECVET units can be seen as the standards/expected L.O.’s which can be seen in the middle of this model. ECVET units should be accessible from the formal- as well as from the in-formal learning pathway.

To make them accessible from both learning pathways those units should be described in such a way that:

- A unit may be specific to a single qualification or common to several qualifications. The expected learning outcomes defining a unit may be achieved irrespective of where or how these have been achieved. Thus, a unit is not to be confused with a component of a formal learning programme or training provision.
- Units of learning outcomes should be designed in such a way that they can be completed as independently as possible of other units of learning outcomes.
- Units of learning outcomes should include all necessary learning outcomes.
- Units of learning outcomes should be assessable.
- Units of learning outcomes should be structured and dimensioned in such a way that the relevant learning outcomes can actually be achieved in the given time, i.e. during the period of mobility. Units of learning outcomes should therefore not be too extensive!

**But there is more to make an unit outcome based.....**

- In my opinion the most important issue to work on, is the permeability of the educational system. ImpAQ project (D.O.I. project ended in 2012) showed as an outcome that in many countries level 1 and 2 of the EQF in diverse VET sectors in education does not exist. That means that for most of the workforce in Europe there is no education. They cannot step into the EQF system if the entry level is 3 or 4. Do not make the mistake that the Vet levels start on level 3 or higher as the labour market is focussing on permeable development of the individuals within their teams!
The so called competence profiles contain team competences and (according to the level requirements) a holistic view of the market. Those two things are often missing in educational programs. Teachers are focused on groups of individuals in a classroom and students work for themselves and not for others in the group. When students are asked to work on a group assignment which will also give them individual credits for their examinations they will probably make objections. They will not want responsibility for others in the group, especially not for weaker students. When working as a team in a company they are responsible for the team results and many companies train their employees in team development skills and processes and a more holistic view of their customers. That is the missing link in education but it has been the paradox of educational institutions for the last three decades. Education of students is basically focused on individual results and companies need more than that.

Underneath is an overview of what schools are supposed to do to build the bridge between education and the labor market. Beware that this overview has to be translated in different learning outcomes according to the EQF levels.

The mix of those skills looks like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic or school skills</th>
<th>Personal Management skills</th>
<th>Teamwork/social skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those skills which provide the basic foundation on a job and to achieve the best results.</td>
<td>The combination of skills, attitudes and behaviours required to get, keep progress on a job and to achieve the best results</td>
<td>Those skills needed to work with others on a job and to achieve the best results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Employers need a person who can:**

**Communicate:**
- Understand and speak the languages in which business is conducted
- Listen to understand and learn
- Read, comprehend and use written materials, including graphs and displays
- Write effectively in the languages in which business is conducted

**Think:**
- Thinks critically and act

**Positive attitudes and behaviours:**
- Self-esteem and confidence
- Honesty, Integrity and personal ethics
- A positive attitude toward learning, growth and public health
- Initiative, energy and persistence to get the job done.

**Responsibility:**
- The ability to set goals

**Work with others:**
- Understand and contribute to the organization’s goals
- Plan and make decisions with others and support the outcomes.
- Respect the thoughts and opinions of others in the group
- Exercise “gives and takes”
| logically to evaluate situations, solve problems and make decisions. |
| * Understand and solve problems involving mathematics and use the results |
| * Use technology, instruments, tools and information systems effectively |
| * Access and apply specialized knowledge from various fields. |

**Learn:**

* Continue for learn to life

| and priorities in work and personal life. |
| * The ability to plan and manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals |
| * Accountability for actions taken |

**Adaptability:**

* A positive attitude toward change
* Recognition of and respect for people’s diversity and individual differences.
* The ability to identify and suggest new ideas to get the job done-creativity.

| to achieve group results |
| * Seek a team approach as appropriate. |
| * Lead when appropriate, mobilizing the group for high performance |

### The Dutch implementation process

The Netherlands is very active in the European development processes. They are leading in the development of the ECVET toolbox NET-ECVET, They are participating with two members in ECVET-team Europe which is supporting the implementation process of ECVET from Brussels. Their national coordination point ECVET.NL is fully operating.

