

Learning outcomes, modules, credits and their European framework

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Thematic overview

- The **Learning Outcomes approach** within European Vocational Education and Training, its rationales, overall concept and consequences
- **Modules/Units and credits** within European Vocational Education and Training, its mode of action, its value and its European application context
- **Conclusions** for the structure of training within directive 2003/59/EC under consideration of lessons learnt while working on comparability and transparency of qualifications in Europe

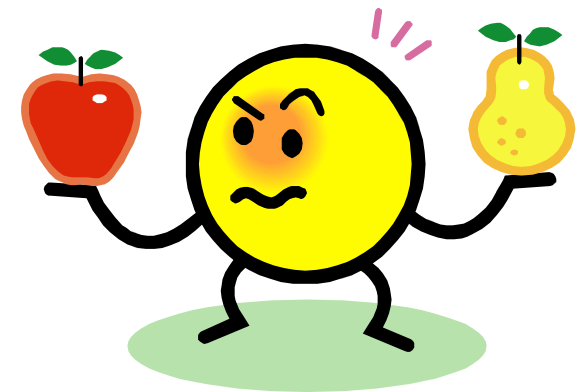


The Learning Outcomes Approach

Why learning outcomes as basis for comparison?

Same length and/or same content of study do not necessarily lead to the same learning result.

- **Input parameters are no useful tool to compare qualifications** across Europe because input parameters differ too widely and lead to very different results.
- It is **NOT possible to standardise/ harmonise as many input parameters** as necessary for reaching a common level of learners abilities.
- Currently **directive 2003/59/EC cannot lead to a real common level** of professional driver qualification in Europe due to its input orientation and the very heterogeneous implementation in the member states.
- That's why the driver CPC leads to a **very heterogeneous landscape of qualifications and levels of drivers abilities** reached with them!



Learning outcomes as basis for comparison

- The **European Qualifications Framework** with its learning outcomes approach and its 8-level structure has been launched in 2008 in order to make qualifications comparable across Europe.
- It uses **learning outcomes descriptor based on practical work processes/ tasks** in order to make qualifications transparent and comparable across Europe, those are :



- BUT: This requires a fundamental **shift in thinking/perspective** and an **increase of training and teaching quality!**
- **BENEFIT:** Working based on learning outcomes can lead to an **increase in quality of the training** if applied properly!



„Learning outcomes means statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of [any kind of] learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.”

The learning outcomes approach in practice

Shifting profiles/standards from input to output/-come orientation:

Directive 2003/59/EC	EQF/ learning outcomes based profile (ProfDRV profile)		
	knowledge	skills	competence
<p>2.1 Objective: to know the social environment of road transport and the rules governing it:</p> <p>maximum working periods specific to the transport industry; principles, application and consequences of Regulations (EEC) No 3820/85 and (EEC) No 3821/85; penalties for failure to use, improper use of and tampering with the tachograph; ...</p>	<p>4.2 Planning of and compliance with driving time and rest periods based on relevant legal regulations and on the specifications of the transport order</p> <p>The professional driver knows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legal regulations for driving times and rest periods • ... 	<p>The professional driver can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practically apply legal regulations for driving times and rest periods • manage time • ... 	<p>... He/ She considers the legal requirements on driving times and rest periods, ... He/ She applies the relevant legal regulations ... consequently. He/ She decides under special consideration of her/ his responsibility within road traffic and shows a professional behaviour as well as integrity.</p> <p>...</p>



www.project-profdrv.eu

The ProfDRV learning outcomes based profile

6 task related and 4 cross-cutting task/learning areas defined in learning outcomes

Driving and manoeuvring the vehicle

Performing pre-departure tasks

Loading and unloading

Planning driving times and routes

Maintenance of vehicle and vehicle combinations

Work documentation and paper work

Cooperation with customers

Cooperation with supervisors, colleagues, enforcement bodies and general public

Occupational health and safety and healthy lifestyle

Continuous education and training

Such learning outcomes based profiles/ standards need to have a clear **relation to the work processes/ practical work tasks** and therefore to the requirements/ needs of the labour market in order to enable comparison and comparability of qualifications across borders!



www.project-profdrv.eu

Consequences for teaching and training praxis

- The way (duration/ hours, training approach, etc.) **how learning takes place plays no role** within the learning outcomes approach.
- Learning outcomes can be acquired **formally, informally or non-formally**, through any kind of training such as class-room based training, learning at the workplace, e-learning, etc.
⇒ only the outcomes matter.
- BUT: In the framework of (non-) formal training this has major **influences on**
 - ⇒ the necessary **quality** of training (see projects such as www.project-ictdrv.eu or www.euVETsupport.eu),
 - ⇒ the choice of **training approach** and methods as well as
 - ⇒ **assessment** praxis in order to reach/assess the required learning outcomes especially skills and competence.(Those are among others reflected in the **ProfDRV quality standards.**)

