

VaLOGReg

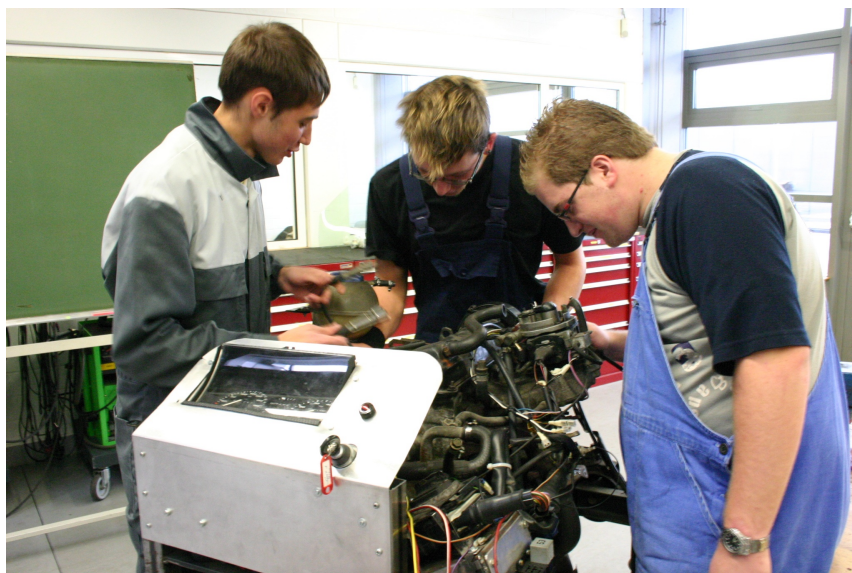
Value Learning Outcomes in the Grande Region



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Contents :

Page 2	Preface of Klaus Kessler, Minister of Education
Page 3	The experts of the VaLOGReg project meet in Luxembourg
Page 4	Meeting in Luxembourg, reactions
Page 5	Participation of the VaLOGReg project in the 4th and 5th ECVET seminars in Rome and Barcelona
Page 6	Partners

Value Learning Outcomes in the Grande Region



Lifelong Learning Programme



Education and Culture DG



Preface

The Saarland is currently chairing the 12th "Summit of the Grande Région", under the motto "Initiative for Mobility in the Grande Région".

Encouraging the mobility of young people is important to foster a sense of belonging to Europe, to improve social and vocational integration and to ensure the competitiveness of the European economy.

In May 2010, the "Initiative for Mobility in the Grande Région" led the Conference of Ministers of Education of the Grande Région to highlight the importance of vocational training in the context of cross-border educational policy, as there are still numerous obstacles. There are enormous differences as far as the educational systems, professional profiles and designations, administrative competency and financing as well as the length of courses, the status of the learners and the number of participants are concerned. Despite a large number of existing exchange programs, only about two per cent of learners in Germany currently complete one part of their training or internship abroad.

A stay abroad for training can however be very rewarding. Learners develop their linguistic and professional skills, improve their knowledge of the market and the culture of everyday life in the neighbouring country and establish contacts which benefit businesses. Stays abroad can develop cooperation in training and lead to high-quality training to meet the needs of businesses. This can in turn ensure the continued supply of skilled professionals in the region.

The Conference of Education Ministers places great hopes on the VaLOGReg project. On the basis of ECVET, instruments are developed which should ensure the comparability of learning outcomes achieved during training periods in other regions, so that these learning outcomes can then be evaluated and validated in the country of origin.

The results are eagerly awaited. The targets are ambitious. It is important to add flexibility and transparency to the system of vocational training in the region, to simplify the recognition of professional qualifications and to promote flexibility and mobility in the course of vocational training.

Klaus Kessler

Minister of Education

The experts of the VaLOGReg project meet in Luxembourg

Mutual trust is a prerequisite for any ECVET partnership. The partners must be able to rely on competent integration, training and assessment in the educational system of the neighbouring region.

To establish this sense of trust, it is important to conduct a thorough review of the learning outcomes that will be recognized at the end of a period of mobility

Thus, the VaLOGReg consortium has decided to involve experts in car mechanics and electronics in its work. This thorough examination by experts then forms the basis for the elaboration of a partnership agreement regarding the transfer of learning outcomes.

Comparison of learning outcomes

The first meeting of experts was held on 8th and 9th February 2010 in Bettange-sur-Mess (Luxembourg). 18 experts from 5 regions of the Grande Région (Lorraine, Wallonia, Saarland, Rhineland-Palatinate and Luxembourg) participated in this two-day workshop.

Ahead of the meeting, experts had reviewed the qualifications of car mechanics and electronics and compared them to ECVET criteria. Qualifications were described by using a grid broken down into activities, tasks and learning outcomes.

The objective of the first meeting of experts was thus to compare the educational profiles of the four countries by focusing on learning outcomes. Learning outcomes were first made consistent in groups of two, and then the four training courses were compared. To do this, the experts identified activities and tasks as a chart and checked if they formed an integral part of the vocational training in the four countries.

To avoid the risk of each partner merely modifying their pre-existing learning units, fields of learning or modules, the experts agreed to make the comparison as well as other stages of the project work on the basis of learning outcomes instead of individual units. In the formulation of learning outcomes, experts have relied on the recommendation that ECVET learning outcomes are "statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process." This is

what distinguishes the VaLOGReg project from other ECVET projects: it is not about developing common units, but about identifying learning units that cover the same learning objectives.

