CISESK
&
The European Qualification Framework (EQF)

**Made by**

Projektbüro für innovative Sozialpolitik

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Introduction

What is the EQF ?

The EQF is a translation device for comparing qualifications. It uses neutral reference points based on learning outcomes.
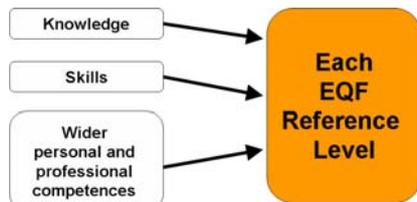
The EQF uses 8 reference levels based on learning outcomes (defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences).

The EQF shifts the focus from input (lengths of a learning experience, type of institution) to what a person holding a particular qualification actually knows and is able to do.
This supports a better match between the needs of the labour market and education and training provision, facilitates the validation of non-formal and informal learning, and facilitates the transfer and use of qualifications across different countries and education and training systems.
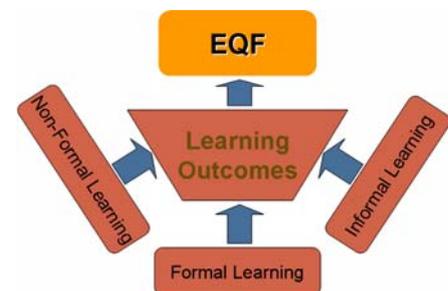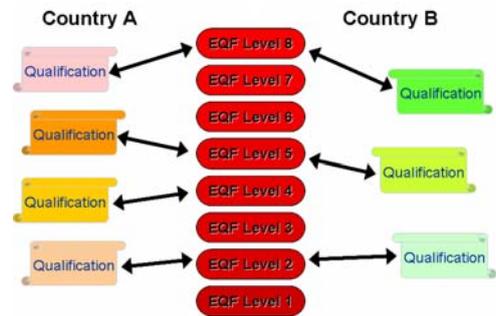
What is ECVET?

ECVET (European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training) is a European system of accumulation (capitalisation) and transfer of credits designed for vocational education and training in Europe. It enables the attesting and recording of the learning achievement/learning outcomes of an individual engaged in a learning pathway leading to a qualification, a vocational diploma or certificate.
It enables the documentation, validation and recognition of achieved learning outcomes acquired abroad, in both formal VET or in non-formal contexts. It is centred on the validation and the accumulation of learning outcomes, defined in terms of the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for achieving a qualification.
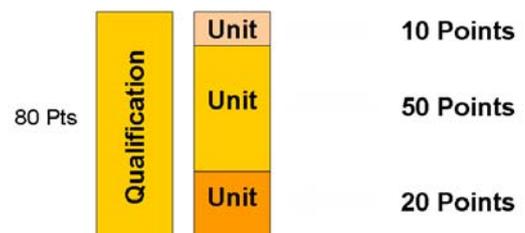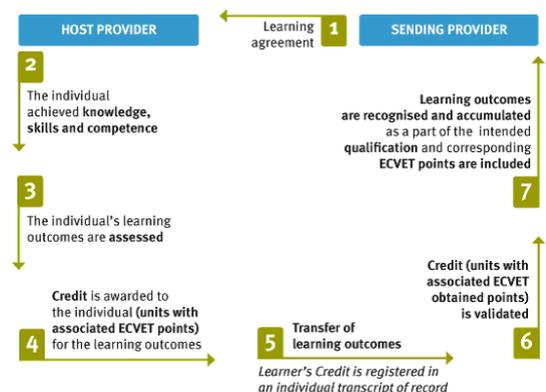
Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning

Genereal Aspects of Validation

Validating non-formal and informal learning is increasingly seen as a way of improving lifelong learning. Validation of non-formal and informal learning is intended for making visible and valuing learning that takes place outside formal education and training institutions and thus making visible the entire scope of knowledge and experience held by an individual. For an employer it is a question of human resource management, for individuals a question of having the full range of skills and competences valued and for society a question of making full use of existing knowledge and experience, thus avoiding waste and duplication.