The Netherlands was and is project leader for several EQF and ECVET projects in the Agricultural sector. These projects are defined by CEDEFOP and the SCQF as ‘good practices’ in Europe. For more details [WWW.EQUFAS.com](http://WWW.EQUFAS.com) and [WWW.YEBISU.NL](http://WWW.YEBISU.NL). For EUROPEA they developed the connected projects ALIE, ANGIE and a new ECVET project.
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POLAND

[Map of Poland with flag]

POLSKA

[Map legend: 100 km]
I. The Education System in Poland

In Poland we cannot even create the description of ways of acquiring qualifications including all required elements. Because there is a lack of unified definitions and procedures connected with the confirming competencies.

What we can describe are qualifications acquired in formal education, from the lowest to the highest level, in all three sectors of education: general, vocational and higher education. However, it is difficult to apply the same descriptions and procedures to the system of learning outside the formal education.

In Poland we don't have a system of recognizing and confirming competences acquired outside the formal education, for example confirming job experiences and other qualifications for a need of the labour market. It should be pointed out that growing number of competences acquired by Polish people is an effect of self-learning, for instance IT skills, mainly acquired through self-learning, are not formally confirm, so they don’t belong to the formally confirmed competencies. But the situation is changing. Introduced 3 years ago, a new curriculum, includes IT skills as one of the formal confirmed competencies.
II. The Polish Qualifications Framework

A team of experts from the Educational Research Institute is working on the Polish Qualifications Framework, a key tool for changing approaches to learning and investing in human capital in Poland. The project is called “The development of terms of reference for the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework and the National Qualifications Register for lifelong learning”.

**Ministry of National Education**

Ministry of National Education commissioned the Educational Research Institute the implementation of the project “The development of terms of reference for the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework and the National Qualifications Register for lifelong learning”. The Minister of National Education is also the chairperson of the Inter-ministerial Team on Lifelong Learning, including the National Qualifications Framework. The Ministry’s Department of Vocational and Continuing Education implements a project entitled “Modernisation of examinations confirming vocational qualifications”.

Another interesting initiative is the project called “Vocational school – a positive choice”.

**Ministry of Science and Higher Education**

The Ministry is implementing a project entitled “National qualifications frameworks in higher education as a tool to improve the quality of education”. The objective of this project is to adapt the Polish qualifications framework to European frameworks. Another project implemented by the Ministry is “Support of studies on the mutual recognition of accreditation decisions in the European Higher Education Area”. The aim of this project is to develop international cooperation between the Polish higher education system and the European Higher Education Area, including the possibility of
learning at foreign universities. The goal of both initiatives is to implement qualifications frameworks in higher education.

**Ministry of Labour and Social Policy**

Several hundred vocational competences will be included and described within the project “Developing a set of national standards of vocational competences required by employers”.

The Ministry is also implementing the project called “Improving the professional qualifications of social assistance and integration workers”.

**Inter-ministerial Taskforce for Lifelong Learning, including the National Qualifications Framework**

The Inter-ministerial Taskforce for Lifelong Learning, including the National Qualifications Framework, was created in February 2010. Chaired by the Minister of National Education, the taskforce is an advisory board to the Prime Minister. The taskforce’s principle aim is to create a strategic document on solutions for lifelong learning in Poland, including the learning outcomes presented in the National Qualifications Framework.

**National Team of Bologna Experts**

This team works on unification of the higher education system at the European level and adapting the existing qualifications frameworks in Poland to other similar solutions in the EU.

**Bureau for Academic Recognition and International Exchange**

This institution serves as the national coordination point for European qualifications frameworks. It is responsible for arranging foreign scholarships for Polish students, among other activities.

**National Centre for Supporting Vocational and Continuing Education**

The Centre is implementing a project entitled “Improving curricula – key to modernizing vocational training”, which core objective is to improve the quality of vocational education by modernising and verifying curricula in terms of their adaptation to the requirements of a knowledge-based economy and in accordance to planned curricula-related and organizational changes in vocational training.

**Lifelong Learning Programme**

Lifelong Learning is a European Union programme for professional education and development. The realization of the programme is planned for 2007 - 2013 and it is a continuation of such projects as SOCRATES, Leonardo da Vinci, Jean Monnet, e-Learning and European Language Label programmes.

**Implementation of new curriculum**

The changes were introduced 2008 on the core curriculum for pre-school child development and general education in specific types of schools (Journal of Laws of 2009, no. 4, item 17). During the 2009-2010 school year, the new core curriculum came into force for the first year of primary school and for lower secondary schools. From the 2012-2013 school years, it will cover the first fourth levels of primary school and upper secondary schools. The external examination system has also been adapted to the new requirements specified in the core curriculum. The changes affected the
lower secondary school examination from 2012 and will affect the matura examination from 2015.

