

INDEX OF THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING SYSTEMS OF THE COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN THE LEONARDO DA VINCI EURASMENT PROJECT

(UNITED KINGDOM, ESTONIA, FRANCE, GERMANY, GREECE, ITALY,
POLAND, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA, SPAIN)

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Introduction and VET questionnaire guidelines

The present document was created in the context of the LdV Eurasment project, regarding the development of the European qualification entitled “Management Assistant for Small & Medium Enterprises”. This document is an index of the Vocational Education & Training Systems (VET) of the countries participating in the project. The presentation of these VET systems is based on the answers given by each participating country to a questionnaire comprising 18 questions (see below), which were taken as guidelines for the descriptions of each one of the particular national VET structures. The presentations are listed per country in alphabetical order: the United Kingdom, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, and Romania.

VET Questionnaire Guidelines

Structure of VET system

1. What is the structure of the VET system in your country?
2. Which bodies are involved in the provision of Vocational Education and Training?
3. What is the duration and level of studies?
4. Is apprenticeship and work practice compulsory? What are the conditions regulating it and the duration of practice?
5. Is there vertical and horizontal mobility in your national VET system?

Qualifications in VET

6. Which bodies are responsible for the development of qualifications?
7. Who is involved in the development of qualifications? (social partners, training organisations etc.)
8. How is a qualification constructed and structured?
9. Are the notions of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credit points’ / ‘learning outcomes’ being used?

Accumulation, Capitalisation and Transferability

10. Does “transfer” of knowledge, skills and competences exist in your national VET system?
11. Is it possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another? If yes, how is this done?
12. Is there “accumulation” towards qualification of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credits’? If yes, which stakeholders are involved in the process and how is this done?
13. Which bodies are responsible for establishing equivalence between qualifications acquired abroad and at home?

Assessment and Certification

14. What are the different means of acquiring a certificate? (through initial and/or continuing training, through validation of experience)

15. Which are the awarding bodies responsible for accrediting certificates or diplomas in VET?
16. What assessment and validation procedures are in operation? When is a qualification achieved in VET? What are the certification procedures for the attestation of a certificate?
17. What do certificates document (acquired knowledge, skills, competences / participation to a course etc.)
18. How is the Eurasment Training Course going to be implemented in your country?

CONTENTS

THE BRITISH VET SYSTEM	5
THE ESTONIAN VET SYSTEM	9
THE FRENCH VET SYSTEM	17
THE GERMAN VET SYSTEM	22
THE GREEK VET SYSTEM	27
THE ITALIAN VET SYSTEM	31
THE POLISH VET SYSTEM	41
THE PORTUGUESE VET SYSTEM	44
THE ROMANIAN VET SYSTEM	51
THE SPANISH VET SYSTEM	56

The British VET System

Structure of the VET system

1. What is the structure of the VET system in your country?

National vocational qualifications (NVQs)

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are work-related and competence based qualifications and are achieved through assessment and training (either full- or part-time). The qualifications are available at one or more of levels 1-5 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

2. Which bodies are involved in the provision of Vocational Education and Training?

Bodies responsible for qualification development

Sector Skills Councils (25)

Standard Setting Bodies (25)

Qualification and Curriculum Agency (QCA)

Awarding Bodies (115)

Sector Skills Development Agency ((SSDA) was disbanded in March 2008 and replaced with the UKCES (UK Commission for Employment and Skills) Training

Providers/Colleges

Employers

3. What is the duration and level of studies?

NVQs are based on National Occupational Standards (NOS) and do not have to be completed within a specific length of time.

4. Is apprenticeship and work practice compulsory? What are the conditions regulating it and the duration of practice?

Work practice for Apprenticeships is compulsory.

5. Is there vertical and horizontal mobility in your national VET system?

Upon completion of an Apprenticeship, Apprentices can if they choose continue vocational education and training by following an Advanced Apprenticeship (vertical progression), access a foundation degree (vertical progression) or take up Continuous Professional Training through the workplace (horizontal progression).

Qualification in VET

6. Which bodies are responsible for the development of qualifications?

Sector Skills Councils

Standard Setting Bodies

Awarding Bodies

Qualification and Curriculum Authority

Employers (advisory role)

7. Who is involved in the development of qualifications? (social partners, training organisations etc.)

See point 6

8. How is a qualification constructed and structured?

A certificate of achievement or competence specifies the Awarding Body, the type of qualification and the title which makes the learner eligible for consideration for entry, advancement or progression in an academic, vocational or professional context.

A Qualification unit is the smallest part of a qualification that can be separately certificated.

Specific credit is the number of credits at specified levels which a receiving institution is prepared to accept for recognition of prior learning on a specific programme.

A transcript is a record of the credits achieved by an individual learner

9. Are the notions of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credit points’ / ‘learning outcomes’ being used?

For units that assess the knowledge and skills specified for a particular vocation or occupational area, National Occupational Standards (NOS) should be the starting point, where they exist. This will ensure that the resulting units of assessment focus on the knowledge, skills and understanding, which, applied together, form the competence required by employers for certain roles and functions.

Accumulation, Capitalisation and Transferability

10. Does “transfer” of knowledge, skills and competences exist in your national VET system?

Credit Accumulation and Transfer, or CAT, is a system in which all learning is recognised by means of credits and levels. **General credit** refers to the credit value that learners receive when they successfully complete a block of learning or a programme/course. **Specific credit** refers to the amount of this general credit that they can put towards another course. It is specific because it relates directly to the context of the course to which students are progressing.

11. Is it possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another? If yes, how is this done?

Learners can gain credits for learning from either formal programmes, learning demonstrated in practice or life experiences.

12. Is there “accumulation” towards qualification of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credits’? If yes, which stakeholders are involved in the process and how is this done?

Awarding Bodies and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

Units describe what the learner will be expected to know, do and understand and the value of that learning expressed in credits and levels.

A module refers to the delivered curriculum experienced by the learner and includes the syllabus, modes of learning, assessment strategy, modes of assessment and units of assessment.

13. Which bodies are responsible for establishing equivalence between qualifications acquired abroad and at home?

For vocational qualifications, the Qualification Curriculum Agency (QCA) is responsible for establishing equivalence for key skills. However, for general vocational qualifications any of the major Awarding Bodies would be responsible to ascertain the validity of overseas qualifications.

Assessment and Certification

14. What are the different means of acquiring a certificate? (Through initial and/or continuing training, through validation of experience)

Accreditation or Certification is the formal recognition of the achievement of specified learning outcomes at a particular level. Normally, accreditation is given by an Awarding Body which is recognised by the regulatory body.

Certification can be acquired through all three modes, such as initial and/or continuing training as well as through validation of experience

15. Which are the awarding bodies responsible for accrediting certificates or diplomas in VET?

There are currently 115 Awarding Bodies operating across the UK but only four major ones including Scotland:

- City & Guilds
- OCR
- Edexcel
- SQA (Scotland)

16. What assessment and validation procedures are in operation? When is a qualification achieved in VET? What are the certification procedures for the attestation of a certificate?

Validation is the formal process of approval of learning provision by an Awarding Body and the accompanying regulatory framework of which the successful completion will lead to an award.

The three main Assessment and Validation procedures in operation in England include:

Observation: An assessor from a Training Provider/College visits the learner at the workplace and observes him/her.

Witness Testimony: An employer, assessor or colleague witnesses a task and signs it off.

Product Evidence: Anything the learner can show as a piece of evidence, e.g. a letter that was typed and formatted by the learner.

Others are:

Test

Multiple Choice

On-line test

Assignments

Once the Assessment Criteria has been completed, the Training Provider/College applies to their assigned Awarding Body with the relevant documentation for certification.

17. What do certificates document (acquired knowledge, skills, competences/ participation to a course etc.)

In England, certificates only display and document the title of the course, the name of the learner and the Awarding Body.

18. How is the Eurasmement Training Course going to be implemented in your country?

In September 2008, The UK launches its new national framework, the Qualification Credit Framework (QCF). The current National Qualification Framework (NQF) has no credits attached to any units which will change with the new QCF.

In addition, the current NQF is constructed on 5 levels. The new QCF however has 8 levels aiming to be equivalent to the EQF. The construction of this new framework enables VET to be transferrable and encourages mobility, e.g. by being able to map English credit points and levels to those of the EQF.

In the UK, the implementing process of EURASMENT training course will take place follow the next stages:

- The new qualification will be written in partnership with selected Awarding Bodies who are responsible for certification (January 2009)
- The new qualification will need to be reviewed by the Qualification Curriculum Agency (2010). Once approved the qualification will be launched on the new Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).
- The CfA is the guardian of the new qualification and promotes the new qualification on the professional training market through Steering Groups, e-alerts and national events to all key stakeholders (2010).

The Estonian VET System

Structure of the VET system

1. What is the structure of the VET system in your country?

The objective of the Estonian vocational education system is to ensure the social and vocational preparedness of young people for commencement of their professional life and to prepare skilled workers who would be competitive both in the Estonian as well

Overview of the system: The operation of the vocational education system in Estonia is regulated mainly by the Vocational Education Institutions Act. The general framework for modernisation of the field has been established by the Government of the Republic in the Conceptual Bases of Vocational Education (1998) and the Action Plan for Development of the Vocational Education System in Estonia through 2001-2004. The Vocational Education Development Plan for 2005-2008, which serves as a basis for future steps toward modernisation of the education system is being drafted.

This touches primarily upon changes required for ensuring the quality of vocational education and for increasing the flexibility of education opportunities.

In vocational education institutions one can acquire secondary vocational education after graduating from basic school or upper secondary school as well as acquire professional higher education. Upon enforcement of the changes, it will be possible to take up vocational studies after basic school without having to learn the secondary education part and this also applies to people who do not have any basic education and who have exceeded the age of compulsory school attendance. Those who have obtained secondary vocational education will have the opportunity to study general education subjects and prepare for certificate examinations if they want to continue their vocational studies in an institution of higher education.

Flexible vocational training in basic schools and upper secondary schools, i.e. virtually initial vocational training for students of general education schools has been introduced as well.

As of 1 September 2004 there were 68 vocational education institutions in Estonia. 47 of them were state vocational education institutions (incl. 3 special vocational education institutions), 18 private vocational education institutions and 3 municipal schools.

Since a system of numerous small schools is inefficient both economically and educationally, a reform of the network of vocational education institutions was launched in 1997, in the course of which smaller vocational education institutions will be merged and regional training centres will be developed. This process is guided by the recently adopted School Network Development Plan for 2005-2008.

Vocational training opportunities

The definition of vocational education covers all forms of vocational and professional training.

The vocational education opportunities offered in the framework of the formal education system are as follows:

- Vocational education for people who do not have basic education and who have exceeded the age of compulsory school attendance;
- Vocational education based on basic education (without acquiring upper secondary education);
- Secondary vocational education on the basis of basic education;
- Vocational training based on upper secondary education.

Secondary vocational education may be acquired after graduating from basic school. The acquisition of secondary vocational education on the basis of basic education lasts at least 3 years. Thereafter those interested can focus on preparing for state examinations for one year in order to take up studies in an institution of higher education.

Vocational education can be obtained by people who do not have basic education (have exceeded the age of compulsory school attendance) as well as by people who have basic education. In such an event the selection of professions and specialties would be narrower than in case of secondary vocational education, depending on the needs and demands of employers. Vocational education based on secondary education is provided in professions and specialties, which require secondary education.

In addition, vocational education institutions and general education schools cooperate upon providing **vocational education in basic schools and upper secondary schools** (incl. adult upper secondary schools). This is acquisition of first professional and special knowledge and skills aimed at the students of general education schools as optional subjects of the study programme of basic school or upper secondary school. The completion of such vocational training is taken into account upon continuing studies in a vocational education institution (if the study programme lasts at least 15 academic weeks).

In addition to institutions of **professional higher education**, professional higher education can be obtained in some vocational education institutions as well. It can be acquired by people who have secondary education. Graduates of vocational education institutions who would like to continue their studies at the level of higher education usually need to take certificate examinations – the requirements depend on the specific education institution.

Outside the formal education system vocational education institutions host various training courses, which are usually (but not always) aimed at adults (in-service training and retraining).

2. Which bodies are involved in the provision of Vocational Education and Training?

The **Estonian Education System** and the **Vocational Training integrated in the Education System** are exclusively supported by the Ministry of Education.

The bodies responsible for providing Vocational Education and Training are schools, universities and training organisations (public or private).

3. What is the duration and level of studies?

See Annex 1

4. Is apprenticeship and work practice compulsory? What are the conditions regulating it and the duration of practice?

Practical training in enterprises is an integral part of VET.

Practical work must be at least 25% of studies and practical work 25% of studies.

- Vocational institution must ensure that the student has on-the-job learning place
- Contract:
 - Period, capacity, workplace and address
 - Tasks (from curricula, individual)
 - Rights and responsibilities of each party
 - Data of the teacher and on-the-job counsellor

5. Is there vertical and horizontal mobility in your national VET system?

In the framework of the **High Education system**, vertical and horizontal mobility is guaranteed by the formal adoption of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System within the European Qualification Framework.

In the other VET sub-systems:

- Vertical mobility: the several VET systems give direct access to higher skills qualifications levels or higher school degrees.
- Horizontal mobility between the several VET systems: so far, mobility happens punctually and merely inside each VET system.