Convergence of Learning Paths

One important aspect of validation of non-formal and informal learning is the convergence of learning paths in terms of common standards. The current trend to increase the 'outcome' formulation of standards (e.g. EQF) will also enable validation processes to lead to formal qualification. There is increasing convergence in the definition of standards expected in validation of non-formal and informal learning and those expected for formal qualifications. In the long-term this could result in the certification of (partially) non-formal and informal competencies / learning outcomes in form of degrees. The following diagram illustrates this (possible) convergence.
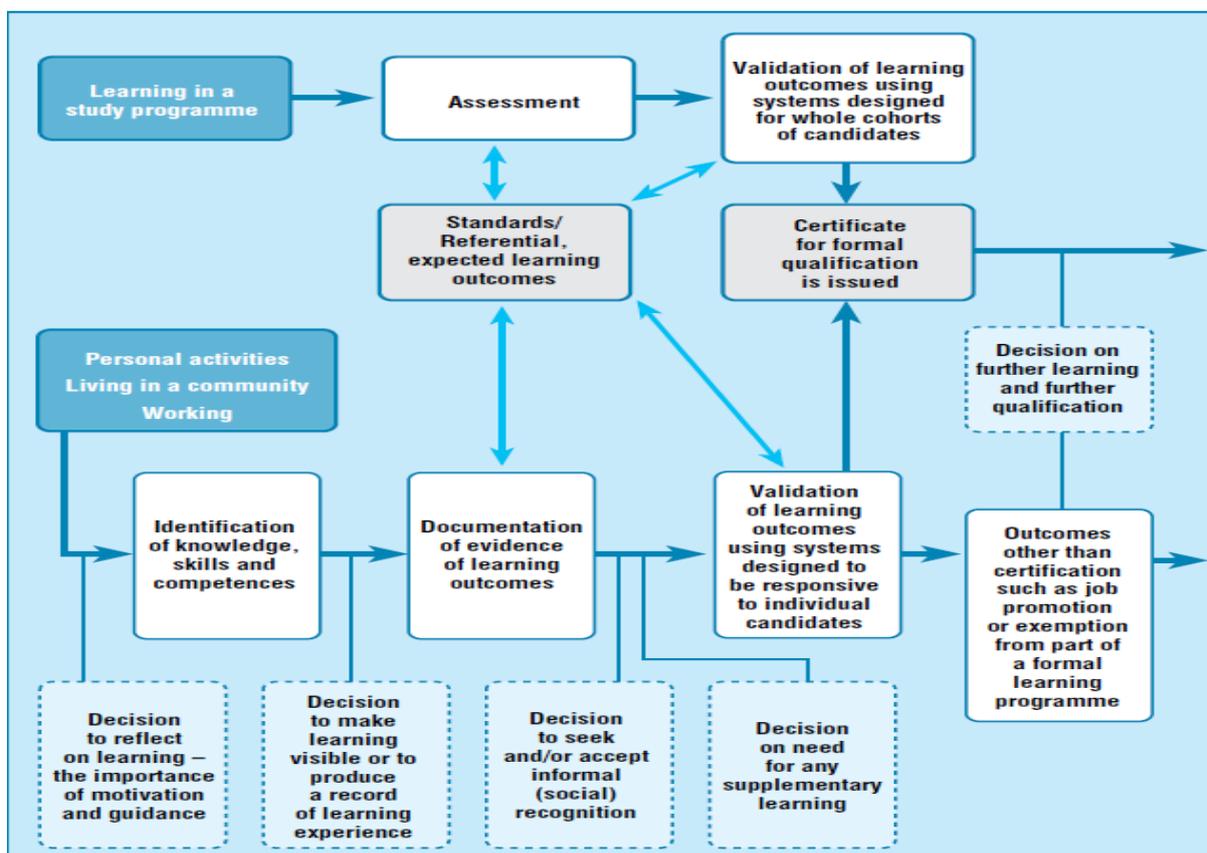

