

FRAMEWORK FOR THE ATTRIBUTION OF ECVET POINTS

1. ECVET POINTS

A Commission staff working document dated 31 October 2006, the first Commission comprehensive document on ECVET, stated “Principles of ECVET” as follows:

- ‘ECVET is a method enabling qualifications to be described in terms of transferable and accumulating units of learning outcome (knowledge, skills and competence) to which credit points are attached;
- ECVET is intended to facilitate the transfer and accumulation of learning outcomes acquired by people moving from one learning context to another, from one system of qualification to another;
- ECVET will be based on the voluntary participation of the Member States and of the stakeholders in their respective qualification systems and vocational education and training;
- ECVET will be a mechanism to foster a synergy between the training providers through the support it will provide for cooperation between partner organisations, with a view to the transfer and accumulation of individual learning credits.’¹

In accordance to the ECVET European Recommendation, ECVET points ‘means a numerical representation of the overall weight of learning outcomes in a qualification and of the relative weight of units in relation to the qualification’.²

2. ALLOCATION OF ECVET POINTS TO QUALIFICATIONS

For a given qualification, one formal learning context is taken as a reference and on the basis of 60 ECVET points per year of formal full time VET, the total number of ECVET points is assigned to that qualification³.

In a number of European countries qualifications’ descriptions are independent of the education and training programme preparing for these qualifications. Furthermore, it is also possible that the same qualification can be prepared through various programmes.

Therefore ECVET allocates credit points to qualifications and not to education and training programmes. However, to decide on the number of ECVET points allocated to a qualification, one

¹ Commission of the European Communities (2006). European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). A system for the transfer, accumulation and recognition of learning outcomes in Europe. Brussels, 31.10.2006, SEC(2006) 143, p. 3. Available from Internet: https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/ecvet_en

² Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52008PC0180>

formal learning programme is chosen as a point of reference. It is up to the competent institutions in charge of designing qualifications to decide which specific programme will be chosen as a point of reference (e.g. the initial VET or the most common programme). The duration of the selected reference programme together with the ECVET convention on ECVET points, will give the number of ECVET points allocated to the qualification⁴.

From the total number of ECVET points allocated to a qualification, each unit is allocated a number of ECVET points based on its relative weight within the qualification. The relative weight of a unit is established using one or a combination of these approaches:

1. **the relative importance of the learning outcomes which constitute the unit for labour market** participation, for progression to other qualification levels or for social integration: this method of allocating ECVET points is based on how different actors “value” the different units which are part of the qualification. For example, some units may be core to the professional profile that the qualification leads to. It can be decided that such core units would have a higher number of ECVET points than the others. It is also possible that some units would enable progression to other qualifications levels (e.g. general knowledge, skills and competence to enable progression to higher education).
2. **the complexity, scope and volume of learning outcomes in the unit:** this approach is based on evaluating the complexity, scope and volume of knowledge, skills and competence in a unit, with regard to those in the qualification. It can be based on indicators such as the level of performance for assessment of learning outcomes. For example: the body of technical, technological, scientific and general knowledge that have to be mobilized in order to execute the skills and competences expected; the number of procedures or methods to follow, the complexity of combinations of these procedures or methods; the variety and complexity of material and documentation resources to use.
3. **the effort necessary for a learner to acquire the knowledge, skills and competence** required for the unit: this method of allocating ECVET points is based on the education and training programme taken as a point of reference and on the estimation of learners’ effort (which can be also translated as workload or notional learning time) to achieve the expected learning outcomes⁵.

⁴ www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/4900-att1-1-ECVET_QA_Final.pdf

⁵ www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/4900-att1-1-ECVET_QA_Final.pdf

3. ENTITIES EMPOWERED TO ALLOCATE ECVET POINTS

Usually, allocation of ECVET points is part of the design of qualifications and units of learning outcome. The allocation of ECVET points to qualifications and/or to units of learning outcome is carried out by the competent institution for the design of qualifications or the institution empowered to allocate ECVET points within a country or a qualifications system.

4. ASSIGNING ECVET POINTS TO LEARNERS

The ECVET European Recommendation, establishes that ‘the successful achievement of a qualification or of a unit triggers the award of the associated ECVET points, independently of the actual time required to achieve them.’⁶

It means that when the learner achieves the expected learning outcomes with the required performance criteria of a given unit of learning outcome, and these achieved learning outcomes are due assessed, validated and recorded in the personal transcript, then the corresponding ECVET points are awarded to the learner.