Qualifications in VET

6. Which bodies are responsible for the development of qualifications?

Estonian Qualification Authority- Kutsekoda established 31.08.2001

- Founders – employees, employers, state
- Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Estonian Confederation of Employers and Industry
- Estonian Employees' Unions' Confederation
- Confederation of Estonian Trade Unions
- Ministry of Social Affairs. Since 2004 in the area of Ministry of Education and Research

Professional Councils are the backbone of the system and are formed on the basis of statistical classification of economic fields in Estonia, what is based on NACE (Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community)

There are 16 professional councils. Their aim is to work out professional standards and award professional qualification.

Professional standard

- Decision to work out or renew professional standard
- Forms working groups, expert groups

- Approves professional standards

Award of professional qualification

- Issues licence for the awarding body
- Confirms methods of awarding qualification
- Confirms the price of awarding qualification
- Carries out supervision

7. Who is involved in the development of qualifications? (social partners, training organisations etc.)

Principles of the qualification system

- SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP – employer, employee and the state - three parties of the labour market
- Creation, implementation and development of the qualification system is a PROCESS
- Qualification system is a QUALITY SYSTEM
- MEASURABLE qualifications
- COMMON and COMPARABLE measuring system
- COMPETENCE based approach - assessment is based on actual skills and knowledge
- FLEXIBLE and OPTIMAL training system, which considers labour market needs
- MOTIVATION for life-long learning

Cooperation with social partners

Involvement of social partners in all aspects of VET

- In strategic planning
- In planning of study places
- In management of VET system as a whole and in the management of VET schools
- In preparation of professional standards and vocational curricula
- In organising of practical training for students in enterprises
- In teacher training
- In evaluation of graduates (exams)

Employers play a more active and influential role through their participation in Professional Councils (established under the Vocational Educational Institutions Act) and in creating a national employee qualification system.

Professional Councils develop qualification requirements and professional standards, which are used as a basic reference in curricula development at educational institutions.

8. How is a qualification constructed and structured?

See point 6

9. Are the notions of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credit points’ / ‘learning outcomes’ being used?

Knowledge, Skills and understanding/competences: knowledge, skills and understanding, applied together, form the competence required by employers for certain roles and functions.

A module refers to the delivered curriculum experienced by the learner and includes the syllabus, modes of learning, assessment strategy, modes of assessment and units of assessment.

Learning outcomes, together with assessment criteria, specify the minimum requirements for the award of credit. Statements of competence may be used as, and equate to, learning outcomes. Learning outcomes do not, however, always define competencies.

Accumulation, Capitalisation and Transferability

10. Does “transfer” of knowledge, skills and competences exist in your national VET system?

Yes. See point 11

11. Is it possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another? If yes, how is this done?

Yes. Learners can gain credits for learning from either formal programmes, learning demonstrated in practice or life experiences. Educational institutions have the right to make those decisions according to students application.

12. Is there “accumulation” towards qualification of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credits’? If yes, which stakeholders are involved in the process and how is this done?

There is accumulation towards qualification of knowledge, skills and competences through different modules and study units and also practical work in enterprises.

The stakeholders involved in this process are the certified training organizations, enterprises and all the bodies involved in National System of Qualification.

13. Which bodies are responsible for establishing equivalence between qualifications acquired abroad and at home?

The Estonian ENIC/NARIC (*Academic Recognition Information Centre*) is a subdivision of Foundation Archimedes. It belongs to the international networks of ENIC and NARIC. The European Council and UNESCO network ENIC (*European Network of National Information Centres on Academic Recognition and Mobility*) and the European Union network NARIC

(*National Academic Recognition Information Centres*) are international networks created for facilitating the true and fair recognition of education obtained abroad and for promoting academic and professional mobility.

The main functions of the Estonian ENIC/NARIC are:

- evaluating foreign qualifications (diplomas, certificates, academic reports, etc.)
- determining the correspondence of education qualifications (academic degrees, titles, diplomas) certified by documentation to the Estonian education system and making recognition proposals
- providing information about foreign higher education systems
- providing foreign countries with information about the Estonian higher education system

The Estonian ENIC/NARIC evaluates foreign qualifications and determines the Estonian correspondence to the attested qualifications for:

- commencing or continuing studies in Estonian higher education institutions
- employment in non-regulated professions

An applicant for the evaluation of foreign qualifications may be the holder of the qualification as well as an employer, higher education institution or another institution where the education document has been presented.

An evaluation determines the correspondence of foreign qualifications to qualifications within the Estonian education system and a proposal is made for the recognition of these qualifications to a higher education establishment or employer.

The Estonian ENIC/NARIC provides information about:

- foreign education systems and qualifications
- the recognition and comparison of academic degrees, diplomas and other qualifications
- international and national legal acts concerning the regulation of qualifications recognition

The Centre provides foreign countries with information about the Estonian education system and qualifications in order to simplify the evaluation and recognition of Estonian qualifications abroad.

Assessment and Certification

14. What are the different means of acquiring a certificate? (through initial and/or continuing training, through validation of experience)

Through **Initial Training, Continuing Training and Qualification examination.**

For the initial training Ministry of Education and Research issues the methodology for assessment and examination. For continuing training, each training provider elaborates examination proposals relevant to professional profiles.

VET school graduates can take the vocational qualification examination upon graduation.

15. Which are the awarding bodies responsible for accrediting certificates or diplomas in VET?

In the **Estonian Education system**, all school degrees are granted through the Ministry of Education and Research.

The final certificates awarded by the vocational schools certify that a certain programme has been obtained at a certain level within a certain school rather than in themselves representing any formal qualification.

Awarding professional qualification

Active parties in awarding process:

Professional councils (16) create professional standards

Awarding bodies are Professional Qualifications Committees (85) and Examination Committee

Professional certificate

- is a document certifying professional qualification
- statute, format and procedure for the issuing are established by the Government of the Republic
- must be registered by the awarding body in the Register of Professions

Certificate supplement

- The propose is to give additional information to the information presented in the Professional Certificate
- Certificate Supplement is not valid without a Professional Certificate

16. What assessment and validation procedures are in operation? When is a qualification achieved in VET? What are the certification procedures for the attestation of a certificate?

In initial training, Ministry of Education and Research decides the format and the final form of examination for each level of qualification. The role of social partners in examination and assessment is that they are involved in assessment of competencies and practice training.

For adult training, each provider can decide how to involve the social partners in examination and assessment process.

The Ministry of Education and Research issues the methodology for assessments and examination. The content of the final paper or final examination reflects the training standards.

17. What do certificates document (acquired knowledge, skills, competences / participation to a course etc.)

Certificates can:

- Award school degree and a skills qualification (Qualification Diploma for the Qualifications included in the National Catalogue of Qualifications and Vocational Training Certificate for the others);
- Award a school degree;
- Attest the accomplishment of one or more training units
- Attest the participation in a course (Vocational Training Certificate);
- Validate the individual experience (non-formal and informal learning)

18. How is the Eurasment Training Course going to be implemented in your country?

The following steps shall be taken for implementing the Eurasment training course:

- to elaborate the training programme based on the reference material (competences, skills and knowledge) and on the modular approach adopted;
- to start teaching the module “Management of financial resources” in English from September 2009.

The French VET System

Structure of the VET system

1. What is the structure of the VET system in your country?

French vocational training, within the framework of the Ministry of National Education is offered at secondary level and in higher education (after the baccalaureate).

At secondary level, three diplomas can be obtained after the fourth (and last) class of lower secondary school: the Certificate of Vocational Competence (CAP) and the Certificate of Vocational Studies (BEP) (a two year course) and the Vocational Baccalaureate (a 3 year course).

At the higher level, two diplomas can be obtained after the Baccalaureate: the advanced vocational training certificate (BTS) and the diploma from a University Institute of Technology (DUT) (a two year course). Following this, students can then study for a further year to obtain a vocational degree.

Students can study for the diplomas through initial training (school or in apprenticeship) or in continuing training. (see the diagram).

2. Which bodies are involved in the provision of vocational education and training?

- Qualifications leading to a vocational qualification are issued mainly by the Ministry of National Education. However, the Ministries of Agriculture, Youth and Sport, and Health also issue qualifications in their particular field.

There are also “titles” issued by the Ministry of Employment and vocational qualification certificates (CQP) issued by the professional bodies and recognized by the labour agreements of the various professions which set them up.

- The Regions and the State share the responsibility for the implementation of vocational training and particularly in the drawing up of the training map. Within the framework of decentralization, the Regions have general authority as far as apprenticeship and vocational training is concerned. The State’s authority is limited by law.

3. What is the duration and level of studies?

- The length of training required to obtain the qualifications varies according to the status (pupil, apprentice, continuing vocational training candidate) and according to the subject.

In the case of the BTS (Brevet de Technicien Supérieur = Advanced Vocational Training Certificate) for example:

- School route: 2 years of training after the Baccalaureate with a weekly timetable that varies according to the field of specialisation.
- Apprenticeship: minimum length of 1350 hours
- Continuing vocational training :
 - if the candidate has a level III qualification or title, the minimum length is 600 hours
 - if the candidate has a level IV qualification the minimum length is 1100 hours
 - if the candidate has 3 year’s professional experience, the minimum length is 1100 hours
 - if the candidate is not covered by any of the above, the minimum is 1500 hours

For trainees in continuing training, the length of training takes into account personal prior learning/experience thanks to an assessment procedure at the beginning of the training. The

assessment enables the length of training to be reduced in subjects in which the training is deemed to have already been undertaken. It does not, however, include an exemption from tests/exams.

- Initial vocational training is organized in Higher Secondary Vocational Schools and apprentice training centres (CFA). After the fourth (and last) class of lower secondary education, these centres prepare pupils for the Certificate of Vocational Competence (CAP), or for the Certificate of Vocational Studies (BEP) (pupils aged 14/15). At the outcome of the BEP, these pupils can study for two years for a Vocational Baccalaureate. Current policy consists however in offering, for a majority of vocational courses, a three year course in preparation for the Vocational Baccalaureate after the fourth (and last) year of lower secondary education. In this case the BEP (Certificate of Vocational Studies) is obtained during the first two years of the course.

- Short routes of higher vocational education prepare students, over a two year period after the baccalaureate for either a diploma from a University Institute of Technology (DUT), answerable to the university, or an advanced vocational training certificate (BTS) in public or private higher secondary vocational schools. The vocational degree, where 50% of training time is on the job, constitutes a university opportunity for students, particularly BTS students, who wish to pursue their studies beyond their first two years of study.

Higher education also offers long vocational routes (vocational degrees, vocational Masters, qualifications from “Grandes Ecoles”).

4. Is apprenticeship and work practice compulsory? What is the length of the work placement and the conditions regulating it?

All the various types of vocational training include periods of on the job training or work experience. Their length and the conditions of on the job training periods are governed by statutory texts according to each level of qualification. In any same level, the length is also variable (from 10 to 16 weeks for the BTS for example)

5. Is there vertical and horizontal mobility in your national VET system?

The system enables both vertical and horizontal training mobility by capitalisation of prior learning in one particular qualification and the transfer of this prior learning towards another qualification of the same level. For example, the holder of a BTS can be exempted from the general education exams and certain vocational units of another BTS.

Qualifications in the VETsystem

6. Which bodies are responsible for the development of qualifications?

7. Who is involved in the development of qualifications? (social partners, training organisations, etc.)

8. How is a qualification constructed and structured?

- The official statutory texts define, for each level of diploma (CAP, BEP, Vocational Baccalaureate, and BTS), the contents of the training and the methods of certification. Whatever the level of the qualification, the reference material includes general education which varies according to the nature of the training (French, Foreign Language, Maths etc.) and the vocational training necessary to acquire professional skills and knowledge.

Under the aegis of the minister in question, the creation, the updating or the elimination of qualifications or titles is carried out at

“Professional Consultative Committees” (CPC): where the Ministerial representatives, employers, labour unions and qualified people confer and give an opinion. Suggestions are beforehand drawn up by a working party driven by a project leader who is generally a General Inspector.

	Ministry	Number of Professional Consultative Committees	Volume of certifications (from CAP to BTS)
1.	National Education	17	700 qualifications (from CAP to BTS)
2.	Employment	7	300 vocational titles
3.	Agriculture	7	150 qualifications
4.	Sport	1	100 qualifications
5.	Social Action	1	15 qualifications
6.	Culture	1	-
7.	Health	1	14 qualifications

- Information letter from the national vocational certification committee No. 2 – 2007

This document, although recent, is not however up to date, so for the Ministry of Education, there are 14 Professional Consultative Committees (and not 17) and 650 qualifications (and not 700), it nevertheless gives an idea of size.

- The Vocational Qualification Certificates (CQP) is a title created and issued in a professional field by an equal representation authority, more often than not a National Equal Representation Committee for Employment.(CPNE)

A « National Directory of Vocational Certifications » set up by the « National Committee of Vocational Certification » (RNCP) today lists more than 96% of certifications (excluding higher education).

9. Are the notions of “knowledge, skills and competences”/ “units”/ “modules”/ “credit points”/ “learning outcomes” used?

Statutory texts defining the qualification include:

- the reference material for professional activities (RAP) which describes the activities and the tasks that the holder of the qualification will be called upon to carry out,
- the reference material for certification which describes the professional skills and knowledge and the methods of certification. The skills are grouped coherently into “Units of Certification”.

