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Template 1: Favourable conditions in the country for ECVET implementation

Organization (full legal name):	**Zeynep Mehmet Donmez Vocational and Technical High School**
Country:	**TURKEY**

Favourable conditions in the country that can contribute to the implementation of ECVET's principals	
Examples: **-** National policies that facilitate the implementation of ECVET principles; - Reforms of the national VET system; - New regulations that aim to introduce elements supportive of ECVET; - Aspects of the national VET system that are in line with the ECVET philosophy; - Alignment between EQF / NQF; - Indications of ECVET trials for internal use.	Turkey, since being formally recognised as a candidate for EU membership at the Helsinki European Council in December 1999, has been engaged in the accession process, preparing itself to fulfil all the conditions of the membership known as the «Copenhagen Criteria». For this reason the education sector, VET in particular, is one of the important areas that Turkey has been working on. The Turkish Ministry of National Education, the responsible body for managing the overall education system, has been implementing a comprehensive reform process in all aspects of vocational education and training (VET) since 2004. The process is based on a new global understanding of VET. It particularly refers to the priorities of the Copenhagen Process of November 2002 along with national decisions set out in development plans, government programs and declarations by the Education Assembly. Some of the milestones of the VET reform implemented since 2002 have been summarised below. Reforms were mainly achieved through some EU funded projects (via MEDA and IPA programs) under the administration of the Ministry of National Education, in close cooperation with social partners. All the achievements outlined here were based on international approaches in the field of VET, such as the consideration of ISCO 88 and ISCED 97. In order to successfully implement the European Credit Transfer System in Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) a viable National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is essential. Turkey is aware that the development of these two systems (NQF and ECVET) needs to be done in parallel. Therefore, before talking about the Turkish initiatives for ECVET, let's have a brief look at the development process of the NQF in Turkey. A major milestone towards a working NQF in Turkey was the establishment of the Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA) in 2006. This was the result of two years of intensive work on an EU funded VET project with the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) and a diverse range of relevant stakeholders, mainly social partners. The VQA acts as the EQF National Co-ordination Point in Turkey. Vocational Qualification Institution (MYK)'s first General Assembly was collected on 8 December 2006 and determined the Board of Directors. After determination of Board of Directors, Establishment of this new institution from scratch such as the creation of secondary legislation, staffing, budget creation, building of service building and hardware supplies has been realized. Action plan including the principal activities of the

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institution was prepared in 2008.

It is expressed clearly that Professional standards, testing and certification services will be done by institutions and organizations authorized from MYK.

The Regulations on “Preparation of the National Professional Standards” and “Establishment of The Sector Committees, Duties and Study” were promulgated on October 5, 2007 and 27 November 2007 respectively.

When Examination of The Regulation on “Preparation of the National Occupational Standards”, it is understood that preparation of the drafts of professional standards by elected institutions / organizations with objective criteria, revision of these drafts by sector committees and approval by MYK and announcement as National Occupational Standards in Official Gazette is ensured.

Determination of The Format of Professional-standards according to international practice and levels of vocational qualification compatible to EQF were adopted.

In addition, a temporary article was added to this regulation so that draft occupational standards prepared through projects of the institutions and organizations with their own means or the support of international organizations within this scope have been enabled the evaluation as national savings.

In this context, All the documents related with 250 Occupational Standards prepared through the coordination of ISKUR"s (Turkish Employment Organization) between 1995-2000 and Approximately 300 Occupational Standards prepared by TSE (Turkish Standards Institution) with its own means and the standards prepared through the coordination of MoNE thanks to SVET Project (Strengthening the Vocational and Technical Education in Turkey Project) between 2003-2007 period have been taken from these institutions and were started to evaluate.

The Studies of determination and provision of Occupational Standards Savings of Other institutions and organizations are being continued. Being an authorized testing and certification organization should be applied to MYK.

First of All, willing the institutions / organizations after creating the necessary infrastructure, must be accredited by Turkish Accreditation Agency (TURKAK) or an accreditation institution with an multilateral recognition agreement in EU.

At this point, the formation of the centres for occupational standards, testing and certification are required.

Therefore, "Strengthening Vocational Qualifications Authority and National Qualifications System "Project with 11 million budget was prepared with the almost establishment of MYK synchronously.

The introduction of learning outcomes into the curricula development process has been underway for several years as is a part of the secondary education and training reform project in Turkey (Strengthening Vocational Education and Training in Turkey Project-abbreviated as SVET).

The studies oriented to establish a National Qualifications System has been carried out within the framework of SVET Project in Turkey. The most important output of these studies is the law on Vocational Qualifications Authority approved on 21st September 2006. The establishment of the Vocational Qualifications Authority has been seen as the most important advantage of our country for implementing ECVET.

Designing the modular educational programmes and application of them will also

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facilitate the implementation of ECVET in Turkey. Since most of the universities has already started to apply ECTS successfully for some time, it is evaluated as another advantage in terms of implementing ECVET.

EXPERIENCE IN ECVET:

The system will be based on certifications within the accepted occupational standards. It is worth noting here that Turkey has adopted 8 reference levels from the EQF for the National Qualification Framework

(NQF) which are to be developed. VQA has two major responsibilities that are crucial to strengthening the relationship between the VET system and employment. First, it is expected to develop occupational standards (OS) based on competences currently required by the labour market. These OS will shape the development of training standards to be used by all training institutions in the country.