5. ECVET POINTS AND TRANSFER AND ACCUMULATION SYSTEMS

‘Usually the transfer of a unit entails the transfer of the corresponding ECVET points so that they are included when the transferred learning outcomes are recognized, in acceptance with national or regional rules. It is up to the competent institution to reconsider, where necessary, the ECVET points to be taken into account, as long as the rules and methodologies which are laid down for this purpose are transparent and underpinned by quality assurance principles.’⁷

The transfer and accumulation of credit points concerns the validation and recognition of learning outcomes assessed in a different context, for example in another country. The transcription of ECVET points in personal transcripts follows this process, but the subject of credit transfer and accumulation are the assessed and validated learning outcomes and not the ECVET points.

Hence, the role of ECVET points is to inform the institution in charge of transferring learning outcomes and their recognition about the relative weight of the units/qualification the learner has already achieved (especially when transfer is taking place outside the context of a recognized mobility).

⁶ Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training.

⁷ Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training.

When learners' credit is transferred and accumulated, the number of ECVET points, together with the unit specifications and information on the learning outcomes, are recorded in the personal transcript.⁸

6. METHODOLOGY USED IN PROJECT EURSPACE FOR ALLOCATING ECVET POINTS

During the implementation of the Pilot Project, ECVET Points were allocated to the Cookery qualification in all participating countries.

Following the European convention, for the Cookery qualification, an I-VET formal learning context was taken as a reference in each country and on the basis of 60 ECVET points per year of formal full time VET, the total number of ECVET points were assigned to the qualification.

In countries in which a credit system based in the European Recommendation already exists, the credit system is followed and converted in ECVET Points.

It is possible that the same qualification in different countries has a total number of ECVET Points substantially different from another country. But in this pilot project we intend to compare units of learning outcome, with the main focus being the learning outcomes. As already mentioned, the number of hours of the unit is considered of less relevance for this comparison, provided that the same learning outcomes are achieved.

ECVET points are assigned to the units that make up a qualification and a system of credits is assigned, in each country, so that it is possible to transfer and accumulate credits of units of learning outcome acquired in other contexts. For example, the learner participates in an Erasmus+ mobility and acquires abroad learning outcomes that we know that match with Unit X and Unit Y of the country of origin; when returning, intends the validation and recognition of the learning outcomes acquired and already assessed, so that the learner can accumulate the number of credit points corresponding to the units that contain the acquired learning outcomes.

7. EXAMPLES ON ALLOCATION OF CREDITS AND ECVET POINTS IN PROJECT EURSPACE

Example 1: Portugal

In Portugal, on February 1, 2017, Ordinance no. 47/2017 was issued, giving account of the creation of a credit system that, in line with the modular structure of the existing training offer, enables the coherent capitalization of training units and greater mobility and flexibility in the training paths. This ordinance

⁸ www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/4900-att1-1-ECVET_QA_Final.pdf

regulates the National System of Credits of Vocational Education and Training, with the objective of promoting the flexibility of the qualification pathways, capitalizing individual paths of training and lifelong learning and favouring the readability and recognition of the education system and training of the various actors, in particular by employers. Credit points are allocated to qualifications that integrate the National Qualification Catalogue, according to the qualification level defined in the National Qualifications Framework. A full-time formal training year corresponds to 60 credit points, as provided for in the ECVET Recommendation. Qualifications with the same level of qualification, according to the National Qualifications Framework, have the same minimum limit of number of credit points. Credit points are distributed among the units that comprise the qualification, taking into account the following criteria: (a) the relative importance of the learning outcomes for the labour market; b) complexity of the learning outcomes to be achieved; c) the amount of work required to acquire the learning outcomes, in particular the hours of training required for this purpose. The minimum number of credit points allocated to EQF level 4 qualifications is 180 credit points: 70 credit points for all units relating to the basic training component; 110 credit points allocated to all units relating to the technological training component or professional skills, of which 20 correspond to the internship, when applicable. The qualification *Cookery and Pastry Technician*, EQF level 4, contained in the National Qualification Catalogue has a total of 3 years of full time training. Therefore, for example, the unit of learning outcome “Preparation of Soups”, which has 25 hours, has a total of 2.25 credit points.

