



E-letter 4– October 2015

“EQF meets ECVET” comes to an end by late November!

<http://www.eqfmeetsecvet.eu>

Dear readers, welcome to the final “EQF meets ECVET” Newsletter!

After two years of intensive work we gladly present the final results developed by the partnership.

Four basic non-formal Vocational Education Training (VET) programs at National Qualification Framework/European Qualification Framework (NQF/EQF) levels 1 and 2 were described by units of learning-outcomes. To make these descriptions also useful for persons with learning disabilities, easy to understand language was used.

Additionally to these descriptions, two models were developed: *Model 1*, which shows how to divide basic vocational qualifications in units of learning outcomes that are meaningful for the learners. Such VET programs consisting of individual units allow step by step learning, and thus ease the learning path. *Model 2*, which outlines how these basic vocational qualifications, that have been described along two different learning levels, can be assigned to the NQF in such a way that the learners' strengths (i.e. individually acquired units of learning outcomes approved on the higher level) can be approved and written down in a certificate. This official certificate increases the learners' self-esteem and facilitates their access to labor market.

The primary aims of this project were to offer official recognition for basic, non-formal VET on NQF/ EQF levels 1 and 2, and to make the learners' occupational knowledge, skills and competences visible and valuable (also for potential employers). Secondly, it had to outline learners' special strengths by describing units of learning outcomes for linked basic vocational qualifications on different NQF / EQF levels. Doing so, these VET programs become permeable and learners get a differentiated proof and confirmation of their learning outcomes reached so far.

Defining a common model for the partner countries Austria, Germany, Italy, Lithuania and Slovenia wasn't easy as the status of the NQFs' development differs very much as well as the approaches for recognition of non-formal learning. There are also differences in terms of the approval of the idea/the need for giving official recognition to basic VET. The focus is mostly on possible labor market needs, without considering the needs of persons with learning disabilities, their right to lifelong learning and the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UN CRPD)!

Despite these difficulties, the project partners developed valuable results which will be available by the end of November 2015 in form of two handbooks and a CD and will also be published on our project website www.eqfmeetsecvet.eu. These results were presented as well during the project's national events and at the “EQF meets ECVET” final conference which took place in Salzburg. You can find more information about it in this final Newsletter.

Enjoy the reading!

- Marion Bock,
Chance B – Holding GmbH

EQF meets ECVET” at the Salzburg Conference “Inclusive teaching programmes: Let’s develop it together!”



Part of “EQF meets ECVET” Panel at Salzburg Conference: (from left to right) Ms. Marlies Krumböhmer, Ms. Melanie Biertempfel, Ms. Karin Luomi-Messerer and Mr. Karl Andrew Müllner

On the 22nd and 23rd of October the EASPD Annual Conference, “Inclusive teaching programmes: Let’s develop it together!” took place in Salzburg, Austria. It has undoubtedly been an opportune environment for discussions and attempts at finding answers to issues such as: Why do we not have yet inclusive education? Has inclusive education been theoretically defined? Which are the main barriers in society which make it difficult to have fully inclusive educational settings in Europe?

Looking at the state of play with regard to the implementation of article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) on the right to education, the conference aimed at showing practical models on how to make education more inclusive and the required elements to succeed on fully including persons with disabilities in mainstream educational systems following the principles and values of the CRPD.

Franz Wolfmayr, founder and former General Manager of Chance B and EASPD President, highlighted the need to “promote positive attitude towards inclusion and develop inclusive networks.” In that sense, panelists agreed that if all children go to mainstream schools in their communities that can have a great impact among society’s level of tolerance, whilst also combating prejudices and discrimination.

One of the four EU funded projects presenting their final results and sharing their best practices and key factors for a successful implementation of article 24 of the UN CRPD, was EQF meets ECVET. On the first day of the conference under the EQF Panel entitled “*Units of Learning Outcomes to highlight the strengths of the learner*”, it has been discussed the importance of recognition of non-formal learning and the development of a model of recognition which leads to certificates for learners with disabilities. This is something that is not yet accredited.