The notions of skills and competences and modules do not appear in the methodology guide for the construction of diplomas but are used in the diplomas with common European reference material (Cominter, Eurasment and Euroast).

Accumulation, Capitalisation and Transferability

10. Does “transfer” of knowledge, skills and competences exist in your national VET system?

The existing system enables prior learning in a “certification unit” (a diploma is composed of several certification units) in one particular qualification to be capitalized and transferred to another qualification of the same level.

11. Is it possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another? If yes, how is this done?

The various training possibilities preparing students for the BTS exam are consistent with the framework of the European architecture of study (Bachelor/Master/Doctoral degrees) and the obtaining of the qualification carries with it the acquisition of 120 European credits (ECTS). The attribution of credit points attached to a vocational training course is under study within the ECVET framework.

12. Is “accumulation” towards qualification through “knowledge, skills and competences”, “units”, “modules”, “credit points” possible?

The accumulation of qualifications is taken into account within the framework of the training route. If the qualification is not obtained, the marks gained above the pass mark can be kept for a limited period.

The various types of vocational training are not currently organized in independent modules enabling partial certification.

The accumulation of skills can also be carried out within the vocational framework through the procedure of “validation of prior experience”. (VAE) without sitting the traditional tests/examinations of the diploma.

13. Which bodies are responsible for establishing equivalence between qualifications acquired abroad and at home?

In France, there is no general legal principle of equivalence between qualifications and titles. However, professional experience is taken into account through reductions in training time (assessment) or again through validation of prior experience (VAE).

Texts provide for prior learning/experience to be taken into account. There are also specific principles linked to agreements.

The appropriate authority for issuing the qualification is qualified to take experience into account.

Assessment and Certification

14. What are the different means of acquiring a certificate/diploma? (through initial and/or continuing training, through validation of experience)

A national education qualification can be obtained by candidates from initial training, from continuing training, or by independent candidates.

The tests/examinations are either at the end of the training, or through continuous assessment during the training (CCF)

Vocational diplomas can also be obtained through the validation of prior experience (VAE).

Titles issued by the Ministry of Labour and vocational qualification certificates (CQP) can be obtained at the end of a period of continuing training or the validation of prior experience.

15. Which awarding bodies are responsible for accrediting certificates or diplomas in VET?

Each ministerial department regulates its own system of certification defined in the regulations particular to each qualification. Each professional field regulates its own certificates (CQP).

16. What assessment and validation procedures are in operation? When is a qualification achieved in VET? What are the certification procedures for the attestation of a certificate?

The methods of assessment and certification can be:

- at the end of the training: written, oral or practical
- continuous assessment: written, oral or practical

In general compensation between the various tests/examinations is possible.

The qualification is obtained with the issuing of the diploma, after the candidate has sat the tests and the examining panel has considered the results (after the two years of training for the BTS diploma through the school route for example).

Certification is an official act which must be understood as the issuing of a diploma after the candidate has been before an examining panel.

17. What do certificate documents contain? (acquired knowledge, skills, competences/participation in a course, etc.)

The certificate is a document which shows: the awarding body, the name of the qualification obtained and its level. It means that the holder has fulfilled all the legal requirements. There is no indication concerning the skills or the knowledge acquired.

18. How is the Eurament training course going to be implemented in your country?

The training programme is going to be implemented at the beginning of the 2009/2010 school year in all the higher secondary vocational schools which offer training for the BTS “Management Assistant for SMEs” qualification, that is to say about 180 schools. About twenty could participate directly in the Eurament student mobility project.

The German VET System

Structure of the VET system

1. What is the structure of the VET system in your country?

A statistical Survey:

- Dual System: 60 - 70% of 16 to 19 year old people; about 340 training occupations
- Vocational School (Full time): 10% of all 16 to 19 year old people
- 35 - 38% of all 20 – 25 year old people: University (or similar)
- 10 - 15% of all 16 – 19 year old People: Only parts of an occupational profile

Framework Legislation for Dual System on the National Level (Vocational Training Act, BBiG) and the Länder-Level: Part-Time Vocational School

2. Which bodies are involved in the provision of Vocational Education and Training?

- Federal Government (BMW, BMBF, BIBB)
- Social Partners (Employer Organisations and Unions)
- Companies
- The Länder
- Training Institutions (optional)
- Vocational Schools (optional)

3. What is the duration and level of studies?

- Max. 1 year individual preparation for VET (if necessary)
- 2 - 3 (in some cases: 3 1/2) years in the dual system
- Vocational School Training: 2 – 3 years
- Upgrading, further Training, Career: 1/2 - 2 years
- University: Bachelor: 3 - 4 Jahre
- Master: max. 2 ½ more years

At this time: No Qualification Framework in Germany

The German System and the EQF-Levels (discussion is going on)

- Preparation for VET: EQF-Level 2
- Initial Vocational Training: EQF-Level 3 and 4, may be in some cases 5
- Further Qualification/Upgrading: EQF-Level 5, 6 and 7
- Bachelor: EQF-Level 6
- Master: EQF-Level 7
- More, specific, high-level further training, PhD etc: EQF-Level 8

4. Is apprenticeship and work practice compulsory? What are the conditions regulating it and the duration of practice?

- Dual System: about 2/3 useful; in dual Studies: Practice in Companies is included (increasing: One or two Semester Learning and working (occupational experience) in a company, about 1/3 Learning in a vocational School
- University: additional Practise is -Studies abroad)

- Conditions in the dual System:
 - Training Contract Company – Trainee,
 - VET of young people (max. 18 years old) only in occupational trainings that are according to the vocational training act,
 - Training Employers have to pay an appropriate allowance (on the average about 700€each month), the trainees have to learn,
 - Training Employers have to urge Trainees to attend part-time vocational school
 - Trainees may only be engaged by employers who have employees with the necessary qualifications (personal, technical, methodological)
 - Costs of Training: Companies about 28 Billion €each year (Costs of Vocational School: Länder)

5. Is there vertical and horizontal mobility in your national VET system?

- Vertical Mobility: Yes!! Great Career Chances up to the top of a Company, even in larger companies!
VET in dual System,
Upgrading of Qualifications (Further VET), regulations at the national and the regional level, certificate by competent bodies e.g. chambers of industry and commerce),
Further Training, Life Long Learning
- Horizontal Mobility: Yes!! Training Profiles are broad and specific, they have to enable trainees to engage in a form of skilled occupational activity and hey have to be a basis for LLL

Qualifications in VET

6. Which bodies are responsible for the development of qualifications?

- Dual System: Social Partners (Employer Organisations, Unions, Chambers) and Companies, Federal Government (Ministeries of Economics and of Education, BIBB), Länder: Intensive Cooperation
- University: Universities, Länder, Cooperating with Companies

7. Who is involved in the development of qualifications? (social partners, training organisations etc.)

- Social Partners (including Chambers)
- Companies
- Federal Government
- BIBB
- Länder

8. How is a qualification constructed and structured?

Training (Occupational) Profiles in dual System:

- Designation of training occupation
- Duration of initial training (2 to 3 1/2 years)
- Occupational Profile: vocational skills, knowledge and qualifications, competences)
- Outline of the syllabus and timetable (binding list of skills and competences)
- Examination Requirements
- And a Curriculum for the vocational school

9. Are the notions of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credit points’ / ‘learning outcomes’ being used?

- The terms are used in German VET; sometimes they have another meaning as in EQF or ECVET:
- Initial Training: Vocational and occupational Competences („Berufliche Handlungskompetenz“), it means more than Competences described as Autonomy and responsibility in EQF; Trainees learn the necessary technical, personal, methodological, social and participative competences
- The term „Module“ is political incorrect, some people say; the main reason: it is completely different to the concept of „Vocational and occupational Competences („Berufliche Handlungskompetenz“); they fear the splitting of occupational training profiles to modules which can be combined by the trainees as they want it „Unit“ sounds more neutral. A lot of training profiles have units (the training companies can choose according to rules written in the initial training regulations).
- Credit Points: Only Bachelor and Master (Bologna-Process); ECVET: Discussion has started; Testing in VET, Research Activities; We do not believe ECVET is helpful: Recognition, accumulation and transfer depend on description and comparison of Competences and Qualifications, Credit Points can only serve as a quantitative auxiliary descriptor in the framework of EQF.
- Learning Outcome: Used in University and schools; the problem: the term is theoretical oriented (assessments of knowledge „What somebody knows“) instead of Examinations about occupational competence („The capacity to act in a concrete and complexe work setting

Accumulation, Capitalisation and Transferability

10. Does “transfer” of knowledge, skills and competences exist in your national VET system?

- Yes, but in different ways, 3 examples:
 - Conditions for admission to the examinations of further training regulations: It is easier if training and work practice are connected to the aims of further training
 - Optional Recognition to a Training (Initial or further)
 - Admission to a University for People without „Abitur“, whose highest formal Qualifications are vocational (Problem: Intransparent, discriminates vocational training and vocational competences)
 - Not solved at this time: The Transfer of informal or non-formal Competences to State-Examinations

11. Is it possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another? If yes, how is this done?

Yes, in some Cases

- Conditions for admission
Certificates
Tests
- Training institution, competent bodies or company have to decide if someone can transfer „Credits“

There must be better and more transparent conditions!

12. Is there “accumulation” towards qualification of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credits’? If yes, which stakeholders are involved in the process and how is this done?

Accumulation: more complex work, more ambitious work situations (Stakeholder: Company, Employee)

See answer 11

13. Which bodies are responsible for establishing equivalence between qualifications acquired abroad and at home?

- It is a task of the „competent body“, which organizes training examinations (eg. Chambers of industry and commerce)
- Universities: Kooperations, ECTS, Bologna-Process
- Reglementated Profiles

Assessment and Certification

14. What are the different means of acquiring a certificate? (through initial and/or continuing training, through validation of experience)

- Individual Means like Career, Employability, Income, secure and better work, mobility
- Company: Signals and Informations about the competences and qualifications of an applicant

15. Which are the awarding bodies responsible for accrediting certificates or diplomas in VET?

- „Competent Bodies“ (CCi etc.)
- Companies
- Private certificates: Companies, training institutons, Employer Organizations
- „Awarding Bodies“ important, more important: Acceptance and usability of Certifikates, Diplomas etc. within the Employment System

16. What assessment and validation procedures are in operation? When is a qualification achieved in VET? What are the certification procedures for the attestation of a certificate?

- Qualification are achieved, one example (Management Assistant for Retail Services): 3 written examinations, possibility of one additional oral exam (maximum one 5, no 6)
Oral Exam, a complex discussion: 1 to 4, no 5
The whole/combined result: 4 or better
- Assessments in Companies
- Written exams in vocational Schools or training institutions
- Qualifications, proved in examinations and written in Certificates, are important; but one thing will be more important in the future: The competences shown in work practice – independent from the learning process and if it was a formal, informal or non-formal way of achieving the competences. There is a change of Paradigma: From Qualifications to Competences: A long process

17. What do certificates document (acquired knowledge, skills, competences / participation to a course etc.)?

- Certificates document Knowledge

Skills, if exams have practical parts

Participation to a Course: It is only documented by the training institutions

Dual System: Three certification documents

- Certificate of a competent body,
- Written Certificate from the training employer
- Certificate from Part-Time Vocational School

18. How is EURASMENT going to be implemented in your country?

There is no decision till now. We have to discuss the results of EURASMENT with the main political actors of Germany`s VET-System. And we have to find Training Centres which want to use EURASMENT-Profile as a basis for further training programs.

The Greek VET System

Structure of the VET system

1. What is the structure of the VET system in your country?

VET in Greece is provided at Secondary and Post-Secondary Education level and can be initial or continuing.

Secondary IVET (Initial Vocational Education & Training) is provided at Vocational Lyceums (EPAL) and Vocational Schools (EPAS) and the duration is 3 years. Students are led either to tertiary education after completing the prerequisite of the 3-year attendance (Technological Education Institutes, vertical mobility) or to *Post-Secondary IVET*, which is mainly provided at Vocational Training Institutes (IEK, 124 public and 55 private ones) and leads to certification (after 1 or 2 years). Students can have access to such Vocational Training Institutes after three years of Lower Secondary Education (holders of Lower Secondary Education Certificate) or after attendance in a Vocational Lyceum, EPAL, or Vocational School, EPAS (holders of Upper Secondary Education Certificate), depending on the qualification that they want to pursue. Vocational Training Institutes (IEKs) are not classified within the national education system and do not allow vertical mobility towards Tertiary Education.

Continuing training is provided through Vocational Training Centres (KEK, either privately-owned or state-run), Employment Promotion Centres (KPA, under the Ministry of Labour), in-service training modes etc.

2. Which bodies are involved in the provision of Vocational Education and Training?

Initial vocational education & training (formal learning) is provided mainly by OEEK (the Organisation for Vocational Education & Training). Within the framework of the National VET System, OEEK acts as an independent body under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and provides formal IVET, has the overall responsibility of the Public Vocational Training Institutes (IEK) and the supervision and control of the private ones. Other VET providers are the Ministries of Labour, Development, Agriculture, Health, Commercial Marine etc. There are also certain private organizations operating along with the public ones, but they only have a minor role.

