



## "PEP goes local"



### ECVET implementation: A European challenge with local actions.



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The European Vocational Training Association (EVTA) started in 2009, under the Lifelong Learning Programme, a partnership project "PEP": "Partnership for Experimenting with ECVET in a Practical context.". It was an experiment to explore what ECVET could do for the members in the EVTA network. Taking on board 10 members from different countries, it became very soon clear that all contexts were different. Both in terms of educational system as in terms of how the members wanted to apply ECVET.

As a result of this partnership, some of the partners were setting up bilateral projects and initiatives to continue the work, or to transfer the work to another sector or context. In other words: an atmosphere was created for collaboration at European level. However, the members felt also that they had "to go back home" with the results. In order to go one step further in ECVET implementation the partners expressed the need to set up the dialog with the relevant stakeholders in their own context.

This is why the follow up project "PEP goes local" is set up: It is all about organizing workshops at regional, local or sectoral level, involving the most relevant partners for them, in order to discuss the opportunities for ECVET in their context and to see how they can work together on a next step forward in ECVET implementation.

***"Within the partnership the benefits of ECVET were clear, but what about the awareness and commitment of stakeholders in our own context?"***



“A clear roadmap with concrete actions is what we need now.”

“We should see ECVET in a broader context and not only in the context of mobility”

Within the “PEP goes local” project, 9 regional ECVET workshops have taken place in the Netherlands (2), France (2), Sweden, Greece, Spain, Italy and Hungary in the period from June till November 2012.

In general it can be said that the workshops were received very positively by the stakeholders. There is a general commitment and willingness to continue. However a clear roadmap with concrete next steps is necessary. The vision on how to use and implement ECVET in each context has to be made concrete in steps and actions!

In a lot of workshops, the discussion on ECVET is put in a broader context than only mobility and technical specifications.

The main principles behind ECVET and how they could be used to improve own VET systems was put in the centre of the attention. For example: learning outcomes based approaches, lifelong learning and transparency of qualifications.

It seemed that discussions on the technical specifications often led to confusion. Besides, detailed technical discussions were preventing the partners in setting up a dialog with their stakeholders in order to create a vision on ECVET in their own context.

The partners also expressed a strong need for continuing with practical approaches. Especially in cases where legislations and regulations have to be adapted for a fully operational ECVET system. There is an overall agreement that “policy will not easily change, as long as we can’t show that it works!”. So in other words, there is a belief that policy will follow practice.

“Within the PEP goes local project, 9 regional ECVET workshops have taken place from June – November 2012 !”!



# "How transparent is our VET system for people in our own country? "



One of the great "wins" in this project was the involvement of relevant stakeholders at regional, local or sector level. Both in terms of quality as in terms of quantity. Thereby, the workshops strengthened the relation with the partner organizations and their stakeholders for further activities in the near future.

Another important strength was that ECVET is seen in a broader perspective and not only in the context of mobility. Mobility is often a logic consequence, but not the first priority in working on ECVET. If there is more transparency of qualifications and openness of VET systems with the help of ECVET, there is already a great win at European level.

Examples which were used during the workshops were: ECVET for special target groups, to help people on the labour market to find a job, or for (working) adults who want to enter the educational system again etc. In this perspective, it helped the people to think in terms of learning outcomes, instead of educational programmes.

ECVET is also seen by the partnership as an opportunity to open their own VET system to other systems. And not only from abroad, but also in the perspective of "How transparent is our own VET system for people in our own country?"

For example people who are in own country looking for a job, with no diploma but rich in working experiences, or people who like to continue training because they know already that they have to work longer... All examples in which it is important that educational systems are more open and flexible. This is exactly the basic idea behind ECVET and the starting point for the workshops!

*"coming back after the regional workshops: a rich peer learning experience!"*

**National Institute for Labour and Human Resources (Greece):**

*"...In these economic times, we are not in the position to think that ECVET is NOT relevant for Greece. We see a clear added value, especially in making people more employable with ECVET. The only question is "how do we proceed?" We need a roadmap to start and European practices can help us..."*

**ENAIPI Lazio (Italy):**

*"...ECVET can help us in making qualifications more transparent between the regions. For us, ECVET is not only about mobility, but about opening our qualification systems towards each other and to create more transparency and employability..."*

**IMELSA (ES):**

*"...We see an opportunity to reduce our drop off rates in education with the help of ECVET..."*



## The next step forward...

### **KCHandel (The Netherlands)**

"...In the Netherlands, there are not much legislations which prevent organizations to implement ECVET. The main obstacle is often (a lack of) mutual trust and quality assurance when it comes to summative assessments abroad...."

### **AFPA (France):**

"...We have to deal with national rules and legislations, which prevent us to implement a fully operational ECVET system. But however, rules can be adapted. But only if we can show that ECVET works and is of benefit for people. Therefore, the bottom up approach and working on ECVET from the beginning till the end is so important..."

### **AFEC (France):**

"...We see a real added value of mobility for people, but only if we manage to validate and recognize the learning outcomes from abroad..."

The need to continue on a practical level will be translated in a follow up proposal. In this new proposal, the partnership will work on a common methodology for ECVET, from the beginning till the end, with the contexts and sectors of the partners at the practical background. Important in this perspective is that from each country more relevant stakeholders will be on board, in order to create more commitment and impact at strategic level.

***"The project will be successful in our context when training centres or employers accept the learning outcomes achieved in other (formal, or non/informal) contexts, thanks to our common methodology."***

An ambitious project, but not impossible as long as we have a clear vision on where to end and as long as we work with a partnership which is motivated and committed in our mission to make people more employable with ECVET.

*With special thanks to the project partners:*



