Assuring the Quality in VET

The Role of Accreditation of VET Providers

Research Issues

- Types of accreditation
- National and sectoral accreditation frameworks
  - Accreditation process
  - Accreditation bodies and agencies
- Requirements, criteria and indicators
- Relationship to quality assurance
- Common elements and differences
- Results and impacts of accreditation
- Current trends and challenges for the future

Research Sample

Countries	Sectors
Denmark	Banking and Finance
Germany	ECDL
France (IVET and CVET)	Hotels & Restaurants
Hungary	Welding
Italy / Lombardy	
Romania	
UK / England	

Characteristics

- Consolidated legal and professional frameworks
- Appropriate application tools available on the internet
- Compulsory / voluntarily: precondition for provision of recognised diplomas and / or access to public funds
- Different accreditation bodies:
  - Ministries
  - Governmental bodies; some linked to accreditation in HE
  - Private agencies: under the directorate of a public council
- Average duration of accreditation process
  - Countries: 1 month to 15 months
  - Sectors: 15 days to 12 months
- Validity between 1 year and five years

Results and impacts

- Accreditation systems widely accepted by VET providers
- Systems have captured the market
- Accreditation assures respect of quality standards
  - Weak performers disappear from the market
  - Accredited providers increase their credibility
- Internal quality management system
  - Basically required in all systems, but often
  - not fully operationalised (data collection, dissemination of results)
- Criteria for accreditation
  - Over-extended in national systems
  - Too limited in sectoral systems
- Input-orientation still prevailing

Trends and challenges

- Develop accreditation into a driving force for the improvement of quality in VET
- Put more emphasis on output and outcome criteria
- Make use of the European set of quality indicators
- A common framework for accreditation in the perspective of lifelong learning
- Strengthen mutual recognition of accreditation between European Member States
- Stronger emphasis on the effective operation of internal quality management systems
- Complement accreditation by an approach supporting excellence in VET provision.

Conclusions I

VET providers

- Shape own individual quality objectives
- Strengthen the focus on the learner and the learning process
- Make use of monitoring, regular review and evaluation
- Organize change and improve towards better quality
- Exchange experiences with internal quality management systems

Member States and accreditation bodies

- Strengthen the involvement of stakeholders
- Give VET providers a voice in the board of accreditation bodies
- Give more weight to output and outcome criteria
- Reward VET providers having demonstrated outstanding performance
- Improve the attractiveness of VET by giving more visibility to good quality
- Enable providers to seek accreditation from foreign agencies.

Conclusions II

Sectoral professional organizations

- Organize cross-sectoral exchange of experience and good practice
- Pay more attention to the quality of the training process
- Encourage providers to operate an internal quality management system

European-wide cooperation

- Create a European network of accreditation bodies in VET
- Increase cooperation between national and sectoral accreditation systems
- Build on the common ground in accreditation as identified in the CEDEFOP study and
- Move forward towards a voluntary European framework for accreditation in VET