Continuing vocational training (non-formal learning) is provided by Universities, Public and Private Organizations, Prefectures, Ministries and NGO's. Training in this case is provided through Vocational Training Centres (KEK, either privately-owned or state-run), Employment Promotion Centres (KPA, run by the Greek Organisation for the Employment of Manpower, under the Ministry of Labour) and other bodies which offer a variety of courses for the unemployed, the self-employed or employees in enterprises.

3. What is the duration and level of studies?

In IEKs (Vocational Training Institutes under OEEK) studies last from 2 up to 4 semesters depending on the qualification. Each vocational training year consists of two integral training semesters (autumn and spring). Every semester includes 14 complete weeks of training.

Although both notions of EQF and NQF are still only theoretical in Greece, it could be considered that IVET offered at Upper Secondary Education level is of level 3 according to the EQF, while IVET offered at Post-Secondary level at the Institutes for Vocational Training (IEKs) is of level 4. Few qualifications resulting from European pilot programmes are currently running and considered

to be of level 5, according to the European Qualifications Framework, but again this kind of EQF classification is only theoretical and has no practical results.

4. Is apprenticeship and work practice compulsory? What are the conditions regulating it and the duration of practice?

Practical training is not compulsory for all specializations. When required it runs within the curriculum.

By decision of the Minister of National Education & Religious Affairs, a six month non-compulsory apprenticeship for graduates of Public and Private Vocational Training Institutes has been established. Graduates of Vocational Training Institutes who have not yet taken their certification exam are eligible to participate. The duration of training in the work place is recognized when applying for professional vocational licenses. Apprenticeship can be carried out in the public sector, in organizations under public or private law as well as in private enterprises. It can last up to 6 months and is usually recommended by the director of studies. During the apprenticeship period, a person from the personnel of the competent IEK is nominated as tutor and is responsible for the correct and safe progress of the students' training. Such period of practical training is recognized as professional experience.

5. Is there vertical and horizontal mobility in your national VET system?

Vertical and horizontal mobility is possible within the Upper Secondary Initial VET system, whereas vertical mobility is not possible in Post-Secondary Education because such education level is not classified within the educational system. Access to Vocational Training Institutes (IEKs) is possible from the appropriate Secondary Education levels, but access from the IEKs to other levels of the Tertiary Education is not allowed.

Qualifications in VET

6. Which bodies are responsible for the development of qualifications?

In what regards the Secondary Initial VET (EQF level 3), the Pedagogical Institute is an advisory body under the Ministry of Education generally responsible for the design of the curricula, the educational material, research and teacher training.

In what regards Post-Secondary Initial VET (EQF level 3 or 4), the body responsible is OEEK (the Organization for VET, under the Ministry of Education), as well as other VET providers. All VET qualifications have to meet certain criteria and to be accredited by the National Accreditation Centre for Vocational Training.

7. Who is involved in the development of qualifications (social partners, training organisations etc.)?

Each qualification is developed upon suggestion submitted either by the Organization for VET (OEEK) or by social partners. Social partners play a significant role in VET, given that they survey the market and its needs and report back to OEEK, suggest the development of new qualifications needed and participate in the structuring of the training guides that govern vocational education.

8. How is a qualification constructed and structured?

There are Tripartite Advisory Committees (consisting of employers, employees and OEEK), whose main task is to survey the labour market at prefectural and local level and consequently propose the introduction of new qualifications in public Vocational Training Institutes or the

withdrawal of older qualifications, when demand drops. Suggestions pass through the Governing Board of OEEK.

9. Are the notions of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credit points’ / ‘learning outcomes’ being used?

Such notions have not been officially introduced in the relative literature and have no practical application, although they are currently used in order to describe qualification profiles resulting from European projects and EQF-based description approaches.

Accumulation, Capitalisation and Transferability

10. Does “transfer” of knowledge, skills and competences exist in your national VET system?

Within the Greek VET system, KSC “transfer” only exists limitedly, when moving from level 3 to level 4 and only in specific and relevant courses. There is also recognition of 1-2 semesters of training when moving from a sector of upper secondary vocational education to a relevant level of IVET, upon presentation of the necessary documentation (certificate of attendance, successful participation in semester exams, successful examination in certain subjects if asked).

11. Is it possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another? If yes, how is this done?

No credit system has been created so far.

12. Is there “accumulation” towards qualification of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credits’? If yes, which stakeholders are involved in the process and how is this done?

There is no method for establishing equivalence between Learning Outcomes, no recognition of KSC acquired abroad and, as aforementioned, only very limited “accumulation” or “transfer” within the Greek VET system itself.

13. Which bodies are responsible for establishing equivalence between qualifications acquired abroad and at home?

The body responsible is the Equivalence Committee, under the Organization for Vocational Education and Training, which grants equivalence to technical and vocational education certificates acquired abroad. Equivalence is also granted to certificates corresponding to technical and vocational national or foreign programmes, which have been abolished.

Assessment and Certification

14. What are the different means of acquiring a certificate (through initial and/or continuing training, through validation of experience)?

A level 3 certificate can be acquired after completion of attendance within the context of the Initial Upper Secondary Vocational Education (Vocational Lyceums) and successful participation in the final end-of-semester exams. A level 4 Vocational Training Certificate (Initial Post-Secondary Vocational Education) can be acquired after attendance in Vocational Training Institutes (IEK) and successful participation in the end-of-year exams. Such Vocational Training Certificated gives access to the Vocational Training Diploma, through participation in the Qualification Exams, after the end of the training and the practice (if applied). For each qualification, such official

Certification Exams are organized twice a year by OEEK, at a panhellenic level, with the aid of the Central Examination Committee for the Certification of Vocational Training, with the representation of the state, the employers and the employees. Exams consist of both a theoretical part and a practical part.

Continuing VET only leads to acquiring certificates of attendance.

No validation of experience has been provided so far.

15. Which are the awarding bodies responsible for accrediting certificates or diplomas in VET?

VET certificates and diplomas are state responsibility in Greece. The body responsible for the issuing of VET certificates and diplomas is the Organization for Vocational Education & Training (OEEK) regarding Initial Post-Secondary Vocational Education & Training, and the Ministry of Education for Certificates regarding Initial Upper Secondary Vocational Education.

16. What assessment and validation procedures are in operation? When is a qualification achieved in VET? What are the certification procedures for the attestation of a certificate?

In the Vocational Lyceums, there are ongoing appraisal procedures applied by the trainer (tests, workshops and laboratory work, written assignments, projects, evaluation of class participation and, finally, participation in the final end-of-year exams). In the Vocational Training Institutes, such ongoing appraisal procedures are also applied. Trainees attend theoretical, laboratory and combined subjects that are compulsory. Throughout the training process, trainees are assessed both through progress tests during the semester, but also with final examinations that take place at the end of each semester. After completion of attendance for each qualification, there is the official Certification Exam, organized twice a year by OEEK with the aid of the Central Examination Committee for the Certification of Vocational Training, with the representation of the state, the employers and the employees. Exams consist of both a theoretical part and a practical part.

17. What do certificates document (acquired knowledge, skills, competences / participation to a course etc.)

Assessment of VET qualifications regards each qualification as a whole (and not parts of it). Certificates document acquired knowledge, skills and competences, and participation to the course (attendance is compulsory).

18. How is the Eurament Training Course going to be implemented in your country?

A new qualification under the title "SME executive" has been very recently implemented in Greece, after the beginning of the Eurament programme. Such qualification is fruit of an initiative taken by the Ministry of Labour and it was mainly intended to address the subject of Entrepreneurship. It ended up to an educational material which became the basis of this new qualification. After consulting OEEK's Training Department, there are plans of adapting the existing qualification in the future in order to make it more compatible with the Eurament context, at least in what regards the basic certification units, so that we can make good use of the Eurament network of training centres and enterprises that will be created. For the moment, there is provision for the exchange of information regarding the aforementioned qualification and for the specification of common grounds.

The Italian VET System

Structure of the VET system

1. What is the structure of the Vet system in your country?

The Italian education system is composed of:

- preschool (not compulsory)
- primary education (first level) - compulsory
- secondary education (first level) – compulsory
- secondary education (second level) – compulsory in the first two years (educational obligation). The Act 53/03 has established the right/duty of the citizen until 18 years old to have an education. The second cycle, according to this law, comprises the post secondary school divided into
 - high schools system identifies eight different courses typologies; courses last 5 years, they end with an exam in order to have access to the University; they depend on government institutions
 - professional education and training (IFP); courses last three/four or five years and they end with an exam which enables to obtain both a qualification or a diploma; only in the second case it's possible to enter University; training bodies depend on Regions, schools on the Government.

This system has changed a lot; the Act 228/06 has established times to adjust the Decrees 76/05 and 77/05.

The Act 296/06 – paragraphs 622, 624 – introduces the obligation to have an education until 16 years old starting from the year 2007-2008; so a person can enter a job only at 16 years old (Decree by the Ministry of Education – 22/08/07 – which contains the Regulation concerning the educational obligation).

The Act 40/07, art. 13 changes and re-defines the division of the second cycle, described above, into:

- high schools
- technical schools
- tertiary colleges
- schools of art and arts colleges

This Act also defines rules to create the technical – professional Poli and annuls the Decree 226/05 which establishes two types of high schools (the economic school and the technological school); it establishes the starting of the courses related to the Second cycle reform in 2009-2010.

The high secondary education depends on the Ministry of Public Education (MPI) and the information can be find in the website www.istruzione.it where it's possible to enter also the websites of the regional and local bodies.

Further information and databases can be found in the websites of other bodies such as the Agency for the Education Development (ex INDIRE and IRRE) and the Assessment National Body (INVALSI).

- Higher education

- academic – Decree 509/99 and Decree 270/04 – which foresees three levels: Degree, Graduate Studies, PhD
- non academic – Act 144/99 Art. 69, Act 296/06, Act 40/07, Decree 25/01/08 published on the 11th April 2008. Such degree re-organizes the IFTS and establishes the Technical Colleges

2. What is the duration and level of studies?

The Italian education and training system is divided into three levels:

- primary and first cycle
- second cycle
- post secondary education and training.

Primary and first cycle school

Primary (elementary) school, lasting 5 years (from 6 to 11 years old), and first-grade secondary education (middle school), lasting 3 years (from 11 to 14). Elementary and middle school form the first cycle, whereas secondary school (or high school) constitutes the second cycle. In the first cycle the student has to pass a final exam in order to acquire the degree functional to enter to the second cycle.

Information can be found on the website www.istruzione.it

Second cycle

The second cycle lasts 5 years (from 14 to 19 years old) and it enables:

at the end of the two year period to meet the educational obligation

at the end of the third year concerning the vocational path to obtain a vocational qualification (first level)

at the end of the whole training path (5 years) after the final exam to obtain the diploma.

Post secondary education and training

It is composed of:

ITS (Technical Colleges) lasting two years and enabling to obtain a diploma for a higher technical specialization (Energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, new life technologies, new technologies for made in Italy, new technologies for Cultural Heritage, ICT)

IFTS programmes last one year and they enable to obtain a qualification for a higher technical specialization.

3. Is apprenticeship and work practice compulsory? What are the conditions regulating it and the duration of practice?

The apprenticeship is compulsory only for those leaving the school at the age of 16 (see Act 296/06), while the work practice is compulsory only in tertiary colleges; actually it is a practice used in lots of Italian schools. The Italian situation is not uniform; apprenticeship activities for young people under the age of 18 are managed at national level by the Act 24 June 1997, n. 196. To order the new courses specific regulations have been adopted at regional level. In the second cycle all information about three-year educational courses and apprenticeship can be find in the Regions websites or in the following one www.tecnostruttura.it

4. Which bodies are involved in the provision of Vocational Education and Training?

The I.F.T.S. system – Post-secondary non academic education - represents a new system within the Italian educational scenario. In Italy the first Post-secondary non-academic system has been created in 1999.¹ The non academic Higher Education (IFTS) system, set up under the Act n.144 on 17 May 1999, provides post-secondary school education in technical areas and is aimed at professional training and re-training. The objective is to remain close to the job market and to respond to the needs of business in a rapid and reactive manner. The Act 296/06 – par. 631 – redefines IFTS in order to enhance the vocational training.

IFTS is jointly planned by the Ministry of Public Education, the Ministry of Employment and Social Policies, Regional governments and the autonomous Provinces of Bolzano and Trento; the National Planning Committee, which lays down procedures, guidelines and minimum national standards. Regional governments plan the courses, mould the guidelines to the different local requirements and call for bids to finance the projects. The courses are planned and managed in an integrative manner by second level secondary education institutes, research public bodies, vocational training organizations, universities, enterprises or their associations.

Training organizations should be recognized according to the Act 196/97 – art. 17 - . This Act establishes that the guidelines should be adopted by a Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers according to a proposal done by the Ministry of the Public Education together with other Ministries after consultation with the Unified Conference.

The Act 40/07 designs the re-organization of IFTS into high non academic schools which, together with the new technical schools and the recognized training organizations, can join together into Poli (Partnerships) at provincial level.

IFTS courses match national standards decided by the Unified Conference and they depend on Regions; the information can be found in the websites of

- Regions
- MPI
- INDIRE www.indire.it/IFTS
- www.tecnostruttura.it

5. Is there vertical and horizontal mobility in your national VET system?

The vertical mobility represents the passage to the labour market; the horizontal one deals with the passage among different systems. It can be done only according to specific agreements.

