




CEDEFOP | European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

Towards more flexibility in education and training pathways

Role of the European tools

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Study visits programme - synthesis seminar
Workshop: Supporting flexible learning pathways



As introduction

Update of VET policy process: Bruges Communiqué (07.Dec 2010)

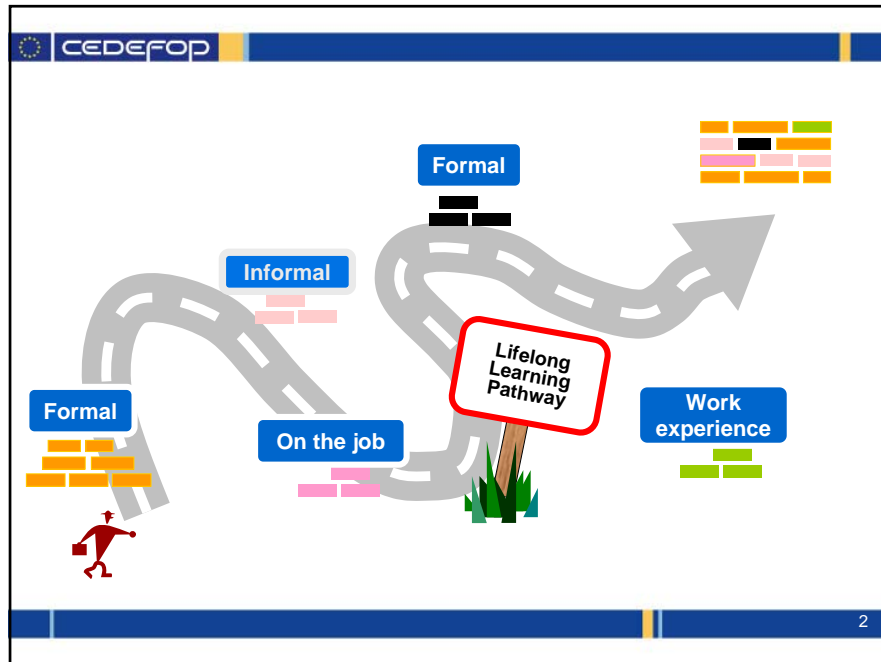
Prominent role for mobility:

- Maximum **access** to lifelong learning; **routes** into education and training more open and **flexible**
- More opportunities for experience and training **abroad**

Mobility in VET understood as:

- Geographic mobility (learning mobility in VET)
- Educational mobility (progression, permeability)
- Professional mobility (changing vocations, upskilling)

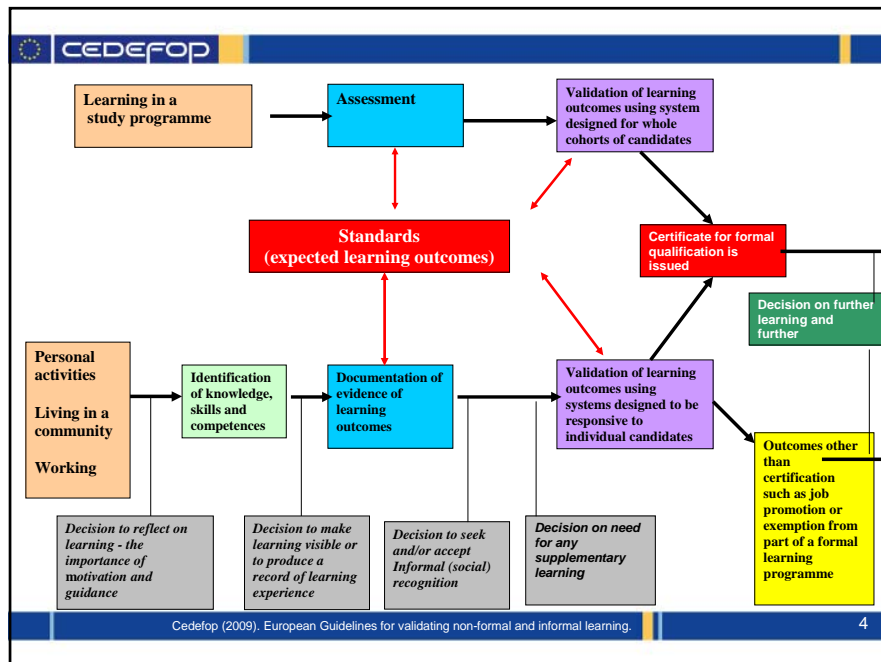
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What do you need to set up learning pathways?