The detailed examination of the experts led to the conclusion that, in the two areas of car mechanics and electronics, 90 per cent of the learning outcomes overlapped. The differences that were noted could be found in the fields of error diagnosis and customer relations.

Other differences could be found in the organization of vocational training. While in Germany courses are structured in a linear fashion, other training programmes, such as those in Luxembourg, have a cyclical curriculum in which the learning objectives recur with increasing complexity.

Work Progress

A second meeting of experts was held on 11th May 2010. At that time all the activities were described in detail by indicating the required learning outcomes. Does the learner perform these activities independently or with the assistance of others? To what degree must each activity be mastered? How much of the learners' training is accomplished at school, and how much time is spent at the workplace?

These issues are particularly important in the context of the organization of the mobility phase scheduled for late 2010 / early 2011, which will last 3 to 5 weeks. This is why the teachers who will host the students during the mobility phase also attended the meeting.

Based on the results of two expert meetings, the steering group developed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the Learning Agreement. The MoU represents a voluntary agreement between the providers of vocational education, the national / regional authorities and other involved parties in the participating countries. It aims to build mutual trust by regulating the collaboration in terms of the validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired during a phase of mobility.

The experts of the VaLOGReg project meet in Luxembourg

Continuation of text

The learning agreement, on the other hand, describes the learning objectives that should be achieved in the course of the mobility phase. It will be signed by the host institution, the home institution, as well as the learner. The work done by the experts is of major importance, as it points out the right way towards establishing the framework for mobility projects.

Reactions & comments:

Patrice HENRION, *Chargé de mission, Service francophone des métiers et des qualifications (B)*

In my opinion the VaLOGReg project offers a wonderful opportunity not only to meet partners from neighbouring countries but also to meet people in a (mainly European) multi-cultural context. The various exchanges have allowed us to recognize most of the major points of convergence between our training profiles but also the existing differences. The differences that were singled out through the VaLOGReg project consisted of a lack of certain skills from a European point of view. Thus, the syllabi in the French-speaking community of Belgium put less emphasis on learner autonomy and customer relations. Consequently, these aspects will be taken into account by the service francophone des métiers et des qualifications when new training profiles and syllabi are developed. This will constitute a significant advance in terms of learner mobility.

Pierre MARQUET, , *Institut wallon de formation en alternance et des indépendants et petites et moyennes entreprises (IFAPME), Expert in the area of car mechanics (B)*

As pedagogical counsellors at IFAPME, we have developed and adapted our training standards on the basis of our partnership with Educam, the automotive industry in Belgium.

Working as an expert in a project like VaLOGReg has allowed me to add a new dimension to my work: learner mobility.

Through a rigorous methodology proposed by the project managers, the group of experts from participating countries quickly managed to analyse the syllabi and to identify the major activities related to each profession. More than 90 % of the learning outcomes were identical, which was hardly surprising given the particular area of work. Indeed, maintaining or repairing a car should be quite similar in Germany, France, Luxembourg and Belgium.

What remained to be checked was the level of taxonomy selected for training among the different project partners. Apart from some items related to expertise and customer relations, the experts also identified some very strong similarities in this particular area of study.

The time to determine the sequence of activities that would be the object of mobility had finally arrived. After some fruitful discussions on the work and especially on how to conduct the assessment of the learners, mobility could be organized.

Now it is up to the participating training centres to put this experiment to the test.

The experts of the VaLOGReg project meet in Luxembourg

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What the participants from the Saarland (D) have to say

These meetings provide very interesting stimuli when it comes to finding a basic consensus on the training profiles in car mechanics and electronics in the Grande Région. For each of the participants from the different regions, cultural differences had a significant impact on the organization of vocational training. Especially when it comes to teaching, the underlying structures are much more formal in France than in Luxembourg or Germany. At system level, the dual system in Germany differs considerably from the more school-dominated systems in the partner regions. Differences complicate course alignments and create a need for compromises. The difficulties were already apparent in the concept, so that a first step consisted of determining common denominators. The participants could mostly identify with the aspects that overlapped. Further progress should be made in developing common aspects throughout the whole of vocational education and training.

Participation of the VaLOGReg project in the 4th and 5th ECVET seminars in Rome and Barcelona

The recommendation establishing the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) provides for a test phase until 2012. On 18th February 2010, a year after the first pilot projects were launched, the 4th ECVET seminar was held. The objective of this seminar was to organize an exchange of experiences among the 11 ECVET projects existing at EU level. Emphasis was placed on the different approaches to ECVET projects. In this context, the VaLOGReg project also presented its working method. The instruments and methods developed by the projects, the assessment, validation and recognition after the return of the learners to their country of origin and the sustainability of cooperation through formal agreements (Memorandum of Understanding, Learning Agreement) formed the main focus of the discussions.

The 5th ECVET seminar, held in Barcelona on 14th June 2010, focused more on the assessment of learning outcomes in the context of a mobility period.

Partners :

Lycée technique d'Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg, www.lte.lu

Ministère de l'Education nationale et de la Formation professionnelle, Luxembourg

Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Jugend und Kultur, Rheinland Pfalz

Ministerium für Bildung, Saarland

Goupement d'intérêt public Formation Tout au Long de la Vie, France

Institut wallon de formation en alternance et des indépendants et petites et moyennes entreprises, Belgique

Ministère de la Communauté française



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de l'Éducation nationale
et de la Formation professionnelle