The presentations and discussions within this panel were given by Ms. Marion Bock (Project Manager at Chance B) who presented the project; Ms. Marlies Krumböhmer (German trainer in basic VET at Chiemgau-Lebenshilfe-Werkstätten GmbH) who brought in the practitioner’s perspective; Ms. Melanie Biertempfel (student with disabilities) who focused on the user’s perspective; Ms. Karin Luomi-Messerer (external expert in European educational systems at 3s) who presented the situation from the expert’s point of view; and Mr. Karl Andrew Müllner (Austrian NQF Coordination Point) who described the authority’s perspective.

The project was introduced and it was explained that the model of recognition is based on units of learning outcomes that can be partially trained. The model, which follows the pattern of a course, is tailor-made, in a sense that depending on the trainee, certain units can be achieved on different NQF levels and at the end of the training a recognised certificate will be issued. This person-centred approach corresponds to the needs of many trainees with learning disabilities. The model is pivotal because it gives employers valuable information on what the future employee learned or knows, and it can be expanded to other learners as well. Nonetheless this could ease access to and progress in vocational and educational training (VET). Recognition of VET units also gives value to learned qualification parts and supports disadvantaged learners to enter the labour market and access life-long learning.



"EQF meets ECVET" Sewing Workshop during Salzburg Conference



"EQF meets ECVET" Teatime Workshop during Salzburg Conference

In the panel's conclusion it has been unanimously agreed that policymakers, NQF/ECVET institutes/agencies and enterprises/employers need to be convinced of the significance of such a learning and accreditation model.

Parallel to the plenary sessions and keynote speakers, interactive workshops were organised. Among them, the "EQF meets ECVET" workshops were focusing on how can individual learners benefit from ECVET, on EQF/NQF and non-formal and informal learning, on the ESF project "Orientabili" and the project "Inclusive Education". There were also organized practical workshops showing the project's methodology on how to train sewing and waiting.

One of the main conclusions of the conference was that the implementation of inclusive education entails political will. The willingness of decision makers to support the transition to an inclusive educational system is one of the key elements that could facilitate its realization. Political will must go hand in hand with a pedagogical will, by developing inclusive knowledge and skills among mainstream teachers.

- Bianca Bratu,
EASPD

"EQF meets ECVET" project presentation in and around Austria

During the last six months "EQF meets ECVET" was presented by the coordinating organization Chance B at several conferences and workshops.

In June the project was invited at the *WBL Conference: Cooperation between Education and the World of work: Focus on Work based Learning* in Budapest. This conference was organized by the Austrian, Hungarian and Romanian National Agencies in cooperation with the *Thematic Network Work Based Learning and Apprenticeships (NetWBL)*. Within this two days event an overview on work-based learning in Austria, Hungary and Romania was given as well as on the actual status of the NetWBL project. Additionally, three workshops were offered showing several good practice projects, one of them ours. "EQF meets ECVET" was presented in the workshop *Building a quality of culture in WBL* which was a great opportunity to promote the project as well as the idea of inclusive VET and inclusive NQFs!

Furthermore in June, the German and Austrian partners presented together the project in a workshop at the Bodenseekonferenz *Teilhabe und Bildung* in Germany, organized by the *Initiative Lebenslanges Lernen*. Most participants at this conference are working in special schools or sheltered workshops. In these sheltered workshops first attempts to offer recognized VET programs were made, therefore there was a lot of interest in our project.

In September we got the opportunity to present our project at an experts' conference about education and labor market, organized by the Austrian National Agency and the Employment Service. Together with two projects, also funded by the Lifelong Learning program, we held a workshop about *Basic competences via Work-based Learning – How to achieve them, how to make them visible, how to make them useable?*

Besides attending these three conferences Chance B did a lot of additional dissemination activities as well as testing the drafted assignment model with the Austrian National NQF Coordination Point and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs, preparing the final conference and finishing the final products.

