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European Credit system for
Vocational Education & Training



ECVET and validation of informal and non-formal learning - European tendencies

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New Skills Agenda 2016: 3 key work strands



1. Improving the quality and relevance of skills formation
2. Making skills and qualifications more visible and comparable
3. Improving skills intelligence and information for better career choices

Challenges



- Unemployment
- Low skilled workers
- Obsolete qualifications
- Drop-out and early leaving
- Ageing populations
- Productivity
- Low participation in CVET

European initiatives to promote validation of IF and NF learning



- Recommendation on validation of NF and IF learning (2012)
- European Guidelines (2009, 2015)
- European Inventory (2010, 2014, 2016)

ECVET as a tool for validation of LF and NF learning



Recommendation (2009):

- ECVET to facilitate lifelong learning
- Create more open and flexible VET pathways
- Support validation and recognition of learning outcomes from one context to another

ECVET-principles:



- Learner-centred approach
- Learning outcomes
- Units of learning outcome
- Transfer, recognition and accumulation of LO
- “Common language”
- Mutual trust



- Important principles across Europe, but development is uneven across countries and systems
- Diversity of approaches across Europe, reflecting differences in VET systems, cultures, values etc.

Units of learning outcome & accumulation



- Difference between “holistic” and credit-based systems

“Common language” & mutual trust



- Definitions of “knowledge skills and competences”: hierarchal or egalitarian? Pragmatic/functional or theoretical?
- Trust is essential across learning contexts (countries, systems, institutions etc.)

Some important lessons:



National strategies must be elaborated

- Ensuring coordination between stakeholders
- Avoiding fragmentation
- Providing financing



Activities must be regulated by a legal framework

- Ensuring legal security regarding entitlements, procedures, appeals etc.
- Balancing interests of stakeholders to secure flexibility



Access and motivation of learners

- Many come from disadvantaged backgrounds with negative experiences of the education and training system
- Information and guidance services play a pivotal role
- Benefits must be visible
- Assessment methods must be geared to the users



Legitimacy and credibility

- LO resulting from IF and NF learning processes must rank alongside those delivered by educational institutions (no “A” and “B” qualifications)
- Responsible staff must be competent and experienced



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