

Vocational Education and Training, VET: European Credit system ECVET

2008/0070(COD) - 18/06/2009 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

CONTENT: following a first reading agreement with the European Parliament, the Council adopted a Recommendation establishing a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training.

The ECVET intends to facilitate the transfer, recognition and accumulation of assessed learning outcomes of individuals who are aiming to achieve a qualification. This will improve the general understanding of citizens learning outcomes and their transparency, transnational mobility and portability across and, where appropriate, within Member States in a borderless lifelong learning area, and will also improve the mobility and portability of qualifications at national level between various sectors of the economy and within the labour market; furthermore, it will contribute to the development and expansion of European cooperation in education and training.

ECVET is applicable for all learning outcomes which should in principle be achievable through a variety of education and learning paths at all levels of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning ('EQF'), and then be transferred and recognised. This Recommendation therefore contributes to the wider objectives of promoting lifelong learning and increasing the employability, openness to mobility and social inclusion of workers and learners. It particularly facilitates the development of flexible and individualised pathways and also the recognition of those learning outcomes which are acquired through non-formal and informal learning.

It should also be noted that this Recommendation should facilitate the involvement of competent local and regional authorities in the exercise of linking national or other qualifications frameworks and systems to ECVET, where appropriate.

Based on the compromise reached between the European Parliament and the Council, the Council hereby recommend that Member States:

- **Recommendation 1:** promote the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training as set out in Annexes I and II at all levels of the [European Qualification Framework \(EQF\)](#) with reference to VET qualifications, in order to facilitate trans-national mobility and the recognition of learning outcomes in VET and borderless lifelong learning;
- **Recommendation 2:** create the necessary conditions and adopt measures, as appropriate, so that as from 2012 – in accordance with national legislation and practice, and on the basis of trials and testing – it is possible for ECVET to be gradually applied to VET qualifications at all levels of the EQF, and used for the purpose of the transfer, recognition and accumulation of individuals learning outcomes achieved in formal and, where appropriate, non-formal and informal contexts;
- **Recommendation 3:** support the development of national and European partnerships and networks involving institutions and authorities responsible for qualifications and diplomas, VET providers, social partners and other relevant stakeholders dedicated to trialling, implementing and promoting ECVET;

- **Recommendation 4:** ensure that stakeholders and individuals in the area of VET have access to information and guidance for using ECVET, whilst facilitating the exchange of information between the Member States. Furthermore, ensure that the application of ECVET to qualifications is properly publicised by the competent authorities and that associated 'Europass' documents issued by the competent authorities contain explicit relevant information;
- **Recommendation 5:** apply, in accordance with national legislation and practice, the common principles for quality assurance in VET set out in the Council conclusions of 28 May 2004 on Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training when using ECVET, particularly in relation to the assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes;
- **Recommendation 6:** ensure that there are functioning coordination and monitoring mechanisms at the appropriate levels, in accordance with the legislation, structures and requirements of each Member State, in order to guarantee the quality, transparency and consistency of the initiatives taken to implement ECVET.

They endorse the Commission's intention to:

- **Intention 1:** support Member States in carrying out the above-mentioned tasks and in using the principles and technical specifications of ECVET as set out in Annex II, in particular by facilitating testing, cooperation, mutual learning, promotion, and the launching of information and consultation exercises, whilst ensuring access to the guidance material for all interested citizens;
- **Intention 2:** develop users guides and tools, and adapt relevant Europass documents, in collaboration with Member States, national and European experts and users; develop expertise for enhancing the compatibility and complementarity of ECVET and ECTS used in the higher education sector, in collaboration with VET and higher education experts and users at European and national levels; and provide regular information on the developments of ECVET;
- **Intention 3:** promote, and participate together with the Member States in, a European ECVET network involving relevant VET stakeholders and national competent institutions for the purpose of disseminating and supporting ECVET within Member States and establishing a sustainable platform for the exchange of information and experience between Member States; establish, from within this network, an ECVET users group in order to contribute to the updating of the users guide and to the quality and overall coherence of the cooperation process for the implementation of ECVET;
- **Intention 4:** monitor and follow up the action taken, including the results of trials and testing, and, after the assessment and evaluation of this action carried out in cooperation with the Member States, report, by **18 June 2014**, to the European Parliament and the Council on the experience gained and implications for the future, including, if necessary, a review
- and adaptation of this Recommendation, involving the updating of the Annexes and guidance material, in cooperation with the Member States.

Non-binding use: the introduction and implementation of ECVET shall be **voluntary**. The recommendation does not aim at or require either the fragmentation or the harmonisation of qualifications systems. 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.

This recommendation includes two annexes containing the definitions and the main principles and technical specifications of the ECVET.

Lastly, it should be noted that this Recommendation is closely linked to the proposal on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (please see [COD/2008/0069](#)).