Figure taken from "CEDEFOP: European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning"
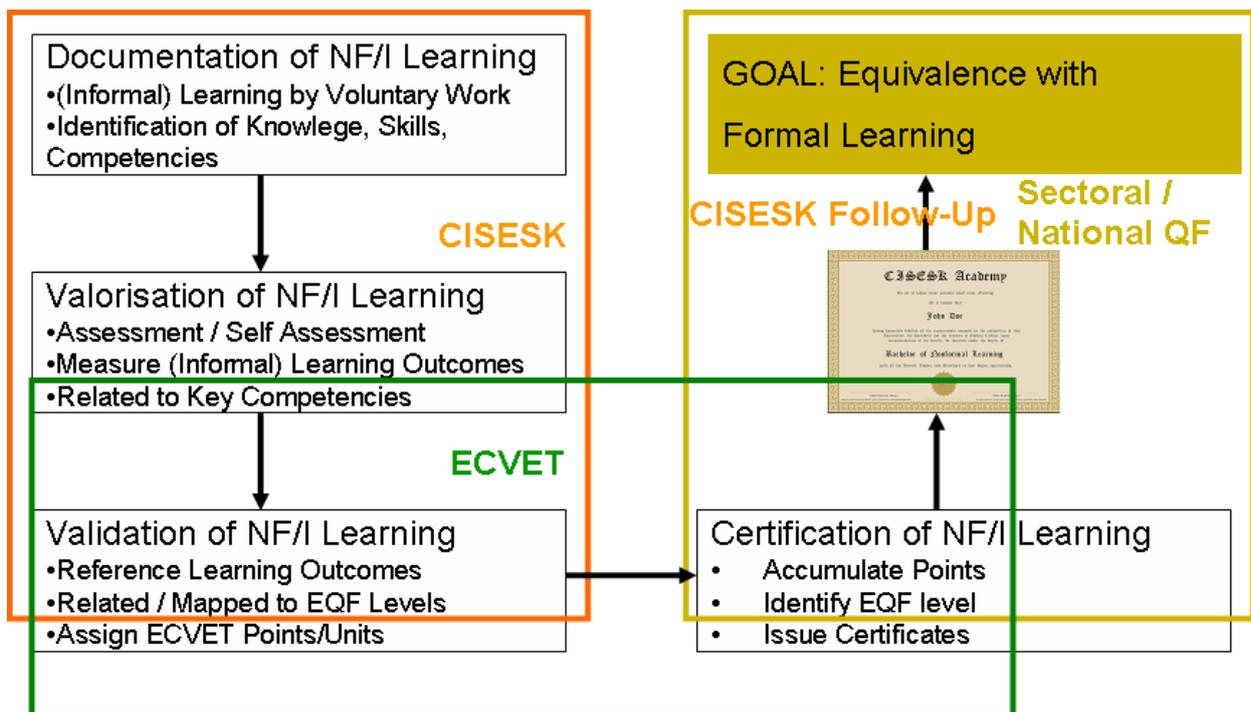
CISESK and Validation

The main connection between CISESK and the EQF is the purpose of Validation of non-formal / informal learning. This validation plays an important role within the deployment and integration strategy for the EQF.

While there are institutions and tools available and/or in development for the validation of non-formal learning (like ECVET), there is still a lack of tools for validation of informal learning. In this context CISESK wants to contribute to the integration by providing tools and mechanisms for the validation of informal learning, especially in the context of voluntary work like (European) civil service.
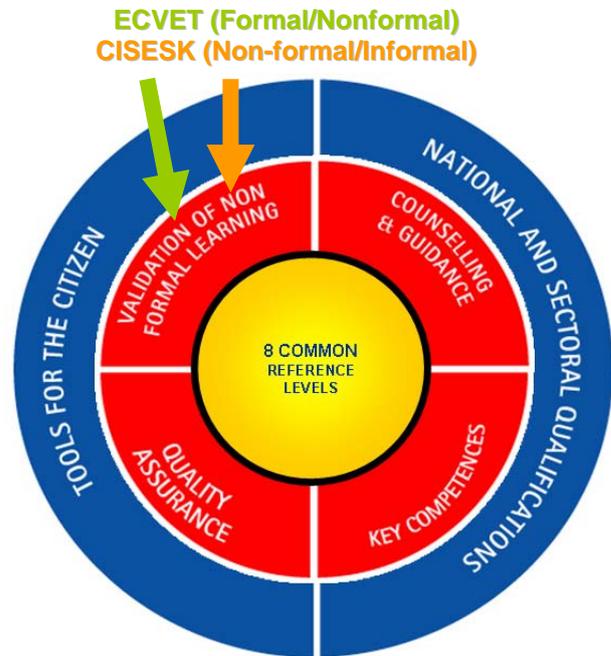
CISESK - Scope and Integration

The main scope of CISESK in this context of validation of non-formal and informal learning, especially by voluntary work, is illustrated by the following diagram:

<u>CISESK Scope</u>

The main scope of CISESK in terms of validation can be describes as follows:

- Documentation of NF/I learning contents by voluntary work (like EVS), by identification of the knowledge, skills and competencies required for /gained by the voluntary work
- Valorisation of NF/I learning outcomes by <u>assessment and/or self assessment</u>, measured through repeated monitoring of acquired skills and competencies, referencing the <u>8 key competencies</u>, as defined by the European Commission.
- Validation of the NF/I learning outcomes

<u>Integration with ECVET</u>

While the ECVET system is designed and targeted for the vocational training sector, the principles and mechanisms could easily be adopted in other contexts.
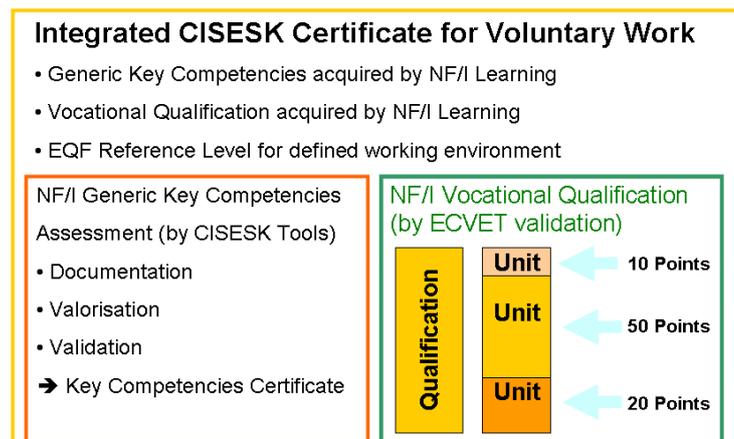
It is first of all very essential, that ECVET learning outcome validation is fully compliant with the EQF framework, e.g. it is based on knowledge, skills and competencies, like the EQF reference model.

This means that the learning outcomes / competencies acquired through voluntary work (like EVS) in terms of practical competencies could be measured by ECVET points as reference. This could be the basis for an integrated certificate, which combines the measurement of generic key competencies with that of vocational/practical skills for a specific sector / working place.

<u>(Integrated) Certification</u>

The CISESK project has developed and disseminated an assessment tool that produces a certificate about acquired competencies through a voluntary work / voluntary service. This certificate is mainly dedicated to the (generic) European key competencies.

A follow up project could produce the necessary integration with certification of vocational qualifications, by using ECVET mechanisms/tools, for specific sectors/working environments.

Additionally an EQF reference level will be defined for selected job profiles. The resulting integrated certificate for voluntary work could then go into the process of international recognition.

Integrated CISESK Certificate for Voluntary Work
- Generic Key Competencies acquired by NF/I Learning
- Vocational Qualification acquired by NF/I Learning
- EQF Reference Level for defined working environment

NF/I Generic Key Competencies Assessment (by CISESK Tools)
- Documentation
- Valorisation
- Validation
➔ Key Competencies Certificate

NF/I Vocational Qualification (by ECVET validation)

Qualification

Unit — 10 Points
Unit — 50 Points
Unit — 20 Points

Sample Competence Profiles for Volunteers

The following roughly describes three competence profiles, as they could be defined for an integrated assessment / certification of NF/I learning for specific sectors:

Generic Competencies

The most important (generic) key competencies needed for volunteers (as well as professionals) in the 3 targeted sectors: education, peace work and ecology have turned out to be the following:

- KC6.1 "Interpersonal, intercultural and social competence"
- KC6.2 "Civic competencies"
- KC8 "Cultural Expression"
- KC1: "Communication in mother tongue"
- KC5 "Learning to learn"
- KC4 "Digital Competence"

For these generic key competencies an EQF reference level of 3-4 could be defined for specific job profiles that which fit voluntary work.

Additional Vocational Competencies

The following list describes an example of additional / vocational qualifications needed for volunteers / professionals in certain sectors / job profiles:

Additional Competencies for volunteers in the sector education:

- Pedagogic skills (theoretical and practical)
- Theoretic knowledge of the subject of education

Additional Competencies for volunteers in the sector ecology:

- Basic technical and mathematical / statistical knowledge
- Biochemical, engineering skills (theoretical/practical)

Additional Competencies for volunteers in the sector peace work:

- Basic sociological and psychological knowledge
- Basic knowledge in political science

For these additional / vocational qualifications an EQF reference level of 3-4 could be defined as needed for carrying out the tasks accordingly.

For a certain / detailed qualification / skill, there could be minimum / necessary ECVET points assigned.