

Vocational Education and Training, VET: European Credit system ECVET

2008/0070(COD) - 18/12/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 564 votes to 12 with 8 abstentions, a legislative resolution amending the proposal for a recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). Parliament highlights that ECVET is applicable at all levels of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The report had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Thomas MANN (EPP-ED, DE), on behalf of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs. The amendments were the result of a compromise between the Council and the Parliament. The main amendments - adopted under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure - were as follows:

- the recital notes that ECVET intended to facilitate 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, trans-national 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. The introduction and implementation of ECVET is voluntary, and can therefore only be undertaken in accordance with existing national laws and regulations. This recommendation thus complies with the principle of subsidiarity by supporting and complementing the activities of Member States, facilitating cooperation between them, increasing transparency and promoting mobility and lifelong learning.

In addition, the 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.

Recommendation 1 : Member States should promote the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training ("ECVET") as set out in Annexes 1 and 2 at all levels of the EQF with reference to VET qualifications, in order to facilitate trans-national mobility and the recognition of learning outcomes in vocational education and training and borderless lifelong learning;

Recommendation 2 : they should 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 experimentation and testing - ECVET can be gradually applied to vocational education and training 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 5 : they should apply, in accordance with national legislation and practice, the common principles for quality assurance in vocational education and training provided for in the Council conclusions of 28 May 2008 when using ECVET, particularly in relation to the assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes;

Member States endorse the Commission's intentions to :

Intention 3: promote, and participate together with the Member States in, a European ECVET network involving relevant vocational education and training stakeholders and national competent institutions for the purpose of disseminating and supporting ECVET within Member States and constituting a sustainable platform for the exchange of information and experience between Member States; and 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 experimentation and testing, and, after the assessment and evaluation of this action carried out in cooperation with the Member States, report, five years after the adoption of this Recommendation, 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 technical Annexes and guidance material, in cooperation with the Member States.

Annex 2: Parliament made several amendments to the principles and technical specifications in Annex 2. It also noted that 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. It should be noted that ECVET does not entail any new entitlement for citizens to obtain the automatic recognition of either learning outcomes or points.

Lastly, it should be noted that this proposal 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](#)).