EU VET SUPPORT



Excursus: The EQF and Directive 2003/59/EC

- Also directive **2003/59/EC has a reference to** a predecessor of the European Qualifications Framework (**EQF**):
Annex I of the Directive says, *“The minimum level of knowledge may not be less than level 2 of the training-level structure provided for in Annex I to Decision 85/368/EEC(1), i.e. the level reached during compulsory education, supplemented by professional training.”*
- The **referenced Decision has been replaced by the EQF** (1065/2008/EC).
- Level 2 within Decision 85/368/EEC(1) **equals skilled worker certificates** which are usually referred to as level 3 or 4 of the EQF.
- As far as the ProfDRV results show, this level is **not realised/ reached with the CPC in any European country.**



Learning outcomes and Directive 2003/59/EC

Initial qualification

- What (EQF) **level of learning outcomes/ qualification** is to be reached?
- **What learning outcomes** (ideally defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences) are supposed to be reached with initial qualification?
- How can **efficient assessment** take place in order to prove them?
(one kind of assessment independently from the way of learning)

Periodic training

- Are there certain **learning outcomes to be reached**/proven in the context of periodic training? If yes, which ones?
- **What learning paths** need to be taken into consideration in order to reach them (informal, non-/formal)?
- What different options/ approaches are conceivable in order **to prove learning outcomes**?



Modules/ Units and Credits within VET in Europe

Units and credits for mobility of workers & learners

Geographical mobility of learners and workers and mutual recognition of learning outcomes acquired abroad

- Units are defined in terms of learning outcomes or, for instance if the learning in a specific domain is the aim but not specific learning outcomes, credit points are **transferred from one national context to another**.
- A certain **set of units leads to a complete formal qualification** that can be referenced to a qualifications framework.
- **Two combinable modes of** action are conceivable within 2003/59:
 - _collecting credits in a domain independently from learning outcomes
 - _common predefined learning outcomes to be transferred beyond borders



Units & credits and non- and informal learning

Recognition of non- and informal learning with ECVET

“... The credit/examination/ testing system would allow drivers who voluntarily keep themselves up to date on legislation etc. to prove it rather than having to sit through hours of what will be to them boring and undemanding. ...” (quote from the consultation contributions)

- Units of learning are also used in order to **make informally and non-formally acquired learning visible** in the context of formal qualifications in order to avoid unnecessary time spend in training.
- At the same time this approach allows to **identify units of learning outcomes that have not yet been achieved** by the learner and need to be addressed in order to reach a formal qualification.



European Credit System for VET (ECVET)

- A **complementary European transparency tool** to the EQF also based on the learning outcomes approach.
- ECVET **expresses whole formal qualifications/ certificates** such as the skilled worker qualification/certificate “professional driver” in Germany **in terms of modules/units associated with certain learning outcomes** necessary in order to achieve the whole qualification/ certificate.
- **Credits are discussed controversially** within ECVET with regard to their added value in the process. They play very different roles and have very different purposes in different (national) contexts.
- BUT: Also here **Units and Credits are NOT linked to input factors** but to learning outcomes!



Units/ Credits and Directive 2003/59/EC

Initial qualification

- Is it necessary to **break down initial qualification into units of learning outcomes (modularisation)** in order to enable accumulation of learning outcomes acquired in different learning contexts?

Periodic training

- **Do the actual learning outcomes matter** for periodic training (for instance in terms of a minimum standard), is continuous education and training (lifelong learning) in the domain the aim or is a combination of both aspired?
- If there is a **minimum standard**, what learning outcomes are this standard?
- How to take **informally acquired learning outcomes** into account?
- What if a learner can prove all learning outcomes without **training attendance**? Does this free him/her from training or is it lifelong learning that matters and training beyond the proven abilities should be attended?



Conclusions for the training structure within Directive 2003/59/EC

Conclusions for Directive 2003/59/EC

Initial qualification:

- A fundamental shift in the current approach **away from defining input parameters (such as hours spend in training) to learning outcomes.**
- Definition of a **common learning outcomes based standard** under consideration of EQF levels and learning outcomes descriptors and based on work processes/ tasks in order to allow a ...
- **Relation of the CPC to the formal VET systems** in the Member States.
- An adequate and coherent approach towards **quality assurance with an emphasis on learning.**

Periodic training

- **Common learning outcomes** to be achieved/proven and/or **lifelong learning approach** (modules/units / credits).
- Integration of **informally acquired abilities** into the overall approach (recognition of non- and informal learning).
- Consideration of **professional drivers (learning) characteristics.**
- An adequate and coherent approach towards **quality assurance with an emphasis on learning.**

Thank you very much for your attention!