- ... access
- ... common references or standards
- ... cooperation and communication between actors
- ... involvement of competent authorities
- ... methods for equivalence assessment and transfer
- ... agreements for recognition and validation
- ... portability of qualifications
- ... trust

3



The European guidelines on validation (2004)

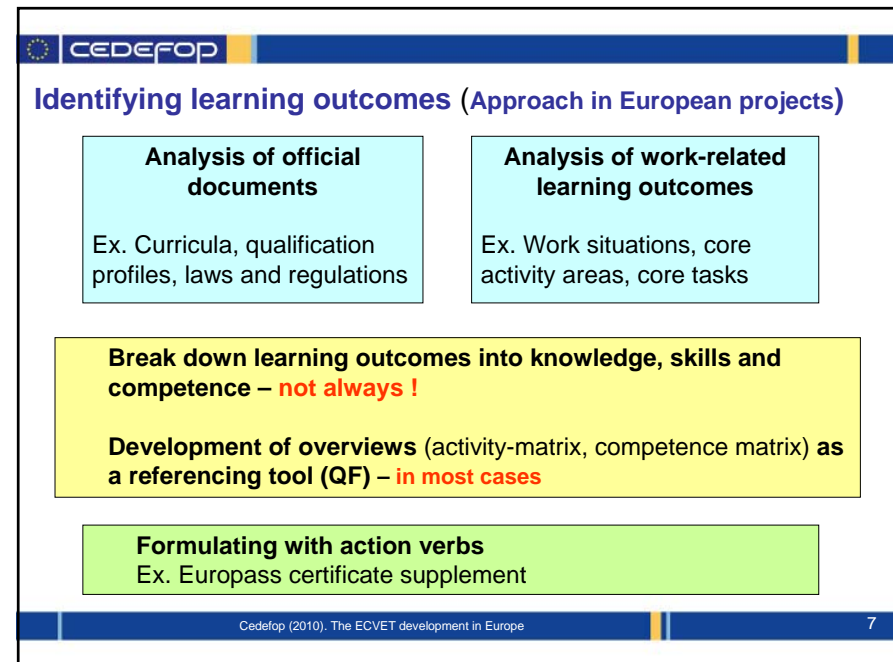
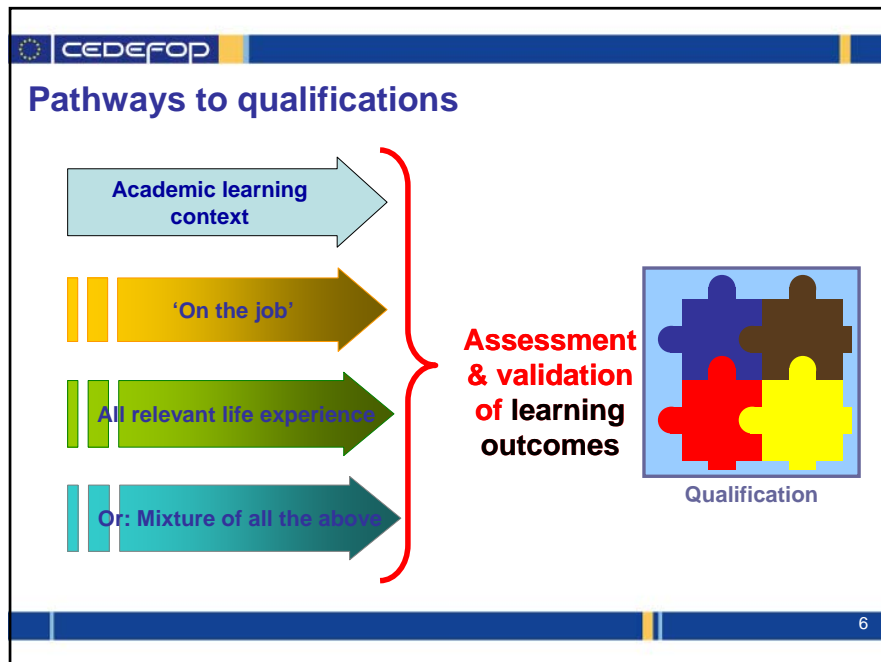
National perspective


- Integral part of the national qualifications system
- Importance of formative aspects of validation
- Summative validation → link to standards (qualifications system)
- Entitlement to validation → non-formal learning as a normal route to a qualification;
- Cost benefit analysis

Individual perspective

- The individual is always at the centre of the validation process;
- Everybody should have access to validation;
- Tailor validation to purposes (identification, documentation or certification, etc.)

Cedefop (2009). European Guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning. 5



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Shift to Learning Outcomes


More & more countries **use learning outcomes** for qualifications frameworks, standards, curricula and assessment.

Broad agreement about how LO can

- increase **transparency** and strengthen **accountability** ;
- Introduce a **common language** enabling comparison of qualifications

Current challenges

- Some **sectors** (general education) are lagging behind;
- Some **countries** lack commitment or apply LO in a **non-coherent way**
- How to address increasing need for **mutual learning**

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 ESCO
version 0.0

European taxonomy of Skills, Competences and Occupations

Objective: Describe the most relevant skills, competences and qualifications needed for several thousand occupations.