They will provide VET schools with the much needed objectives in terms of competency-based curricula. Over 150 OS have been prepared so far in cooperation with social partners and sector representatives. Providing social partners are involved in this task their commitment to the VET system will increase and the relevance of VET for employment will improve. VQA also has important responsibilities in the area of assessment and certification of learning outcomes gained by all individuals. It will contribute to overcoming major weaknesses in the Turkish VET system, including the lack of standardised mechanisms to assess and control the quality and the relevance to employment of the learning process that takes place in training institutions leading to the improvement of mobility in VET.

In Turkey, ECVET is considered as a tool for supporting mutual trust in the field of qualifications and for increasing transparency. It would thereby enable knowledge, skills and competences acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to be accumulated, transferred and recognised. The adoption of ECVET principles in Turkey however, is a relatively new area of interest within the Turkish VET reform. The development process started about two years ago and it is still ongoing. Turkey has not only been working on ECVET at a national level but also participating and contributing to studies that take place in a broader EU context.

Despite being a new concept, the development of ECVET in Turkey has already reached some technical milestones. Turkey is committed to developing an ECVET system under the lifelong learning approach. This commitment was officially declared in an international meeting concerning ECVET on 28th March 2007 in Ankara. The Educational Research and Development Directorate (ERDD) of MoNE is the unit responsible for the development of ECVET in Turkey. First, in the same year, an extensive consultation process took place, with over 250 responses from a broad range of stakeholders. ERDD then prepared a Country Report on ECVET, reflecting the views of the stakeholders.

The major conclusions compiled in the country report are the following: MoNE then organised a series of workshops with the participation of representatives of CoHE, social partners, teachers from VET, trainers and members of the curricula working groups of MoNE. An ECVET approach specific to Turkey was discussed and based on lessons learnt from the practices of EU Member States.

As a result of this development process, an ECVET Discussion Paper for Turkey - including a proposed Action Plan based on SWOT Analysis - was prepared. In keeping with the Action Plan, a multi-actor working group agreed on an approach to assigning credits to the existing VET curriculum. Following this, a national credit-allocation

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approach was used to allocate credit points to all learning outcomes based on knowledge, skills and competences. The basic elements of the ECVET approach specific to the Turkish VET context are:

- Learning outcomes are credited based on total learning time.
- Learning outcomes which lead to qualifications of similar scope, content, complexity and duration are allocated the same amount of credits.
- Learning outcomes gained through one-to-one learning of up to 20 hours are equivalent to 1 ECVET credit.
- One full educational year of VET education is equivalent to 60 credits.
- 240 credits can be gained upon completion of 4 years of secondary formal VET education.

An example of ECVET conversion has been adopted to allocate credits to units of qualifications at levels 2, 3 and 4 in a selected field of training, namely: “Computer and Information Technology” (level 4 curriculum for Network Operator).Given the studies carried out so far for ECVET, it is good to know that the Turkish VET reform, including ECVET development works, will soon be strengthened by the promotion of the Lifelong Learning Project (The LLL project).

The overall objective of the project is to promote the development and implementation of coherent and comprehensive strategies for lifelong learning with the purpose of establishing an institutional framework and capacities for LLL, in line with the EU practices. Projects will support individuals‟ access to education in order to raise employment opportunities within a system designed to value learning. It is expected to begin early March 2011 with a life-span of 24 months.

During the LLL Project, the above proposed ECVET model will be reviewed, adopted for 50 occupational areas and tested in pilot schools, with the ultimate aim of a nationwide implementation by the end of 2012 according to the ECVET Action Plan for Turkey.

Turkish citizens have experienced some difficulties while they apply for visa with a view to getting a training course in a European country. If some measures could be developed cooperatively this will increase the participation rate of Turkish citizens in mobility projects designed in the scope of Community Education and Youth Programmes, in particular of LdV since 2004.

GOOD PRACTICES AND PROJECTS:

1. As a part of Strengthening Vocational Education and Training Project (SVET) learning outcomes have been taken into account in curricula development processes for some years.

2. IKMEP (HRD-VET) Project:

   Within the scope of HRD-VET Project, activities have been carried out to develop competency based modular curricula at secondary education (2nd, 3rd and 4th levels) and post-secondary education (5th Level) levels.

3. The Project of Strengthening Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA) And The National Qualifications System

   There were three core project activities, the first being to ensure the functioning of the National Qualifications System, particularly in a number of priority sectors, including the automotive, tourism, construction, transportation, energy, metal, plastics, chemicals, textiles, clothing and leather products industries.

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	A second activity involved increasing the capacity of the VQA, and the VocTest centres, to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. To facilitate the mutual transfer and sharing of best practices, up to 30 staff from the VQA participated in study tours to two EU countries. An extensive public awareness campaign on the new national qualifications system was the third major activity. This activity was directed at all stakeholders, from the public to the private sectors, to employee and employer organisations and NGOs.
For more information (website page):	http://mtegm.meb.gov.tr/documents/2/AN%20OVERVIEW%20OF%20TURKISH%20VET EM%202012/kitap.pdf
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