Example 2: Turkey

Turkey does not have a framework and/or guidelines for the attribution of ECVET points and credits for VET programmes. Therefore, the ECVET credit attribution has been implemented via the general ECVET Recommendation, attribution of 60 ECVET credits for each academic year. The Cookery Technician Course in Turkish VET schools is 3 years and graduates receive EQF level 4 – with a total of 180 ECVET credits. The allocation of ECVET credits has consequently been calculated with this data. In the 3 years of VET education, the learners receive a total course of 4280 hours, of which 2235 belongs to the technical components and the remaining 2045 to the other courses. A ratio of 60% to 40% between the technical courses and other courses has been followed respectively and the following results have been obtained:

ECVET POINTS FOR TECHNICAL COURSES	60 of 180	108
ECVET POINTS FOR OTHER COURSES	40 of 180	72

Therefore,

ECVET point corresponding to 1 Technical Course Hour is (1x108/2235)	0,048322
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In order to avoid numerical abundance, the obtained ECVET point value for 1 technical course hour has been rounded up to 2 decimal places (0,048322 rounded up to 0,05).

ECVET point corresponding to 1 Technical Course Hour is	0,05
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Sample on ECVET points attribution for ZMD MTAL:

UNITS OF LEARNING OUTCOME	HOURS	ECVET CREDIT
Hygiene and Sanitation	16	0,8 (16 x 0,05)
Occupational Health and Safety	8	0,4 (8 x 0,05)
International Soups	24	1,2 (24 x 0,05)

Example 3: Spain

In the case of Spain, the country does not yet have a framework and/or guidelines for the attribution of ECVET points and credits in VET programmes, although this is now in the debate of the Spanish ECVET discussion group. Without a national reference, for this pilot experience, the general ECVET Recommendation was followed, attribution of 60 ECVET credits to each academic year. In this case, the VET qualification, EQF level 3, for Cookery and Gastronomy Technician lasts 2 years, and to the overall programme is attributed 120 ECVET credits. To allocate credits to each unit of learning, the total number of programme credits (120) is divided by the total number of hours of the programme (1967), meaning that each hour is multiplied by the coefficient 0.06. In the case of Spain all the components in the curriculum are technical; there is no difference between technical and non-technical components as in the case of other countries like Turkey for example.

The ECVET credits for each unit of learning will be achieved by multiplying:

$$\text{Hours of the Unit} \times 0,06 = \text{number of ECVET points attributed to the Unit}$$

The total number of hours of the Cookery Course is 1976 hours.

Therefore,

TOTAL ECVET POINTS for 2 year	120
Total ECVET points for 1st year	60
Total ECVET points for 2nd year	60

Sample ECVET Points attribution for Spain:

UNIT OF LEARNING OUTCOME	HOURS	CREDIT for 1 HOUR	ECVET CREDITS
Business and entrepreneurial initiative	63	0,06	3,84

Example 4: Italy

The attribution of ECVET points has been calculated by taking into consideration the three-year courses equivalent to 3000 hours and since Italy does not have a credit system for vocational education, the 180 credits of the European system was taken into account. From here, the total hours was divided into three main components: 1500 hours for professional/technical competencies; 720 hours for internship; 780 hours for basic competencies over the three years.

Therefore, the weight attributed to each component was distributed by assigning 60% to technical competencies and internship and 40% to basic competencies. Then, the value obtained was multiplied by the number of hours of each unit of learning outcome. Below is a concrete example, of the Unit of Learning Outcome UC03: *Plan the food and the wine and the need for supply*.

This unit has 50 hours and it is a part of the overall 1500 hours of professional/technical competencies. Assigning a 60% weight to the hours of this component translates in a 0,06 value per hour. This value is then multiplied by the amount of hours (50*0,06) and as a result 3 ECVET points are allocated to this Unit of Learning Outcome.

Example 5: Romania

The attribution of ECVET points to Romanian Cookery qualification has been calculated as follows:

- the weight attributed to each component was distributed by assigning 60% to the technical component and 40% to basic components;
- 1 ECVET point is granted for the units of competence that are reasonably expected to be obtained by the learner with 20 hours of training;
- a unit of learning outcome may have between 0.5 and 2 ECVET points.