As a result of the changes in the higher education level, higher education institutions were given more autonomy to develop their curricula. They are no longer required to refer to a specific list of educational content, i.e. a central list of courses. Now, they are able to plan their courses independently, taking into consideration the skills and competences. Higher education institutions offer 3 levels of higher education: licencjat, master’s and doctoral level.

Furthermore, higher education institutions have sets of learning outcomes for: the humanities, sciences, social studies, natural sciences, technical sciences, veterinary and medical sciences and the arts. These sets of outcomes are unified and they can be applied in various areas of studies. Gaining new competences and increasing the opportunity to change professions – through formal and informal education – is facilitated by modifications to vocational education introduced on 1 September, 2012. These changes were introduced by the Decree of the Minister of National Education of 7 February 2012 on the core curriculum for vocational education. The new classification of professions covers 8 areas, in which 200 professions are distinguished. Within these professions 251 qualifications are designated (including 23 professions with three qualifications per profession, 72 with two, 98 with one and 7 professions in the arts for which no qualifications are designated). Some professions were removed, some combined with others and some introduced for the first time. All of these changes were introduced in order to achieve a modern approach to organising vocational work.

After passing a vocational examination in a given specialisation, the pupil or student receives a certificate. After passing all examinations required for a given profession and after finishing school, the pupil or student receives a diploma confirming vocational qualifications. It will also be possible to take examinations without being enrolled in school under the condition that the pupil has completed lower secondary school education or an eight-year primary school and has worked or studied in a given profession for a minimum two years. This will streamline the confirmation of competences gained through non-formal education or informal learning.

Another innovation is the introduction of vocational qualification courses, which employers will be able to commission to schools. This means that schools will be teaching what is actually needed in the labour market. Courses will be available not only for pupils, but also for graduates. It will be possible to link vocational schools with adult vocational education and continuing education centers. Changes in vocational education give also an opportunity to adjust educational requirements to individual needs and abilities of pupils.

**Ways of confirming learning outcomes in Poland**

One of the main components of the system of classification in Poland is confirming acquired competence (learning outcomes). The evaluation and verification system in Poland is regulated by law as a part of the formal education. There are some regulations confirming learning outcomes in non-formal education, but they are not consistent and they don’t cover all skills and abilities in a particular area.

**Confirming learning outcomes in formal education:**

Until 1990s, in formal education in Poland the responsibility for confirming learning outcomes lay with the institution organising the process of education. But the situation
has changed when in late 1990s the new system of external examinations was introduced and now the responsibility for confirming learning outcomes lay with the external institution which is the Central Examination Board.

In the higher education system in Poland there is a system of internal assessment such as examinations and diplomas which is described in the law concerning higher education. The correctness and the reliability of the internal assessment system in higher education in Poland is assessed in the course of the accreditation process. According to the Polish law competencies acquired outside the Alma Mater (in Poland or abroad) are valid, but only as far as formal education is concerned. The details are described in the related legal acts. The competencies acquired in non-formal learning are not valid apart from language competencies confirmed by the international certificates.

**Confirming learning outcomes in non-formal education:**

There are some certificates confirming qualifications in a craft as a response to the labour market’s needs, but today’s legal status in the area of education does not define the system of confirming effects of the learning acquired in non-formal education. Traditionally, nonformal education is based on teaching adults in schools and formalized trainings which means that confirming learning outcomes in nonformal education is difficult and has not its reflection on the central rank.

The current stage of work on the NQS is being conducted at the Educational Research Institute within the project entitled “The development of terms of reference for the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework and the National Qualifications Register for lifelong learning”.

### III. EXAMPLES:

Among examples there are numerous projects focussed on confirming competence acquired in formal and non-formal education, such as “Let’s build together” (“Budujmy razem”), a project lead in Olsztyn, sector and corporate traineeship in this area – certificates given by Association of Polish Electricians, Institute of the Welding in Gliwice, the food industry, international IT corporations, and many other solutions and practices of confirming competence gain in formal and non-formal learning in the third sector.

Many non-governmental organizations and associations (e.g. Polish Red Cross, Polish Scouting and Guiding Association, “Open Door”, “Raf’t”) give their members a chance to learn in non-formal education. Acquired skills and abilities are confirmed by certificates, but the certificates are not valid on the national level.