Domains of application:

- Europass: a more consistent terminology to describe / translate their own experiences at work and elsewhere;
- Learning outcomes approach for qualifications to strengthen their link and relevance to the labour market;
- Validation of non formal and informal learning; an area where the identification and description of relevant skills and competences is of key importance;
- tool for developing skills forecasting methodologies;

9

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The European tools for lifelong learning

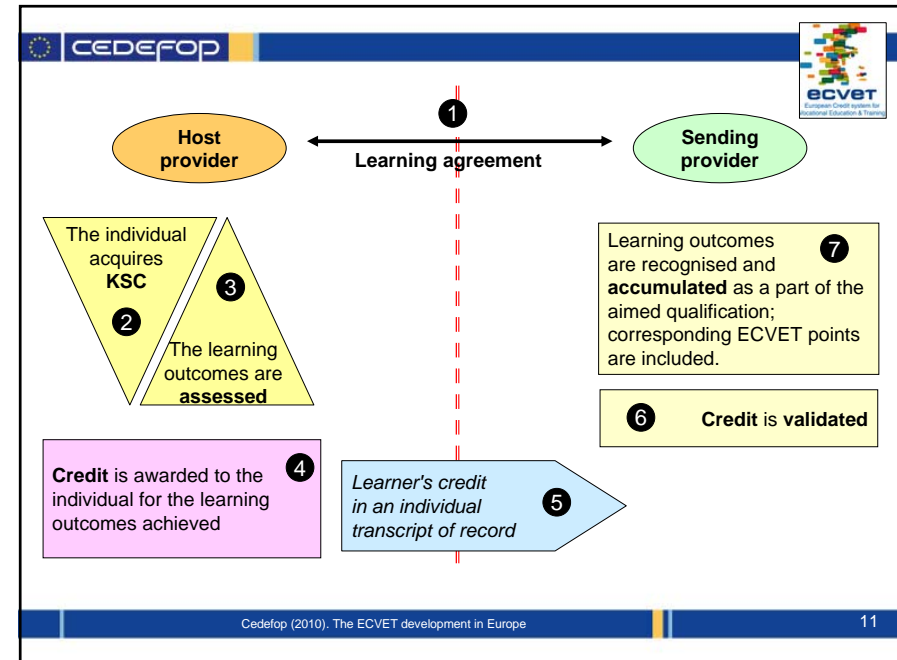
ecvet
European Credit system for Vocational Education & Training



European Qualifications Framework

EQAVET
European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training

europass

10





ECVET is, for the time being,

- ... strongly related to policies on enhancing international learning mobility, to VET reforms towards more permeability and to qualifications frameworks
- ... national, regional or local levels
- ... at prototype stage
- ... no best way but a mix of more or less tightly coordinated lines of actions
- ... push by identified need (permeability, recognition, europeanisation etc)
- ... at EQF levels 3 to 6 in different activities such as construction and building, health care, and transport and logistics



Cedefop (2010). The ECVET development in Europe 12

Objectives of Europass (2005)

- Help European citizens make knowledge, skills and qualifications more visible and legible
- Help European citizens move
- Support the validation of learning outcomes
- Build bridges between national education and training systems



13



Development stage (2010)

- **31 EU/EEA countries** have developed/are developing and introducing NQFs reflecting their national traditions and structures
- Countries agree on the need for European **comparability** and NQFs are seen as key instruments to achieve the link to EQF
- The **learning outcomes approach** is increasingly being accepted and used (standards, curricula)
- A clear trend towards **comprehensive NQFs** covering all levels and types of qualifications – EQF and Bologna go together at national level
- Most NQFs seen as **communication and transparency tools**

Cedefop (2010). The development of national qualifications frameworks in Europe 16



Frameworks and progression in education and training

- 1) Integrated national qualifications frameworks**
 - Permeability, progression, one logic for all level descriptors,
 - Levels 6-8 are explicitly open to qualifications awarded outside the traditional higher education area (defined by the EHEA)
- 2) Clear divide between level 1-5 and 6-8 of EQF**
 - Level 1-5 descriptors and level 6-8 descriptors → different logics
 - Levels 6-8 are not open to qualifications awarded outside traditional higher education area (defined by EHEA)
- 3) Parallel level structures and descriptors at levels 6-8 of EQF**
 - Levels 6-8 are open to all qualifications but distinguishes different strands of qualifications, with different or same descriptors

Cedefop (2010). Linking credit systems and qualifications framework 17
Cedefop (2010). The development of national qualifications frameworks in Europe

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Both qualifications frameworks and credit systems have features which:

- **Facilitate the description/understanding** of qualifications system
- **Introduce aspects** that modify existing **practice in the conception, design and award** of qualifications

Complementary to Europass or the validation principles

Cedefop (2010). Linking credit systems and qualifications framework 18

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Accumulation, transfer and progression

- **Progression depends upon** (for instance)
 - decisions on access criteria
 - articulation of the content of qualifications and programmes
- **Transfer does not require accumulation (and vice-versa)**
- **The differences:**
 1. The **governance** of the qualifications system
 - If progression is a requirement => qualifications/units designed and updated in a coordinated manner; It becomes complex if many awarding bodies are concerned
 2. The **guarantee** individuals have that their credit will be recognised
 - Issues such as costs of recognition process, reputation, need to deal with this case by case etc. might hinder the recognition of credits, unless the demand from learners or the industry reach the critical masse

Cedefop (2010). Linking credit systems and qualifications framework 19



Thank you for your attention

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20