At the end of September the draft of the Austrian NQF Law was published and everybody was invited to send an opinion on this draft. Together with 47 other statements, Chance B's opinion was published at http://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/ME/ME_00152/index.shtml.

All these experts' declarations will be taken into consideration for the final version of the law. We really hope that our ideas and models towards a more inclusive educational system via NQF will become true at the beginning of the next year, when the Austrian NQF law will be launched!

- **Marion Bock**,
Chance B – Holding GmbH

The national closing event of the "EQF meets ECVET" project in Germany

On 19 October 2015 the closing seminar "Input-Output-Recognition?" of the "EQF meets ECVET" project took place in Traunreut, Germany. The seminar kicked off with a presentation of the project and its results, given by Marlies Krumböhrer and Melanie Biertempfel, both working at the Chiemgau-Lebenshilfe-Werkstätten GmbH. Winfried Ellwanger, Head of Volkshochschule Cham and ECVET expert, informed the public on the implementation of ECVET in Germany and other EU countries, and the necessity of acknowledging non-formal acquired learning results and implementing them in the German qualifications framework.

Hannes Müller and Anton Albrecht, both from the Pfennigparade organisation in Munich, gave an additional presentation on qualification bricks, which are used at the Pfennigparade workshops in vocational training.

Thus the event's participants were introduced to two different types of training for people with learning impairments: the first one as part of formal learning (qualification bricks), the second one as part of non-formal learning (the project's modules and units of learning outcomes).

During the final debate, the advantages and disadvantages of the respective training methods were discussed and any questions that arose were answered.

Amongst the participants was also the representative of the Bavarian parliament, Klaus Steiner. He is, inter alia, member of the Work Intergroup on the implementation of inclusion in Bavaria, which aims to help people with disabilities find employment. Mr Steiner showed great interest in the results and goals of the "EQF meets ECVET" project, which, opposed to the qualification bricks, aims to attain



Winfried Ellwanger (ECVET expert
non-formal learning)

recognition of vocational qualification. He sees the using of such a modular training as an opportunity for the inclusion of people with disabilities, in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



In the picture you can see from left to right Klaus Steiner (member of the Bavarian parliament), Marlies Krumböhner (project manager of German partners) and Dr. Jens Maceiczky (executive director of Chiemgau-Lebenshilfe-Werkstätten GmbH)

A week after the event, Klaus Steiner visited again the Chiemgau-Lebenshilfe-Werkstätten GmbH. During his visit he received additional information on the project, and documentation which he intends to use to promote the project on a political and educational level.

- Marlies Krumböhner,
Chiemgau-Lebenshilfe-Werkstätten GmbH

EQF meets ECVET” project dissemination activities in Lithuania

The national event for the project was organised on the 18th of September 2015 in Kaunas, Lithuania. The invitations to this event were sent to the all providers of VET for disabled persons, as well as to the NGO's working with people with disabilities. There were 10 participants representing 3 biggest VET providers for disabled persons. Vidmantas Tütlys presented the project and its main products and developed the manual of learning outcomes' design and the model of assignment of qualifications referenced to EQF levels 1 and 2. A thoroughly explanation of the methodological approach applied in design and a description of learning outcomes for qualifications referenced to the levels 1 and 2 of EQF (and Lithuanian Qualifications Framework) were given. During the discussions the participants indicated that the project results are highly relevant and provide helpful instruments and examples for the learning outcomes based curriculum design, which will be used by the training providers in Lithuania. Some methodological approaches, such as writing the formulations of learning outcomes from the perspective and position of the learner/performer, were new for the participants, but nonetheless proved to be very interesting. With regard to the proposed model for the assignment of qualifications referenced to the EQF levels 1 and 2, the participants indicated that the proposed procedures and documents are sound and comprehensive. However, it is not yet clear how and by whom these procedures and instruments should be implemented in Lithuania because of existing institutional vacuum in the assessment of competence and awarding of qualifications at these levels. Therefore implementation of this instrument would require first to define the institutions and their responsibilities in the field of assessment of competence and awarding of qualifications.