The calculations to get this conclusion are outlined below.

YEAR	TOTAL HOURS PER YEAR	GENERAL COMPONENT	TECHNICAL COMPONENT
I	1238 hours	748 hours	490 hours
II	1326 hours	352 hours	974 hours
III	1290 hours	330 hours	960 hours
Total	3854 hours	1430 hours	2424 hours

A total of 180 ECVET points are allocated to the qualification.

Total of ECVET points to allocate to the general component: $180 * 0,4 = 72$ ECVET points

Total of ECVET points to allocate to the technical component: $180 * 0,6 = 108$ ECVET points

Number of ECVET points, per hour, for the technical component: $108 / 2424 = 0,05$ ECVET point/hour

Example:

UNIT OF LEARNING OUTCOME	NO. OF HOURS	CALCULATION	ECVET POINTS
Appetizers and snacks	30	$30 * 0.05 = 1.5$	1.5
Liquid dishes	31	$31 * 0.05 = 1.55$	1.6

Example 6: Lithuania

In Lithuania, in 2012, based on the European Union Social Fund and the budget of the Republic of Lithuania, under the implementation of project number VP1-2.2-ŠMM-04-V-03-001, "*Formation of qualifications and development of modular vocational training system*", a Centre for the Development of

Qualifications and Vocational Training developed a methodology for the development of modular Vocational Training Programmes which has been used as the main framework until now.

The methodology for the development of modular training programmes offered to use credits (not ECVET points). Firstly, credits are allocated to all qualifications, i.e. for the entire curriculum, after which a certain number of credits from the total number of credits are allocated to individual competences, i.e. units, as the number of credits reflects the weight ratio of each competency to the entire qualification.

A credit is the unit of learning volume for measuring both learning outcomes and learner work time. One academic year of full vocational training, composed by 1600 hours, corresponds to 60 credit points.

One academic year consists of 60 credit points.

LT ECVET credit points: $1600 \text{ hours} / 60 = 27 \text{ hours}$

Therefore, 1 ECVET point is allocated to 27 hours of vocational training.

Example:

UNIT OF LEARNING OUTCOME	NO. OF HOURS	CALCULATION	ECVET POINTS
Preparation of workplace	108	$1 * 108 / 27 = 4$	4
Preparation, presentation and quality estimation of salad	81	$1 * 81 / 27 = 3$	3

Example 7: France

The allocation of ECVET points to units of learning outcome in the case of the French Cookery qualification has been calculated as follows:

- level IV Cookery qualification in France is a three-year course with a total of 4700 hours of vocational training, therefore, 180 ECVET points are allocated to the qualification;
- the professional/technical component has a total of 1800 hours;
- the weight attributed to each training component was distributed by assigning 60% to professional/technical component and 40% to the basic component;
- a total of 108 ECVET points are allocated to the technical component: $180 * 0,6 = 108 \text{ ECVET points}$;
- a total of 72 ECVET points are allocated to the general component: $180 * 0,4 = 72 \text{ ECVET points}$;
- 0,06 ECVET points are allocated to 1 training hour in the technical component:
 $108 / 1800 = 0,06 \text{ ECVET point/hour}$.

Example:

UNIT OF LEARNING OUTCOME	NO. OF HOURS	CALCULATION	ECVET POINTS
Making Soups	30	$30 * 0,06 = 1.8$	1.8

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ANNEX I – TECHNICAL SHEET

- 1- This framework **aims to provide**:
 - a. a definition of ECVET Points;
 - b. a methodology on allocation of ECVET points to Qualifications and Units;
 - c. an exemplification on how to allocate ECVET points to a qualification and its units of learning outcome.
- 2- This framework is intended **to be used** in determining:
 - a. the allocation of ECVET points to units of learning outcome.
- 3- This framework is intended **for the use of** schools, public bodies and other private enterprises who participate in European mobility projects.
- 4- This framework is intended **to be applied** in the context of ECVET implementation, specifically, to validate and recognize the learning outcomes acquired by VET learners in a variety of learning contexts, such as, when learners participate in European mobility projects.
- 5- **Phase and Stage of the Pedagogical Circuit** in which the Framework **should be used**:
 - Phase 1: Before Mobility**
 - Stage 2: Preparing the Recognition Process**