Qualification in VET

6. Which bodies are responsible for the development of qualifications?

It's necessary to separate between BAC (diploma) where the Ministry of Education is responsible for; while the bodies in charge of issuing the qualifications are the Regions.

7. Who is involved in the development of qualifications?

A cooperative model is adopted for course planning: it is performed by Regional governments, but must guarantee the integration of the different formative systems. Planning follows guidelines and standards established at the national level through regulations concerning VET (specifically the Regulations concerning the implementation of the institutive law of IFTS courses, law no. 144/1999), adopted by the Ministries of Education, of Labour and social policies, and of

¹ Law 144/99 art. 69

University and Scientific Research, (Act 144/1999, art. 1) after consultation with the Unified Conference

The Agreement adopted within the Unified Conference of 14th September 2000, which concerns the guidelines and system policies for the planning of IFTS courses for the years 2000-2001, stresses the importance of consultation with the Regional Governments and Municipalities, as well as with Social Partners. Regional Governments are responsible for the identification of professional figures and the implementation of professional profiles, the definition of minimal standards of competences and their implementation (Agreements 2nd August 2000; 11th November 2000; 29th April 2004; 25th November 2004; April 2005)

IFTS courses are jointly planned by at least four different players

- second level secondary schools,
- universities
- public research bodies
- vocational training organizations and enterprises and their associations.

For each project, a Technical Committee must be constituted, with representatives of all the actors involved. The Technical Committee is responsible for

- the coordination and supervision of the course planning
- course management and monitoring,
- internal and external assessment.

One of its main focus is the harmonization of the contributions of the various players and their effective cooperation. It is formally responsible for the project activities; both internal and external subjects directly refer to the Technical Committee for all issues regarding the course. The TC relates itself to the Regional Committee, which performs consultation, orientation and assessment functions with respect to the TC. A member of the TC also acts as course Director, who subscribes the course proposal and is in charge of supervising all planning and management activities.

The TC can set up support committees and staff when necessary, such as:

- Design Committee, comprising experts in the design of formative paths and representatives of the various players involved in the project. It can aid the TC in designing the formative path
- Management staff (e.g. coordinators, tutors coordinator, administrative office), with assignments related to course management, following the strategies identified by the TC.

IFTS courses are selected and funded following a public call for proposals, through which new projects are submitted. Regional Committees are responsible for the ex ante assessment of proposals for new IFTS courses, which aims at evaluating the coherency of each project with the regional objectives and priorities, and is the basis for the selection of projects to be funded. Regional Committees are also in charge of monitoring in itinere the management of local IFTS courses, and of assessing ex post the results achieved, in view of redefining the IFTS regional plans. Even if guidelines are established by regulations concerning IFTS, which for instance suggest which aspects should be given priority in project selections, each Regional Committee can independently specify the criteria for admitting and selecting IFTS courses (on top of the constraints specified by laws and regulations regarding the structure of IFTS courses).

8. How is a qualification constructed and structured?

Reference *professional figures*, along with a system of *minimal standards of competences* that characterize them, have been defined at the national level.

At the regional level, such minimal standards are *implemented*, that is, *additional competences* are included in order to meet local requirements. In this way the national professional figures are contextualized, obtaining specific *Regional Professional Profiles*.

These profiles give place to IFTS courses structured in terms of units of capitalisation (UC), defined as group of competences, independently meaningful, recognizable on the job field as specific professional activities. A circular system, bottom-up and top-down, has been built for the definition and the update of the national system for minimal standards of competence. Starting from local demands in terms of professional skill and competences, the Sector Committees define national standards that are subsequently implemented on a local basis to satisfy specific needs and requirements. Regional Committees provide feedback for the continuous update and verification of the national standards. Coherence among the minimal standards and professional profiles is discussed within the Regional IFTS Committees and the National IFTS Committee. Regional governments are therefore responsible for:

- the identification of professional figures,
- the definition of the minimal standards of competences,
- the identification of specific aspects of the related professional profiles
- the implementation of minimal standards.
- the issue of the notification
- the choice of the administrative and accounting procedures.

9. Are the notions of “knowledge, skills and competences/units/modules/credit points/learning outcomes” being used?

The IFTS standard is made of a common part (Level A) and a subsidiary one (Level B); in the level A we can find

- the description of the working processes
- the activities
- key-competences meant as learning outputs (the person is able to...)
- learning outcomes (the person should know how to...)

In the level B, the units are described as learning outcomes ranged into descriptors and indicators; the correspondence is not uniform and it can be done between indicators and knowledge and descriptors and skills/competences.

In the IFTS standard the units called capitalizable are divided for the European worker into base, technical – professional and cross competences (behaviour, relation, autonomy and responsibility). Credits are not linked to units.

As far as the design of formative path is concerned, the project group is constituted by experts in European Community tools and guidelines for path design, by teachers/trainers with specific experience in adult training and re-qualification that contribute to the definition of formative units, and by representatives of University and labour market.

The Technical Committee is responsible for monitoring VET demand. The analysis of educational needs is generally performed by secondary schools or VET institutions. A reference professional figure is selected based on surveys conducted by local administrations (e.g. Provinces) that monitor the territory and evaluated VET demand and needs at the local level.

With respect to the definition of formative objectives, it must be pointed out that, within each course, formative objectives must be coherent with the definition of formative needs. The latter results as a trade-off between:

- users' needs;
- VET demand – elaborated at a macro level by social partners and political makers through the analysis of labour market and at a micro level by local entrepreneurs;
- expectations of development and employability within the local social and economic context.

Competence represents what a subject should be “able to do”, formative objectives represent the result of the formative path as a result of which a subject should “know what to do in order to able to do something”. Formative objectives, also known as learning outcome, are the result of different learning paths (formal, non-formal and informal) and must be certifiable and comprehensible.

Courses must satisfy the following requirements that have been established at the national level:

- the duration of the course is comprised between two and four semesters, for a total amount of time of no less than 1200 hours and no more than 2400. For working students, the timetable of the course can be appropriately extended. Each semester comprises theoretical, practical and laboratory activities. Formative paths targeting working adults must take into account their professional commitments in defining the course timetable and types of activities. Stages and/or internships are mandatory and must amount to at least 30% of the entire course; they must meet quality standards requirements and they can be carried out either in Italy or abroad and placed within the relating European certification systems
- courses are designed and managed by at least five actors: the school, vocational training, university, public or state enterprise, research centres bound together by a formal act
- curricula are articulated in base, cross and technical-professional competences
- courses have a modular structure and are based on units (CU) meant as a group of competences recognized by the labour market as specific jobs and expected outcome after the training path
- at least 50% of the teaching staff must be formed by experts from the reference professional field, with at least 5 years experience
- independence by the school year timetable
- guidance and orientation activities must be provided, to support the achievement of formative credits and final and intermediate certifications and to support students in finding suitable employment
- for each course, criteria for credit recognition must be identified
- a technical committee, constituted by the representatives of the organizations listed in point 2 is responsible for the course
- acquisition of base, cross and technical-professional competences at the end of courses
- reference to the jobs classification regarding intermediate technicians adopted by the National Statistics Institute and the fourth EU certification level adopted with the Council Decision 85/368/CEE.

The Regional committees can also provide guidelines, and set up further requirements for courses to be funded.

The law establishes that IFTS courses must have a modular structure, and be organized by Formative Units of Capitalisation, which integrate Units of Capitalisation (on which certification is based) and Formative Units. Following this approach, a FUC is defined as the reference element

for the recognition competences for subsequent certification, as well as an effective instrument for path planning and design.

The stage should be consistent with the formative objectives of the course, classroom activities and the students' professional expectations and preferences. The companies that will host the internships should be involved in overall course planning activities, and in specific planning activities devoted to stages and internships. Specifically, company supervisors (i.e. employees that will supervise students during the stage) should be involved in the planning of activities, in order to ensure consistency between stage and classroom activities, and to devise tools for the assessment of the results achieved during the stage itself.

The micro-planning Group should be integrated by training tutor and company tutor; they will check the coherence between classroom and company activities and define evaluation procedures of outcomes acquired during the internship.

The stage can be located at the end of the course, or distributed in various modules along the formative path.

Teaching staff is employed with flexible contracts, and there is not a stable teacher pool for IFTS courses. Teaching staff is selected among secondary school teachers, VET institutions trainers, University professors and experts from the labour market.

Assessment and Certification

10. What assessment and validation procedures are in operation? When is a qualification achieved in VET? What are the certification procedures for the attestation of a certificate?

In IFTS courses students' evaluation is performed both in itinere, in order to assess learning outcome for a given FUC, and at the end of the path.

Guidelines and criteria for assessment and certification were established within the Agreement of the Unified Conference of March 2nd, 2000 which sets also the format to be used for the certification of courses.

Assessment exams of IFTS courses are divided into:

- an individual colloquium regarding the discussion of
 - the student Personal Record, prepared by the teachers and documenting the various phases of the formative path, the assessment of the stage activities as well as of the knowledge and professional competences acquired by the student
 - a student's report, prepared by the student, in which he/she presents the work done during the path. For this purpose, the student supplies the materials produced during the course and the documentation concerning the acquired competences and skills. The personal record and the student's survey must be handed to the Board of Examiners at least 5 days before the preliminary meeting
- a simulation test, by means of which the output competences that constitute the objective of the IFTS course can be verified on an individual basis.

Admission to the final exam is given by the availability of the personal record and the student's survey.

The final tests are prepared by the board of examiners, coherently with the path designed by the Technical Committee. Grades are given by the board of examiners: 70% is given by the colloquium, 30% by the simulation test. The exam is successfully passed with a minimum grade of 60 out of 100 (at least 42 for the colloquium and 18 for the test).

Upon successfully completion of the final exam, the student is issued a certificate. If the student fails the exam, he/she is issued an “Intermediate Declaration”, stating which competences were acquired, in order to support the recognition of formative credits in subsequent courses.

A specific report should certify all exams identifying the acquired evaluation and the relating score. The declaration of the acquired score is issued at the instance of the student.

11. Which are the awarding bodies responsible for accrediting certificates or diplomas in VET?

The Board of examiners is appointed with a formal act by each Region. It is constituted by representatives of the four actors involved in the IFTS system, with professional profiles and experiences coherent with the subject matter of the course; the Board is made by:

- the President, appointed by the Region after consulting the IFTS Regional Committee
- 2 members selected from the course teaching staff and proposed by the course Director
- 2 experts, representatives of the reference professional field, appointed by the Region after consulting the IFTS Regional Committee.

Regarding the President and the other 2 members, appointed by the Technical Committee of each course, the Region is in charge of establishing each Board of examiners ensuring the involvement of school, University and vocational training representatives and the experts.

At the of an IFTS course, final exams are held; the board of examiner is appointed by the Regional government, and its composition ensures the participation of representatives of secondary schools, university, VET providers and experts from the labour market. Upon successful completion of the examination procedure, the participant is issued a Certification by the Regional government, following the format and procedures established by the Agreement signed by the Unified Conference of State, Regions, and Autonomous Provinces on March 2nd, 2000. The national certificate model is determined by the National Committee and corresponds to the 4th European level. An intermediate declaration is issued when the course is not completed, to enable recognition of formative credits in subsequent formative paths.

12. What are the different means of acquiring a certificate?

13. What do certificates document?

Certification is a procedure finalized to the official recognition of a *qualification*, or part of it, by an accredited institution.

Certification is thus based on a procedure for assessing learning outcomes (e.g. based on colloquia, tests, practical examinations) and a validation procedure. A certificate or diploma is an official document that registers the qualification achieved and the results of learning outcome assessment. Certification can refer to the entire course, or part of it, or could be also based on a set of certifications. Each certification, either complete or partial, can provide the recognition of formative credits and the exemption from formative units and/or units of capitalisation.

A qualification is achieved when a national or international agency or legally entitled body ascertains that an individual has gained knowledge and skills up to a certain, predefined, level. The achievement of competences and skills at a given level is confirmed by the successful completion of an examination procedure and/or a given formative path. Learning and assessment of learning outcome can be achieved not only through a formative path, but also through professional experience. A qualification is officially recognized on the labour market and in subsequent formative/educational experiences. Finally, a qualification can constitute a legal entitlement to a certain profession (OECD definition).

Accumulation, capitalisation and transferability

14. Is it possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another? If yes, how is this done?

Credits acquired in an IFTS course can be recognized by the University that participates in the Technical Committee itself. Credit transfer is still based on mutual agreements, and is not enforced or regulated by the law. When the course proposal is submitted, the University states how many credits would be recognized in exit from the course. It is therefore of the utmost importance that institutions responsible for the subsequent recognition of formative credits (Universities, institutions at the regional level) are involved in the design of the formative path. The transfer of credits is usually done according to specific agreements with the University and other training centres.

15. Does “transfer” of knowledge, skills and competences exist in your national VET system?

16. Which bodies are responsible for establishing equivalence between qualifications acquired abroad and at home?

Only according to an agreement signed between different bodies.

In principle, IFTS courses can be accessed by students possessing a secondary school degree. Students without a secondary school degree can be admitted, provided that they can demonstrate adequate linguistic and mathematical skills, not necessarily acquired in a school setting. Skills necessary to successfully attend a post-secondary level course are established by the law, as well as the procedures to verify their possession.