A paper on the specificities of design and implementation of qualifications for vocational inclusion of disabled persons was prepared and it is planned to be published in the scientific journal “Vocational Education: Research and Reality”, edited by the Vytautas Magnus University.

Future implementation of the project products in Lithuania

Referring to the discussions with the experts of the Centre for Development of Qualifications and Vocational Education Training, as well as with the experts involved in the design of the national occupational standards, the qualifications referenced to the EQF levels 1 and 2 will be introduced via

implementation of the occupational standards and national modular VET curricula. Currently designed occupational standards foresee such qualifications in the sectors of construction, hotels and restaurants, metalworking, textile and leather. Therefore the manual of design of learning outcomes will serve as highly relevant instrument for the design and development of the national modular curricula in the different programs of vocational integration and rehabilitation of disabled persons.

- **Vidmantas Tūtlys**, *Centre for Vocational Education and Research,
Vytautas Magnus University*

National final conference of “EQF meets ECVET” in Maribor



On September 16th 2015, VDC POLŽ Maribor held a national final conference of the project "EQF meets ECVET", where the results of the project, Handbook 1 and Appendix 1 to the Handbook 1 were presented. At the conference, the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training, Secondary school for Design and Education Maribor, and the Work and Care Center Dolfke Boštjančič, Draga took part. More than 100 people attended the conference. All the information about the conference was published on the following links:

<http://4d.rtvsllo.si/arhiv/dobro-jutro/174360154>, <http://4d.rtvsllo.si/arhiv/porocila/174361412>,

<http://www.rtvsllo.si/tvmaribor/oddaje/16>, <http://www.vecer.com/clanek/201509176142937>.

“EQF meets ECVET” Workshop “It's Tea Time!” at the international conference in Salzburg

During 21–23 October, VDC POLŽ Maribor participated at the international conference “Inclusive teaching programmes: Let's develop it together!” in Salzburg. At the conference VDC POLŽ Maribor held a workshop entitled “It's Tea Time!” where we presented the results of the project (learning outcomes for the waiter assistant). Participants from Italy, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Slovenia, Lithuania and others who attended the workshop prepared healthy sesame balls, tea, caipirinha and table bouquets.



*Participants at the VDC POLŽ Maribor workshop
“It's Tea Time!” in Salzburg*

- **Aleška Knaflič Cijan**,
VDC POLŽ Maribor

The final months of “EQF meets ECVET” project within FormAzione Co&So Network

During the final months of the project, FormAzione Co&So Network and the partners dedicated to the completion and validation of the Modularised VET programmes for Bakery Assistants, Waiter Assistants, Kitchen & Cook Assistants and Textile Sector Auxiliaries at NQF levels 1 and 2. They committed as well to the finalization and validation of the Model for Assignment and Recognition of VET units at NQF level 1 and 2; the development and testing of a Certification Model with a view to creating a diploma that includes units at higher levels than the level of the awarded qualification; to disseminate to a wide audience of stakeholders and to the exploitation of the final project outputs. The methodology adopted in the project and the results were shown also during the Experts Circles which took place in Florence, Italy on the 10th of February 2015 at the Vocational High School of Tourism and Catering “A. Saffi”. The school is attended by almost 70 learners with disabilities, who have been also involved in the testing of the EQF meets ECVET Modularised VET programmes for Italian Caterers in order to check the feasibility of the Model and how easy is to understand the language used.

On the 18th of November, the final “EQF meets ECVET” event was organized by FCN where 15 participants were present. The dissemination event has been the occasion to present the final project results and to explain to the attendees the work carried out by the partners in these two years of project's life.

Future steps

According to the suggestions and discussions which took place during the above mentioned events, the project's outputs will be used by trainers working with persons with disabilities, within the VET framework. It is also a good means for the fostering of the ECVET methodology which undoubtedly represents a strategic tool to harmonize education in Europe.



- **Patrizia Giorio and Massimo Aloe,**
FormAzione Co&So Network



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