By Roman Seta
For EUROPEA-Poland
Sources: Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych
Lifelong learning has become a necessity in Europe characterized by rapid social, technologic and economic changes. In Europe, many people undertake learning activities outside their own country. The appeal of this kind of mobility is nonetheless limited by various factors, in particular the absence of provisions for the transfer, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired abroad. The same applies to the transition from one system of vocational education and training to another, or from an informal learning situation to a formal training context. Barriers between institutions as well as countries not only prevent access to education and training but also prevent an efficient use of knowledge, skills and competences already acquired.

ECVET, the European credit system for vocational education and training (VET) promotes borderless mobility and lifelong learning. It creates the potential to recognise, accumulate and transfer work-related skills and knowledge acquired during a stay in another country or in different situations, so that these experiences contribute to building up recognised vocational qualifications.

ECVET belongs to the following European initiatives:
- European credit transfer and accumulation system (ECTS)
  ECTS makes teaching and learning more transparent and facilitates the recognition of studies (formal, non-formal and informal). The system is used across Europe for credit transfer (student mobility) and credit accumulation (learning paths towards a degree). It also forms curriculum design and quality assurance.
- Europass
  Europass is a free service of the European Commission, which should provide a clear picture of your qualifications, skills and competences in a comprehensive form, understandable across borders. It opens doors to learning and working in Europe – no matter if a student/learner, in training, seeking work, employed, self-employed or a freelancer.
- European qualification framework for lifelong learning (EQF)
  The EQF acts as a translation device to make national qualifications more readable across Europe, promoting workers’ and learners’ mobility between countries and facilitating their lifelong learning.
Methodology for Development VET Programmes in Slovenia

- based on the Starting points for development of vocational educational programmes (2001),
- programmes are prepared on the basis of occupational standards (employers role),
- programmes are modular structured and based on learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, competence), valorised with credit points.

2 Types of Qualifications in Slovenia

FORMAL EDUCATION
- based on standards designed by employers,
- obtained after successfully completing formally approved educational programmes.

NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION (NVQ)
- based on standard designed by employers,
- obtained after validation of non-formal or informal learning.

Formal education and NVQ
VET programmes and NVQ

NVQ system in Slovenia
- enables formal certification of non-formal and informal learning,
- for adults with no formal education it enables acquisition of NVQ’s in accordance with their work experiences,
- certificate is publicly valid evidence of qualification for specific occupation but not an evidence of education level.

Credit system as part of curricula reform
Credit system is used:
- to promote flexible and comparable curricula,
- to open space for more individualisation and specialisation,
- to form basis for recognition of non-formal and informal learning,
- it places more responsibility on the learner.

Credit system in Slovenia
The Vocational Education Act (2006) sets out legal framework for the implementation of the credit system. Starting with 2006 all upper-secondary vocational programmes are described using credit points. Recognition of credit is responsibility of providers. Credits can be accumulated progressively and transferred within the subsystem.

Credit points
Credit points are allocated to entire educational programmes as well as their components (modules, final work, work placements...). Credit point allocation to the programme components is based on their weight in terms of workload needed for student to achieve the expected learning outcomes. 1 credit point corresponds to 25 hours of learning activities. 60 credit points per one year of formal education.
Agriculture – occupational standards

ECVET activities in Slovenia

Integration of ECVET principles in the National Qualification system. Communication with stakeholders:
- workshops,
- web page,
- conferences.

Manual for using ECVET in students’ mobility.

ECVET and students’ mobility

Piloting protocol in mobility projects:
- LdV project YOUR ECVET (partners from Nederland, Finland, Germany, Spain, Estonia and Slovenia),
- 2 periods of testing: September 2012 – January 2013 and February – June 2013,
- Final Conference: September 2013 in Ljubljana
SPAIN
SPAIN AND ITS NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Spain has a decentralised political system, which means that some political competencies have been shared among its 17 Autonomous Regions. In Education, for instance, the National Government has a 60% of the general decision and the other 40% belong to every autonomous region. So we can find slight differences between them. Nevertheless, there is, of course, a common educational system. We can see below an overview of it:

To see a complete comparison between all European educational Systems, visit: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurypedia
What is the state of the play in Spain about ECVET?