Recognition of input competences (also informal and non formal competences) is also foreseen by the IFTS regulations; the recognition process usually starts after the participants selection. This process aims at:

- verifying students' characteristics (certifications, past experiences, acquired competences, and so on) are suitable to course typology
- certify possible competences already acquired that constitute formative credits for the determination of individual paths
- provide, when necessary, specific support and/or integrative activities to ensure successful attendance of the course

According to regional guidelines each Committee in charge of planning IFTS courses identifies the specific procedures and tools to carry out the recognition taking into account the training path and the users' typology.

For the purpose of credit recognition, a Personal Record is used to document the student's previous curriculum. The Personal Record is produced by the prospective student, with the assistance of a guidance tutor, and will contain specific information which are documented, self-declared and/or deepened within specific interviews in the following fields:

- education and training (for example, titles, certificates, formative experiences, courses contents, acquired competences and knowledge)
- job (for instance, documentation concerning working experiences, sector, activities, outcomes, acquired competences and knowledge)
- internships, charity work or other (for instance, documentation regarding experiences, activities, acquired competences and knowledge).

The Personal Record is evaluated by an Accreditation Technical Committee, established by the Regions with the same criteria and procedure established for the appointment of the Board of Examiners as decided by the Agreement of the Unified Conference 2nd March 2000 published on the G.U. 161 – 12th July 2000.

The Technical Accreditation Committee, taking into account the Dossier and the project, gives its opinions concerning the recognition of competences, already acquired, to get credits in order to have an individual path or to define specific measures or integrative modules. The decision of the Accreditation Committee must be motivated and verbalized; upon request of the student, a certification can be issued.

17. Is there “accumulation” towards qualification of “knowledge, skills and competences/units/modules/credits”? If yes, which stakeholders are involved in the process and how is this done?

No, it can happen only in an informal way by a voluntary recognition of the training body.

18. How is the Eurasment Training Course going to be implemented in your country?

Some units described in the profile are going to be implemented in

- several secondary schools (technical - commercial studies)
- IFTS programmes as a profile referred to two or three vocational figures in the industry and crafts sector
- ITS (technical colleges); since the Decree has been approved in the April 2008 the vocational standards have not been defined yet.

The more suitable training path should be the IFTS programme. Unfortunately this kind of programmes depend on an unfixed funding.

The Polish VET System

Structure of the VET system

1. What is the structure of the VET system in your country?

Vocational education for young people starts at “Post Gymnasium School”. Pupils can choose between Vocational School and Technical School. As a supplement after the Vocational School is “Technical School after Vocational School”. After this level pupils can pass the exam (matura). The next level in vocational education is “Post lyceum school” or higher education. Higher education can be proceeded only with “matura”. In other case students can continue education in “Post lyceum school”.

Furthermore adults can achieve vocational qualifications by participation in non formal vocational education (courses, training, seminars, vocational practice).

2. Which bodies are involved in the provision of Vocational Education and Training?

In polish VET System are involved following bodies: Craft Chambers, Practical Training Centers, Vocational Schools, Employers, in collaboration with schools provide vocational training.

3. What is the duration and level of studies?

Vocational School: 2 or 3 years

Technical School after Vocational School: 3 years

Technical School: 4 years

“Post Vocational School”: 1 or 2 years

Duration of the studies depends on the job profession.

4. Is apprenticeship and work practice compulsory? What are the conditions regulating it and the duration of practice?

On the basis of decree of Ministry of Education from 1.07.2002 the work practice is compulsory. Vocational School is obligated to assure the work place in a company. Regulations about duration, content are included in a school curriculum approved by Ministry of Education and takes from 4-12 weeks depending on training.

5. Is there vertical and horizontal mobility in your national VET system?

In polish VET system dominate vertical mobility. Most students prefer acheiving new, higher competences,

Qualifications in VET

6. Which bodies are responsible for the development of qualifications?

See point 2

7. Who is involved in the development of qualifications?

See point 2

8. How is a qualification constructed and structured?

There are 2 vocational classifications:

1. led by Ministry of Education and
 2. led by Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.
- To each qualification is defined professional profile (activities, tasks, skills, knowledge).

9. Are the notions of ‘knowledge, skills and competences/ units/modules/credit points/ learning outcomes being used?’

The notions knowledge, skills, competences to each Job profile are defined and characterised in Curriculum standard by the Ministry of Education. So they are in common use in vocational education. Some of the curricula base on modules but not all.

Accumulation, Capitalisation and Transferability

10. Does ‘transfer’ of knowledge, skills and competence exist in your national VET system?

The transfer of knowledge, skills, and competences in national VET system exists only on some conditions. A certificate from one Vocational School can be validated in another Vocational School in the same profile and on the same education level. The curriculum are validated by local department of education, so the are comparable. It does not exist credit points or transfer of modules.

11. Is it possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another? If so, how is this done?

It is not impossible until now. Credits does not exist.

12. Is there ‘accumulation’ towards qualification of knowledge, skills and competences/units/modules/credits? If yes, which stakeholders are involved in the process and how is this done?

Accumulation of knowledge, skills and competences/ units/modules/credits is not possible.

13. Which bodies are responsible for establishing equivalence between qualifications acquired abroad and at home?

It does not exist a clear procedure for transferring of competences and knowledge achieved abroad.

Assessment and Certification

14. What are the different means of acquiring a certificate?

Students can take an examination by Local Examination Board. The exam consists of theoretical part and practical part. First part has to verify knowledge and competences gained during the education process. After the theoretical part students take practical exam in particular job profile.

Students can obtain a diploma which confirms their vocational qualifications in a given job profile. They can also take an exam by the Trade Examination Board and gain a title of a craftsman.

15. Which are the Awarding Bodies responsible for accrediting certificates or diplomas in VET?

The local Education Departments are the Awarding Bodies, which are responsible for accrediting training centres and certificates.(68b education system) in non formal education. In the case of schools Awarding Body is a Local Examination Board under surveillance of Central Examination Board.

16. What assessment and validation procedures are in operation?

Detailed assessment and validation procedures are specified in individual status of training centres which base on decree of Ministry of Education from 30.04.2007. It contains assessment criteria and are approved by Examination Board and Local department of Education.

15. When is a qualification achieved in VET?

Vocational qualification can be achieved in formal or non formal education process. Students can attend Vocational School or Technical School and then take an examination.

In non formal education adults can participate in vocational courses and then take Examination in some job profiles.

16. What are the certification procedures for the attestation of a certificate?

Until now, no certification procedures exist in what regards the attestation of a certificate.

17. What do certificates document (acquired knowledge, skills, competences/participation to a course)?

Certificate which is obtained by the apprenticeship contains the title of the profession, which was obtained and the mark, which was gained after the exam. It does not contain acquired knowledge, skills or competences.

18. How is the Eurasment training course going to be implemented in your country?

In the Polish VET System exists a curriculum of "Technical Administration", which is very similar to Assistant Manager of SME's. ZDZ intends to implement this course in the next school year.

The implementation of some modules of Assistant Manager of SME's is possible during the school year 2008/2009 as mobility student exchange program.

The Portuguese VET System

Preface:

With the recent creation and implementation of the *National Catalogue of Qualifications*, the whole Portuguese VET system is at the present being restructured in order to secure uniformity within school degrees and skills qualifications awarded in the Education System and in the Vocational Education Training System. Nowadays, the *National Catalogue of Qualifications*, which encloses all the existent double certification training, only includes the Initial Training for Adults (until the EQF 4th level). In the future, the Initial Training for Young People will be integrated in the *Catalogue*, as well as the entire post-EQF level 4 training offer.

Within this transition framework, the answers given in this questionnaire take into account not only the actual stage of the evolution of the restructure of our VET System, but also the programmed measures for the future.

Structure of the VET system

1. What is the structure of the VET system in your country?

The Portuguese Education System follows the model laid down in the Basic Law of the Education System, published in Law no. 46/86, of 14 October. It is organized into three differentiated subsystems, each one with its own specific ends:

- Preschool education, which complements and/or supplements the educational action within the family and with which it works closely;
- school education, which covers basic, secondary and higher education and which includes special modalities and after-school activities;
- extra-school education, which is carried out in an open framework of multiple initiatives, of a formal and non-formal nature, and is aimed at complementing previously-acquired school qualifications and/or making up for gaps and deficiencies.

Vocational Training in Portugal is legally framed by the Basic Law of the Education System and Decree-laws no. 401/91 and no. 405/91, differentiating between:

- vocational training integrated in the education system;
- vocational training integrated in the labour market.

These two training offers are articulated by the principles, purposes, certification process and main concepts, making it possible to establish relationships between them, particularly as regards occupations and respective skills qualification levels.

Vocational Training includes initial and continuing training modalities:

- Initial Vocational Training is aimed at acquiring skills that are crucial for the start-up of an occupation. It is the first complete training programme that qualifies an individual to perform the tasks that make up a function or occupation.
- Continuing Vocational Training includes all organised and institutionalised training processes that follow the initial vocational training in order to permit an adaptation to technological and technical changes, favour the social promotion of individuals and contribute towards their cultural, economic and social development

2. Which bodies are involved in the provision of Vocational Education and Training?

The **Portuguese Education System** and the **Vocational Training integrated in the Education System** are exclusively supported by the Ministry of Education.

The institutional base supporting the **Vocational Training integrated in the Labour Market** is the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity.

Both of these ministries are responsible for Double Certification training.

The bodies responsible for providing Vocational Education and Training are schools universities and training organisations (public or private).

3. What is the duration and level of studies?

The Portuguese basic education has the total duration of 9 years and can be accomplished through Education and training courses (for adults or for young people). There are four kinds of Education and training courses for young people: Specialized Art Education, Apprenticeship courses, Initial Skill courses and Vocational courses.

Secondary Education can be accomplished through the same training courses as the basic education ones. In order to achieve a secondary school degree, trainees must have a 3 years training course.

Post secondary is achieved in a two years duration training courses that are called Technological Specialization Courses.

4. Is apprenticeship and work practice compulsory? What are the conditions regulating it and the duration of practice?

Education and Training for Young People

The Joint Order n° 453/2004 establishes that for all courses (with 1200 hours or 2200 hours), the work practice is compulsory and has the total duration of 6 six weeks.

Education and Training for Adults

All courses with a skills qualification level 2 include 120 hours of work practice for the adults who don't exercise the professional activity related to the correspondent professional opportunity of each course (Joint Order n° 1083/2000).

Apprenticeship system

The legislation that regulates the **apprenticeship system** (DL 205/96), determinates that work practice (as part of the practical training) is compulsory, taking place all along the training process (Article 2º, n° 3). The duration of work practice should be, at least, 30 % of the whole training period (Article 2º, n° 4).

5. Is there vertical and horizontal mobility in your national VET system?

In the framework of the **High Education sub-system**, vertical and horizontal mobility is guaranteed by the formal adoption of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (artº 44º, DL 74/2006, 24th March) within the European Qualification Framework

In the other VET sub-systems:

- Vertical mobility: the several VET sub-systems give direct access to higher skills qualifications levels or higher school degrees.
- Horizontal mobility between the several VET sub-systems: so far, mobility happens punctually and merely inside each VET sub-system; in 2008, with the full adoption of the European Credit System for VET, horizontal mobility will exist in the entire Education and VET system.
- Horizontal mobility within the *National Catalogue of Qualifications* happens through the accomplishment of *training units* which are common to different skills qualifications.

Qualifications in VET

6. Which bodies are responsible for the development of qualifications?

The body responsible for the development of skills qualifications in Portugal is the *National Agency for Qualifications* (within the framework of the *National System of Qualifications*), which is a public institute, trusted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity and the Ministry of Education.

7. Who is involved in the development of qualifications? (social partners, training organisations etc.)

The *National System of Qualifications* is co-ordinated by:

- the **government** members who are responsible for the national VET areas;
- the *National Council for VET*;
- the *National Agency for Qualifications*;
- the *Follow-up Committee for the Quality of the Certification System for Training Organisations*.

Social partners are involved in the *National System of Qualifications* as they participate in the *National Council for VET*, in the *National Agency for Qualifications* and in the *Follow-up Committee for the Quality of the Certification System for Training Organisations*.

The *National System of Qualifications* structure includes not only the **Training Organisations**, but also the **Skills and Competences Acknowledgment, Assessment and Certification Centres**.

In order to develop the skills qualifications described in the *National Catalogue of Qualifications*, the *National Agency for Qualifications* has the assistance of several **Sectoral Councils for Qualifications**, represented by specialists of the different activity sectors.

8. How is a qualification constructed and structured?

The *National Catalogue of Qualifications* (tool created by the *National Agency for Qualifications*) defines, for each skills qualification:

- It's professional profile: set of activities related to the skills qualification as well as the knowledge, skills and competences required to carry out these activities;
- It's double certification training benchmark description, which has two different components: a basic training component (school) and a technological training component (professional) which is organized in a modular structure (composed by *short term training units* of 25 or 50 hours).

A "Skills Qualification" means, in the scope of the *National System of Qualifications*, the formal result of assessment and validation process acknowledged by a competent body, which recognizes that an individual has acquired competences, in the framework of the training benchmark description.

9. Are the notions of 'knowledge, skills and competences' / 'units' / 'modules' / 'credit points' / 'learning outcomes' being used?

