



European Social Partners Conference on the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), Thessaloniki, 12-13 February 2007

Background Paper

The European Commission has recently issued a consultation document on the development of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). This document provides the basis of a Europe-wide public consultation.

Cedefop was actively involved in the conceptual development of the ECVET proposal and will give high priority to supporting the different stakeholders involved in the consultation process.

The objective of the consultation is to create a European instrument which will facilitate the transfer and accumulation of learning outcomes acquired by individuals moving from one learning context to another (formal, non-formal or informal) and from one system of qualification to another. ECVET will be based on voluntary participation of Member States and stakeholders and will foster synergies between training providers by simplifying transfer and accumulation.

Commissioner Jan Figel launched the consultation by writing to the Education Ministers of the 32 Education and Training 2010 countries, asking them to organise national consultations in their respective countries. The Commission is seeking the views of those experts and stakeholders most directly concerned by the development and implementation of ECVET at the European, national, regional and sectoral levels on what the aims, structure, and content of ECVET should be. This feedback will inform the final content of the ECVET proposal.

The European Commission is in particular seeking the views of the European and national social partners, particularly those who can comment from the point of view of labour market needs. This reflects the important role played by social partners in European vocational education and training. The European Commission has therefore invited the European social partners to consult in turn their member organisations on ECVET.

The European social partners do not only play an important role in the consultation process, they are the key for the implementation of ECVET.

That is why it is important to create a platform where representatives from the social partners, but also from the Member States and VET-institutions can exchange opinions on the ECVET proposal and its further development. This is the role fulfilled by the European Social Partners Conference on ECVET in Thessaloniki on 12 and 13 February 2007.

In this context, the following issues shall be addressed:

- What is the added value of ECVET for enterprises and workers?
- What is the added value of ECVET to vocational education and training at national and European level?
- What is the role of national social partners in implementing the ECVET?

- To which extent can ECVET be used to identify and certify learning outcomes acquired in informal, non-formal and informal settings?
- How can ECVET make certificates more transparent?
- How can the links between ECVET and other European initiatives, in particular EQF and Europass be developed?
- Which is the specific contribution of ECVET to the general development of EU and national initiatives (EQF, Europass, validation of non-formal and informal learning, etc.)?
- How can ECVET lead to more mobility?