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Nationalagentur Erasmus+ Bildung

**Collaborating with stakeholders to develop higher level
VET pathways in Austria**

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Austrian ECVET Strategy #1

- **Principles of implementation** in Austria and **catalogue of measures** 2014-2016
- National overall strategy coordinated by the **Ministry of Education**
- Supported by the **National Working Group ECVET** (as an advisory working group)
- Due to the distribution of competences in the AT educational landscape, **sub-strategies** were developed, taking into account the framework conditions (e.g. competence, objectives, etc.) of the respective educational sector



ECVET
Europäisches Leistungspunktesystem
für die berufliche Bildung
Grundlagen der Umsetzung in Österreich
und Maßnahmenkatalog 2014-2016
2014-04-07



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Austrian ECVET Strategy #2

Strategies in sub-sectors:

- Geographical mobilities in VET ⇒ quality & recognition
- Dual VET ⇒ permeability & recognition of prior learning
- VET schools ⇒ permeability, recognition of prior learning
- VET colleges ⇒ cooperation & permeability, credit transfer
- VET colleges in health care ⇒ permeability & credit transfer
- Adult education ⇒ learning outcomes & validation of nfl/ifl
- **Higher VET ⇒ permeability & credit transfer**



Higher VET - Austrian ECVET Strategy

Long-term objectives

- **Demand-oriented** identification of relevant application areas
- Promotion of **permeability and recognition**, possibly through the bridge to ECTS
- Support for the formulation of competences and **learning outcomes** in **continuing vocational training in enterprises**



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Higher VET in Austria

- No clear definition yet
- Higher VET is quite far from being understood in the same manner throughout Europe
- In this context:
'VET Qualifications and programmes offered at EQF levels 5 to 8 which do not fall within the overarching qualifications framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA)'

Higher VET in Austria – examples #1

CVET institutes:

- Non-formal qualifications: based on training courses in many professional/vocational fields, e.g. coach, personnel development expert, upskilling programmes for skilled workers (middle management)
- Formal qualifications: e.g. Industrial master, Building craftsperson/foreman

Certifying bodies:

- Formal qualifications, preparatory courses offered by CVET institutes (not mandatory):
 - Master craftsperson qualification (NQF/EQF level 6)
 - Engineer qualification (NQF/EQF level 6)
 - Qualified accountant

Higher VET in Austria – examples #2

Companies and supra-company training centres:

- In-company training courses in bigger companies
- Supra-company training centres in e.g. the banking, insurance or building sectors

Public bodies:

- Training centre for police/security officers
- Academy of Public Administration

Higher education institutes:

- CVET courses for HE graduates
- Courses for learners who have a HE entrance qualification ('Matura') but not a HE degree

Higher VET - very heterogeneous in Austria

- Many different **providers**
- Many **programmes** with different access requirements, leading to many different **qualifications**
- **No shared elements**, such as qualifications/degrees, quality assurance standards, etc.
- **Lack of public perception, appreciation, visibility**

Activities related to Higher VET in Austria

Since 2014, the Austrian National Agency for Erasmus+ Education, in cooperation with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, has been organising **conferences** for and with national and/or international ECVET experts – e.g.

- 2018: International ECVET Experts Conference ‘**Higher VET in Europe – Visions for the future**’

<https://erasmusplus.at/de/aktuelles/artikel/2018/11/review-ecvet-experts-conference-higher-vet-in-europe-visions-for-the-future/> (in English)

- 2019: National ECVET Experts Conference: ‘**With VET all the way to the top. Further development of Higher VET in Austria**’

<https://bildung.erasmusplus.at/de/veranstaltungen/detail/2019/11/21/mit-berufsbildung-ganz-nach-oben-weiterentwicklung-der-hoeheren-berufsbildung-in-oesterreich/> (in German)

Int. ECVET Experts Conference

‘Higher VET in Europe – Visions for the future’ #1

Prior to the event, a focus group was organised :

- by the Erasmus+ Agency, together with the Ministry of Education and the national ECVET experts
- with decision-makers from ministries, social partner organisations and other experts
- to shed more light on the subject of ‘Higher VET’, to discuss current developments and to formulate visions for the future

Aim of the conference:

- to share experiences with representatives from other countries on how Higher VET is understood and to gain inspiration for national discussions on Higher VET, especially its visibility and attractiveness.

Participants:

- 70 representatives from 13 European countries (AT, BG, CZ, LV, LU, MT, NL, PT, SE; Macedonia, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey)

Int. ECVET Experts Conference

'Higher VET in Europe – Visions for the future' #2



Netherlands:
Non-regulated
qualifications (EQF 5-8)

Sweden:
Swedish Higher
Vocational Education
(EQF 5-6)

Austria

Switzerland:
Swiss Professional
Education (EQF 5-8)

Int. ECVET Experts Conference

‘Higher VET in Europe – Visions for the future’ #3

Conclusions

- There is a **growing need** for Higher VET.
- Inclusion into **NQFs** is considered as crucial for enhancing visibility and transparency.
- **Higher VET and HE should complement each other** – but how to overcome the traditional dichotomy and separation of these pathways? A change in perspective by shifting the focus on the LO of qualifications and their levels might help to establish parity of esteem.
- No consensus about whether there is a **need of ‘branding’** Higher VET for specific programmes / qualifications or for creating a common understanding across European countries.
- **ECVET principles**, particularly descriptions of qualifications in terms of LO and to a certain extent also the grouping of LO into units or modules, were considered as relevant for Higher VET, although ECVET is usually not explicitly applied in this context

Int. ECVET Experts Conference ‘Higher VET in Europe – Visions for the future’ #4

→ Article in:
ECVET magazine n° 33
December 2018



Nat. ECVET Experts Conference ‘With VET all the way to the top. Further development of Higher VET in Austria’

Date / location:

→ 21. November 2019, Vienna

Aim:

→ to reflect on possible implementation scenarios for Higher VET in Austria

Target group:

→ practitioners from VET and industry

Content:

- Higher VET, what is it? Situation in **Austria** (**research perspective**)
- Why Higher VET? - Motive position, impulse, visions (**governance perspective**)
- Looking beyond the borders - Higher VET in **Switzerland** (has had an established area of Higher VET since 2002) and **Germany** (wants to introduce transparent advanced training levels for higher-qualifying VET in 2020)
- Panel with representatives from VET and industry: Higher VET - **Opportunities and Challenges for Austria**

Additional activity – conference on Higher VET & validation

‘Higher qualifications through recognition of competence?’ - 4.12.2019

- **Organised by:** Chamber of Labour for Vienna and Academy of Continuing Education Austria (wba)
 - **Aim:** to show ways and means of recognising work experience and competences for the more highly qualified and for obtaining qualifications above level 5 of the NQF: namely, what validation can do for these groups of people and what personal and economic benefits it can bring.
 - **Three practical examples:**
 - Validation EQF 6+ - Vision and reality: the way to a Bachelor's degree at the Sorbonne in Paris
 - Engineer NEW - Certification according to IngGesetz 2017 law
 - Recognition of competence in the non-formal area using the example of wba
- <https://wba.or.at/de/aktuelles/tagung-validierung.php>

Future of Higher VET in Austria



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**Thank you for your
attention!**

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