In the framework of the VET System, all of these terms are also being used:

- In the *National Catalogue of Qualifications*, the achievement of the set of activities related to each skills qualification is described in terms of **knowledge, skills and competences**;
- The training benchmark description is constructed on a **modular** basis, which is organized in *short term training units*;
- In 2008, the *short term training units* will be divided in *Competences units* which will focus **learning outcomes**;
- To these *Competences units* will be attributed **credit points**.

The Technologic Specialization VET sub-system (which awards a level 4 skills qualification) is also already using **ECTS credits** (european credit transfer and accumulation system).

In the scope of the High Education sub-system, the legislation that adapted a new organization structure for the Education System in 2005 formally adopted the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. In 2006, the law 74/2006 issued by the Ministry of Science, Technology and High Education aimed at regulating all the changes introduced by the previous diploma using all of these notions.

Accumulation, Capitalisation and Transferability

10. Does "transfer" of knowledge, skills and competences exist in your national VET system?

In the framework of the *National Catalogue of Qualifications*, the "transfer" of knowledge, skills and competences will be possible through an *Individual Carnet of Competences* which aim is to register all the competences acquired by an individual in a long life learning perspective.

With this *Individual Carnet of Competences*, individuals will be able to obtain a *Qualification Certificate* for each training unit accomplished, allowing them to "transfer" the knowledge, skills and competences acquired through these units to conclude the training plan of the initial skills qualification aimed, or another one that includes the training units accomplished.

11. Is it possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another? If yes, how is this done?

After the restructure of the Portuguese VET System (in course), it will be possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another. Nowadays, it is not possible yet.

12. Is there “accumulation” towards qualification of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credits’? If yes, which stakeholders are involved in the process and how is this done?

The *Individual Carnet of Competences* allows its titular to cumulate several training units in order to obtain skills qualification. If these training units are common to more than one skills qualification, it is possible to obtain the other(s) skills qualification(s) by cumulating the different training units.

The stakeholders involved in this process are the certified training organizations, the Skills and Competences Acknowledgment, Assessment and Certification Centres and all the bodies involved in the *National System of Qualifications*.

13. Which bodies are responsible for establishing equivalence between qualifications acquired abroad and at home?

In Portugal, the recognition of professional qualifications acquired in a foreign country is carried by the:

- General System for the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Automatic Recognition System of the European Union;
- National Skills Certification System;
- Recognition of Foreign Higher Qualifications.

Assessment and Certification

14. What are the different means of acquiring a certificate? (through initial and/or continuing training, through validation of experience)

Through **Initial Training**, trainees acquire simultaneously a double certification: a school degree and a skills qualification.

This system also allows individuals who already have a school degree certificate to acquire subsequently a skills qualification (Technologic Specialization training).

If the profession related to the particular skills qualification obtained is registered, the certificate issue by the training organization will be used to obtain the Vocational Aptitude Certificate which proves that an individual has the necessary vocational skills to pursue a specific profession with quality.

Through **Continuing Training**, individuals obtain a certificate that officially states the skills they possess/acquired. This certificate, if related to a specified registered profession, can also be used to obtain the Vocational Aptitude Certificate.

The **Skills and Competences Acknowledgment, Assessment and Certification Centres** allows individuals to obtain a Certificate that attests a school degree, or a skills qualification or both (double certification). All these certificates validate the individual’s own experience.

15. Which are the awarding bodies responsible for accrediting certificates or diplomas in VET?

In the **Portuguese Education system**, all school degrees are granted through the Ministry of Education which is the body responsible for school progression and school certification.

In the VET System, in order to be able to award certificates, training organizations must be accredited by the *Directorate-General for Employment and Labour Relations* (Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity) and the body/bodies responsible for:

- accrediting a double certification are the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity (skills qualification) and Ministry of Education (school degree);
- accrediting a skills qualification is the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity through the Employment and Vocational Training Institute;
- accrediting a specific school degree is the Ministry of Education;
- awarding a specific skills certification is the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity through the National Skills Certification System, established within the framework of the Employment and Vocational Training Institute (whose objective is to certify all competent professionals, irrespective of the manner in which they acquired the skills, i.e. whether through vocational training, work experience or training undertaken in another country, namely a European Union member state).
- The National Skills Certification System defines the certifying bodies able to issue the Vocational Aptitude Certificates (Skills Certification) for each different registered profession. These bodies are responsible for the certification of the vocational aptitude of individuals from a specific sector or professional area and for the approval of the respective vocational training courses.

16. What assessment and validation procedures are in operation? When is a qualification achieved in VET? What are the certification procedures for the attestation of a certificate?

In **Initial Training**, assessment and validation procedures are defined by legislation issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity and the Ministry of Education. The training assessment and validation procedures are fulfilled through continuous and final assessment.

In **Continuous Training**, assessment and validation procedures are defined by each training organization and can consist in continuous assessment and/or final assessment.

In VET, a skills qualification can be achieved by three different means:

- through the training offer of the National Catalogue of Qualifications;
- through the acknowledgement, validation and certification of skills;
- through the acknowledgement of certifications acquired in other countries.

17. What do certificates document (acquired knowledge, skills, competences / participation to a course etc.)

Certificates can:

- Award a double certification: school degree and a skills qualification (Qualification Diploma for the Qualifications included in the National Catalogue of Qualifications and Vocational Training Certificate for the others);
- Award a school degree;
- Attest the accomplishment of one or more training units (Qualification Certificate);
- Attest a skills qualification (Vocational Training Certificate);
- Attest the participation in a course (Vocational Training Certificate);
- Validate the individual experience (non-formal and informal learning)

18. How is the Eurasment Training Course going to be implemented in your country?

The following steps shall be taken for implementing the Eurasment training course:

- to elaborate the training programme based on the reference material (competences, skills and knowledge) and on the modular approach adopted;

- to integrate the training course into CECOIA's Training Plan²;
- to request the creation and authorization to implement the training course to the competent body from the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity³
- to integrate the Eurament professional profile and training referential in the Portuguese National Catalogue of Qualifications (which is the Catalogue that comprehends all the qualifications recognized by the national competent authorities);
- To promote the Training course in order to recruit and select trainees;
- To recruit and select trainers;
- To organise related logistics (trainers, equipment, didactic resources, etc...)

² The Training course will begin as soon as all conditions are gathered.

³ For this step, CECOIA must deliver several forms with informations like the training programme for the general and scientific component; the training programme for the Technological component; the professional profile; the number max. of students per class; the number ma. of students taking the course; etc...

The Romanian VET System

Structure of the VET system

1. What is the structure of VET system in your country?

The Romanian VET system includes lower secondary education level (IX grade – X grade), upper secondary education level (XI grade – XII/XIII grade), tertiary education level (non-university) and higher education level (university).

Secondary IVET (Initial Vocational Education & Training) is provided at *General High Schools, Art, Sport and Theological High Schools*, and *Technological High Schools* where the duration is 4 years. It is also provided at *Arts and Trades Schools*, where the first level leads to certification after 2 years. In Arts and Trades Schools students can have access to a Completion Year after two years of Lower Secondary Education. Students can study two years Technological High School (Upper Secondary Education), after they finished the Completion year.

2. Which bodies are involved in the provision of Vocational Education and Training?

The institutions in charge with education and professional training are: VET schools (initials and permanent education and professional training), centers for permanent professional training, economic agents, and local employment agencies.

3. What is the duration and level of studies?

There are two different pathways in the secondary education: the direct pathway and the progressive pathway.

- Level 1 – *qualification level – worker* – it is associated with vocational competences which presuppose application of knowledge in professional activity, from diverse domains, activity characterized by routine and predictable tasks;
- Level 2 – *qualification level – qualified worker* – it is associated with vocational competences which presuppose application of knowledge in a certain activity, with non-routine tasks, presupposing responsibility and team work;
- Level 3 – *qualification level – technician / forman* – it is associated with vocational competences, which presuppose application of knowledge in an extended area of professional activity, with diverse and complex tasks, excluding routine. The tasks presuppose decision-taking, responsibility and, sometimes, team work with coordination responsibilities

The direct pathway has an inferior cycle of technological high school (IX and X grades), considered to be of level 1 and a superior cycle of technological high school (XI and XII grades) considered to be of level 3.

The progressive pathway has the following structure: in the first two years students can study at School of arts and trades (IX and X grades), considered to be of level 1. At the end of the tenth grade they participate to a certification exam, which can give them the opportunity to pass to the next level represented by a completion year (level 2). Level 3 in a progressive pathway is the superior cycle of technological high school (XII and XII grades).

After graduating high school students participate to a very important exam named: “school-leaving examination”.

A higher education can be of short duration (bachelor) or long duration (master and doctoral studies). The levels for higher education are 4 and 5.

4. Is apprenticeship and work practice compulsory? What are the conditions regulating it and the duration of practice?

Practical training is compulsory for all specializations.

The structure of professional training on qualification levels is:

- **FIRST LEVEL**
 - Theoretical training - 31, 57 %
 - Practical training - 68, 43 %
- **SECOND LEVEL**
 - Theoretical training – 38, 30 %
 - Practical training - 61, 70%
- **THIRD LEVEL**
 - Theoretical training – 21, 23%
 - Practical training - 78, 77%

5. Is there vertical and horizontal mobility in your national VET system?

Vertical and horizontal mobility is possible. Vertical mobility creates direct access to the higher qualification levels. The horizontal mobility is provided by the common elements of the professional training structure:

- Key competencies common to all the qualifications of all qualification areas
- General technical competencies common to all the qualifications of one area
- Technical competencies adapted to each qualification level

Qualifications in VET

6. Which bodies are responsible for the development of qualifications?

The institutions in charge with the format and the final form of qualifications are:

- The National Qualification Authority (NQA) which elaborates the job profiles that are part of the occupational standards
- Ministry of Education and Researches, responsible for approving the format and the form of qualification, the period and the number of hours of training.

7. Who is involved in the development of qualifications (social partners, training organisations etc.)?

The entities involved in the development of qualifications are social partners like: professional organizations, employers' associations, trade unions, private companies and private training providers which determine the content of the job profiles and validate the training standards. In the elaboration of the job profiles there are also involved group of authors like: VET teachers, professionals, companies' representatives and other social partners that develop the training standards.

8. How is the qualification constructed and structured?

The qualification has a structure made of: key skills units (common to all qualifications from all the domains), general technical units (common to all qualifications within the same domain) and specialized technical units (specific for each qualification).

9. Are the notions of 'knowledge, skills and competences' / 'units' / 'modules' / 'credit points' / 'learning outcomes' being used?

Such notions have been officially introduced in the relative literature and have a practical application. The credit points are allocated for each qualification and unit by competent bodies. The number of credit points is distributed on qualification levels and types of competence units.

Accumulation, Capitalisation and Transferability

10. Does “transfer” of knowledge, skills and competences exist in your national VET system?

The competences acquired in the informal system are acknowledged and validated. The transfer from one training system to another on credit points is not possible yet.

The transferability from one training system to another is given by key skills, and for the qualifications from the same domain, by the general technical units.

Investigating how transparency, comparability, transferability and recognition of competences and/or qualifications, between different countries and at different levels, could be promoted by developing reference levels, common principles of certification, and common measures, including a credit transfer system for initial and continuing vocational education and training.

Recognition of competences and qualifications

- Investigating how transparency, comparability, transferability and recognition of competences and/or qualifications, between different countries and at different levels, could be promoted by developing reference levels, common principles of certification, and common measures, including a credit transfer system for initial and continuing vocational education and training.
- Increasing support to the development of competences and qualifications, by reinforcing cooperation and co-ordination, especially involving the social partners.
- Developing a set of common principles regarding validation of non-formal and informal learning with the aim of ensuring greater compatibility between approaches in different countries and at different levels.

11. Is it possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another? If yes, how is this done?

The process is in construction. From the legislative point of view, it is not possible yet. It is still working for the accreditation of the competences acquired at the working place.

- The credits are not yet implemented, but the units of competence acquired in different contexts of learning (formal, non-formal and informal) are recognized in FPC.
- The allocation of credits by the sectors, on the basis of the competences associated with the working place requirements.
- The recognition of credits in the frames of the formal system of FPC, of the non-formal or informal system, also between these, the inscription of credits in the addition at the certificate.
- The transferability of credits facilitated by the CNC.

12. Is there “accumulation” towards qualification of ‘knowledge, skills and competences’/ ‘units’/ ‘modules’/ ‘credits’? If yes, which stakeholders are involved in the process and how is this done?

The social partners (professional organizations, employers’ associations, trade unions, private companies and private training providers) determine the content of the job profiles and validate the training standards, participate at the process of evaluation and learning of the students, are helping the school in the process of elaboration of the curriculum in the local development.

13. Which bodies are responsible for establishing equivalence between qualifications acquired abroad and at home?

The body responsible is the National Council for the Acknowledgement and Equivalence of Diplomas from Education Ministry and Research structure.

Assessment and Certification

14. What are the different means of acquiring a certificate (through initial and/or continuing training, through validation of experience)?

For the initial training, Ministry of Education issues the methodology for assessment and examination. The content of the final examination reflects the training standards. Groups of authors formulate the exam topics. For the adult training, each training provider elaborates examination proposals relevant to professional profiles. The examinations are based on a methodology issued by the National Qualification Authority.