Some items that should justify the use of ECVET and EQF in Spain:

- The economical world crisis is especially harmful in Spain, where five millions of people are unemployed.
- People with a low level of qualification are especially vulnerable in the labour market.
- Europe is getting older, so it is necessary a change of productive models where people have easier access to lifelong learning, because the employ is not stable and life labour is getting longer.
- The changes in the work contents are faster every day.
- People change their jobs more frequently than before.
- Nowadays there are new ways and opportunities of learning.
- The early abandonment rate of secondary education is still worryingly high.
- Non qualified people, but qualified people too, both need support to open their possibilities in order to be inserted in the running of European labour market.
- ECVET and EQF are instruments that can help people to increase their opportunities of insertion in the labour market and for companies to find workers inside the European labour force.

National Strategies and projects.-

- Adaptation an updating of laws and rules of VET.
- Adaptation of NQF.
- Connecting ECVET with NQF
- Learning by working European projects.
- Dissemination of ECVET to target groups.
- Wait and see strategy.

Some actions already made.-

For non-formal and informal lifelong learning, a procedure has been already defined for calling, evaluate, validate and recognize units of competencies. When a person achieves the recognition of all the units of competence of a qualification, no matter the way he/she has achieved it, is awarded with the official certificate of that specific qualification.

INCUAL, the Spanish National Institute of Qualifications, has made an assessment guide for every qualification in order to be used by evaluators. Questionnaires of examination for every qualification have been made too.

The procedures for the identification, validation and recognition of these learning outcomes through the award of the corresponding units of competencies involve not only the learning outcomes achieved abroad, but also all learning outcomes acquired through lifelong.
Nowadays different Autonomous Regions into Spain are making calls for procedures of evaluations, validation, recognitions and accreditation of non formal and informal learning lifelong acquired.

Apart of it, through the Lifelong Learning Programme of UE, some projects are right developing pilot procedures for the recognition of units of competences acquired in formal, non-formal and informal settings in the framework of mobility.

Some examples in which Spanish institution are participating:

1-Project Name/Author: AEROVET
Date Posted: 14 September 2012
Description: The AEROVET project has piloted the elements of the ECVET technical specifications in the context of transnational mobility using the example of technical occupations in the aeronautics sector in France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom. For further information go to: http://www.ecvet-projects.eu/Documents/AEROVET_public_EN.pdf

2-Your ECVET project
Your ECVET is a Transfer of Innovation (TOI) project, granted under the Life Long Learning program Leonardo de Vinci. The project is carried out by 14 partners from 6 EU-countries. Starting-point are the results of FIN-ECVET projects. The duration of the project is from October 2011 until September 2013. Project meetings will take place in Finland, the Netherlands, Spain and Slovenia. The partners in this Your ECVET project have already built a solid international network for the work placements abroad of their students. In recent years many improvements were made and a high level concerning the management of international placements has been reached. In the Your ECVET project the partners will focus on the validation of the learning outcomes acquired during international mobility in various fields of VET.
Objectives
• To improve the recognition of learning outcomes acquired abroad
• To enhance the quality and value of international mobility
To experiment with the ECVET essential tools during international placements
To test the ECVET tools with students during their mobility

Foreseen results
- Description of learning units in different sectors of VET
- Toolkit with models of the ECVET key instruments
- Guidelines on the use of ECVET in practice
- Lessons learned during the testing activities

Key instruments
- Memorandum of understanding
- Learning agreement
- Description of learning units
- Transfer of credits

The Spanish Partners:
Escuela Profesional Comarcal Lea Artibai S.Coop
International coordinator: Ms. Isabel Mendiguren. [http://www.leartik.com](http://www.leartik.com)

3-ANGIE 2.0 – A NEW GENERATION IN EDUCATION

ANGIE 2.0 is a Transfer of Innovation (TOI) project, granted under the Life Long Learning program Leonardo da Vinci.

The project is carried out by 8 country partnership representing national EUROPEA organizations of Sweden, France, Netherlands, Romania, Hungary, Austria, Spain and Denmark, it intends to develop formulas for common validation of in-formal and non-formal learning when students are abroad during their practical training periods. Further, the partners are heading towards a consistent methodology implementing ECVET within green VET.

What is ANGIE 2.0 for?
- Its main goal is to develop a methodology based on ECVET to evaluate, validate and recognize the learning outcomes the students get during their learning experiences abroad.
- The units of competencies acquired by the students and recognized by the hosting institution will be used to accomplish their diplomas.

What will be done?
- Three units of competencies will be defined:
  - Linguistic competencies
  - International competencies
  - Management at work competencies.
- Some instruments will be created to evaluate these units of competences.
- A pilot with students for every unit of competency will be carried out in order to test the methodologies and the instruments created.

More information in: [www.europea.org](http://www.europea.org)