Certification

- A *Qualification Certificate* is issued when all the competence units related with a qualification (from TS) have been achieved – represent the legal entitlement to practice one or more occupations The competence units are mentioned in the Qualification Certificate
- Discrete competences and competence units could be certificated through the *Lifelong Learning Individual Portfolio*, which helps to keep track of all competences acquired by a student, in addition to the full awards

15. Which are the awarding bodies responsible for accrediting certificates or diplomas in VET?

VET certificates and diplomas are state responsibility in Romania. The body responsible for the issuing of VET certificates and diplomas is the Ministry of Education and Research.

- Awarding bodies: MoLSSF and MoER – accredit, through NATB, the training providers and the competences centers – national awards
- Training for occupations could be also certificated by non accredited training providers or employers – awards are not national (unless validated by a competences centre)

16. What assessment and validation procedures are in operation? When is a qualification achieved in VET? What are the certification procedures for the attestation of a certificate?

For the initial training, Ministry of Education and Research decides the format and the final form of examination for each level of qualification. The role of social partners in examination and assessment is that they are involved in the final examination for certification of competencies as well as in the assessment of competencies for practice training.

For adult training, each provider can decide how to involve the social partners in examination and assessment processes.

The Ministry of Education and Research issues the methodology for assessments and examination. The content of the final examination reflects the training standards. Groups of authors formulate the exam topics. (for the initial training)

Each training provider elaborates examination proposals relevant to professional profiles. The examinations are based on a methodology issued by the National Qualification Authority. (for the adult training)

Prior to the validation process for a new qualification certain activities should be undertaken:

- Consultation within the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth (MoERY)
 - Consultation with Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity
-

- Development of a Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) to support and guide activities
- Consultation with the Regional Consortia
- Identification of members for a Programme Development Group (PDG) to produce the materials
- Staff development for the members of the PDG
- Preparation of supporting evidence for the validation event
- Endorsement by Programme Advisory Committee

17. What do certificates document (acquired knowledge, skills, competences/participations to a course etc.)?

The certificate reflects the knowledge, the skills and the competencies acquired in the professional training process and it also certifies the professional competencies acquired in the training process.

The competence unit is the minimum element that can be certificated

- A *Qualification Certificate* and a *Certificate Supplement* are issued when all the competence units related with a qualification (from OS/TS) have been achieved and represent the legal entitlement to practice one or more occupations
- A *Graduation Certificate* and a *Certificate Supplement* are issued when a subset of competence units related to a OS or TS have been achieved – facilitated by the modularisation of learning programmes
- Competences centers issue *Competences Certificates* for the competences achieved within non formal and informal learning contexts

18. How is the EURASMENT Training Course going to be implemented in your country?

In Romania, the implementing process of EURASMENT training course will follow the next stages:

- The validation of the professional profile of the new qualification by the sector committees in the training domains, in the training domains specific to the IMM activities (2008-2009)
 - The introduction of the new qualification in the Romanian classified list of qualifications (2009).
 - To promote the new qualification on the professional training market from Romania (2009).
 - To introduce the qualification in the training offer of the Economic College “Ion Ghica” Targoviste in the school year 2009-2010.
-

The Spanish VET System

Structure of the VET system

1. What is the structure of the VET system in your country?

In Spain there are two VET systems nowadays: **Initial VET**, within the framework of the Ministry of National Education, Social Affairs & Sport, dedicated mainly to young people, and **VET for the Employment**, ruled by the Ministry of Labour and developed by the Unions and Employers. That comprises continuous training and training for unemployed.

From 2006 both systems are linked by the National Catalogue of Professional Standards developed by INCUAL, an institution within the structure of the Ministry of Education and depending on the Director General of VET.

We are now (from 2007) in the transition process of re-editing the Initial VET Qualifications in order to make them consistent with the already defined professional standards. Anyway, since 1991, all the initial VET Qualifications in Spain (144 in total) are constructed around the concept of competences (and pure professional-no general education on them), so the present change is being more a strong updating than an outright change.

In the IVET we have three levels:

- Professional Training at Higher Level (Bac+2) Isced: 5b (expected EQF 5)
- Professional Training at Secondary Level (Sec+2) Isced: 3 (exp. EQF 4)

There are also Programmes for initial professional training mainly dedicated to those pupils unable to achieve the compulsory secondary certification.

Those Certifications/Qualifications are disclosed into 26 “professional families” linked to economical sectors or subsectors (Tourism, Commerce, Metallic manufacturing, Fishing & Aquaculture production, Business & Administration, etc.)

2. Which bodies are involved in the provision of vocational education and training?

• Initial vocational qualifications are designed and issued by the Ministry of National Education. Also, the Government (Ministry) is responsible for 55% of the contents. All these qualifications are official and valid within whole Spain.

There are also “Skills/Professional Certificates” issued by the Ministry of Labour and vocational qualification certificates issued by the professional bodies and recognized by the labour agreements of the various professions which set them up. They are included in the continuous VET system for employed/unemployed adults.

• Within the framework of decentralization, the Regions (17) have the responsibility for the implementation of initial vocational training and decision on educational centres and teachers, always respecting the State’s authority by law. (*Note: In Spain the Government enacts basis*

Constitutional/fundamental/Organic/Federal (?) Laws which set up the strict framework of any policy. Regional laws or rules can not overrun them and are linked mainly to practical application standards).

3. What is the duration and level of studies?

Most of the present IVET Qualifications are 2.000 hrs. long (two academic years) Some, 1.400 (one academic year plus 400 hours of apprenticeship) and from now onwards, all of them will be 2.000.

Spain has not taken yet a decision on EQF levels under University.

An approximate answer is:

- Professional Training at Higher Level (Bac+2) Isced: 5b (expected EQF 5)
 - o Direct pass to certain University Degrees (Level 6) up to now
 - o Direct pass to any University degree (level 6) from now onwards.
- Professional Training at Secondary Level (Sec+2) Isced: 3 (exp. EQF 4)
 - o Direct pass to Bac.
 - o Pass with test to PT Higher level.

4. Is apprenticeship and work practice compulsory? What is the length of the work placement and the conditions regulating it?

Yes. From 1990 legal framework, all the IVET qualifications have a compulsory apprenticeship period. Until now and depending on the qualification it goes from 380 hrs. to 700. From the nowadays updating process, all the apprentice periods will be 400 hrs (10-12 weeks) mainly at the end of second academic course. There are a few exceptions in those qualifications whose professional boards ask for longer apprenticeship periods (i.e: Aircraft maintenance).

The apprenticeship period (Formación en Centros de Trabajo, FCT) is regulated in each qualification's curriculum with developed learning outcomes and assessment criteria, objectives and contents. Its practical organization relays on the tutor in the Educational Centre who is in contact with a correspondent tutor in the working centre. Working centres are sought by the Educational centre –usually in its surrounding area-. Quality criteria for the working centres are checked by the tutor-teachers and supervised by General Inspection. Every working centre signs an agreement with the Educational centre and compromises to some regulated standards. FCT is not paid in Spain but covered by scholar insurances and some pre-paid costs (transport, etc)

In terms of more than 15 years experience, it can be said that FCT period is a great success of our system and both students and companies understand it as a great own benefit.

5. Is there vertical and horizontal mobility in your national VET system?

Horizontal mobility:

From any IVET Qualification you can enter to an other one (same level) and if they have any module in common it can be validated.

Also you can go to any Bac track from Professional Training at Secondary Level.

Vertical mobility:

- Professional Training at Higher Level
 - o Direct pass to certain University Degrees (Level 6) up to now
 - o Direct pass to any University degree (level 6) from now onwards.
 - o ECTS awarded can be transferred from one system to another.
- Professional Training at Secondary Level
 - o Pass with test to PT Higher level.

Again from now onwards, the current education regulation enforces the whole VET system to be linked those Professional Standards described above, whose minimum awardable unit is the “unit of competence”

or “unidad de competencia”. They are poured into IVET Qualifications or Employment Qualifications. Also they can be obtained through proven working experience. So, any person can be awarded those units by one or other path and compose his/her own training way.

Qualifications in VET

6. Which bodies are responsible for the development of qualifications?

IVET: Ministry of Education 2 steps

- INCUAL: development and maintenance of Professional Standards National Catalogue.
- Directorate General for VET:
 - o Design of general IVET framework
 - o Creation of IVET Qualifications (K/S/C) and up to 55% of its contents.
 - o Official Certification of IVET qualifications
 - o Education authorities on Regions: 45% of IVET contents designed by the Ministry and planning and controlling putting in place qualifications (centres, teachers, regional inspectors).

VET for employment: Ministry of Labour

They take care both of setting up Professional Certificates and unemployment and continuous needs of training for the labour market. Employers and Unions are closely related to this system.

7. Who is involved in the development of qualifications? (social partners, training organisations, etc.)

Social partners are totally involved in the system:

- They work as experts in the design of professional standards within the INCUAL
- Any IVET qualification has to be presented in front of the General National Board for VET, where social partners are represented and have the right to approve or disapprove it before setting it up on the system.
- Social partners work very closely with the Ministry of Labour on the VET for Employment. They also have their bodies to give this kind of training

8. How is a qualification constructed and structured?

In the IVET system each qualification is a law. All of them follow exactly the same framework to achieve internal consistency of IVET system.

Besides its pure legal introduction, its structure contains:

Identification

Name

Professional family

Duration

European ISCED reference

General competence

A paragraph that defines the overall competence of the qualification, regarding to the task and degree of responsibility and autonomy.

Professional, personal and social skills.

15 to 20 short points describing the main skills of the professional profile

Relationship with the Occupational Standards National Catalogue

Number of professional standards included in the qualification (compulsorily at least one) and (if exists) a number of other UC from other not included professional standards.

Professional Environment and prospective

A short commentary on current and future professional occupations of the professional profile, trends in the labour market for this occupations and foreseeable changes on them.

Pedagogical objectives

Short points linked to “Professional, personal and social skills” as described above written in terms of its development in the teaching context.

Teaching Modules (training programme)

List of the complete teaching modules (included the 4 common and mandatory for all the IVET qualifications: Labour Guidance, Entrepreneurship, Project on the particular professional field and FCT –apprenticeship-)

Each module is described in *Annex I* (*)

Teaching premises and equipments

Description, in *Annex II*, of minimum needs in terms of classrooms, workshops, laboratories, equipment etc. to develop the teaching process.

Teachers

Required teachers (mandatory specialization and certified education of the teachers needed for each specific module).

Horizontal and vertical mobility

Access to any other type of studies

Validation and exemptions

Validation of some of the modules through a number of clauses (i.e.: The apprenticeship period can be validated if the student shows a labour contract –longer than a year- that proves he/she has been working in the same economic sector for this period).

Annexes

(*) *Annex I: MODULES*

Exhaustive description of the training modules.

Each module is composed of:

- Name, code and number of credits ECTS if upper level (higher education; not yet ECVET credits).
- Learning outcomes: 4-8 learning outcomes per module
- Assessment criteria: 6-10 assessment criteria per learning outcome
- Contents: One block of contents linked to each learning outcome.
- Pedagogical guidance for teachers: a short rationale on the meaning of the module within the qualification as a whole.

9. Are the notions of “knowledge, skills and competences”/ “units”/ “modules”/ “credit points”/ “learning outcomes” used?

Vid supra.

Accumulation, Capitalisation and Transferability

10. Does “transfer” of knowledge, skills and competences exist in your national VET system?

Vid supra.

11. Is it possible to transfer the credits acquired in one educational context into another? If yes, how is this done?

ECTS are recognized by Universities.

Transferability from one VET system to another is made through the acquisition of Professional Standards, and its units, described and included in the national catalogue.

12. Is “accumulation” towards qualification through “knowledge, skills and competences”, “units”, “modules”, “credit points” possible?

Vid supra

13. Which bodies are responsible for establishing equivalence between qualifications acquired abroad and at home?

The Ministry of Education through its Directorate General of VET.

Assessment and Certification

14. What are the different means of acquiring a certificate/diploma? (through initial and/or continuing training, through validation of experience)

Ministry of Education awards the only official Diplomas for IVET.

They are useful in terms of professional level, educational level, validation to become a civil servant etc.

Ministry of Labour awards professional certificates.

Both systems award Professional Standards from the National Catalogue, because those are included in their qualifications/certificates

Working experience recognition system is going to be developed shortly by law.

15. Which awarding bodies are responsible for accrediting certificates or diplomas in VET?

Both Ministries

16. What assessment and validation procedures are in operation? When is a qualification achieved in VET? What are the certification procedures for the attestation of a certificate?

As described above, IVET qualifications assessment criteria are carefully described per module.

Centres and Teachers Departments are autonomous to decide the test and practical exercises always they prove the Module legal assessment criteria have been achieved.

Usually the methods of assessment and certification can be:

- at the end of the training: written, oral or practical
- continuous assessment: written, oral or practical

17. What do certificate documents contain? (acquired knowledge, skills, competences/participation in a course, etc.)

The certificate is a document which shows: the awarding body, the name of the qualification obtained and its level. It means that the holder has fulfilled all the legal requirements. There is no indication concerning the skills or the knowledge acquired.

18. How is the Eurasment training course going to be implemented in your country?

We have to join/pour it within the new IVET qualification we are just about to develop.

We have a present one called “Administración y Finanzas” (Isced 5B) very close. In its renewal process we think we can pour the k/s/c included in Eurasment.