

Assessment and National Report of Existing Vocational Learning Provisions of Professionals in the Healthcare Waste Management Industry

Comparative Report 3.3



DEVELOPING AN EU STANDARDISED APPROACH TO VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS IN HEALTHCARE WASTE

With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union

Grant Agreement No 541982-LLP-1-2013-1-UK-LEONARDO-LNW

Deliverable number	3.3
Dissemination level	Four (Public)
Delivery date	31/09/2014 v.1
Status	Version 1
Author(s)	ICERMS Limited



Co-funded by the Lifelong
Learning Programme of the
European Union



Contents

Chapter 1	Executive Summary	4
Chapter 2	Overview of the Vocational Qualification System	5
	United Kingdom.....	5
	General description of the Vocational Qualification System	5
	Awarding Bodies.....	6
	Vocational Training Centres	9
	National Occupational Standards.....	10
	Greece	11
	General description of the Hellenic Vocational Qualification System	12
	Awarding Bodies.....	12
	Vocational Training Centres (KEK).....	14
	National Occupational Standards.....	15
	Italy.....	16
	General description of the Vocational Qualification System	16
	Awarding Bodies.....	20
	Vocational Training Centres	20
	National Occupational Standards.....	21
	Poland.....	22
	General description of the Vocational Qualification System	22
	Awarding Bodies.....	29
	Vocational Training Centres	33
	National Occupational Standards.....	34
	Spain	35
	General description of the Vocational Qualification System	35
	Awarding Bodies.....	35
	Training Centres	35
	National Occupational Standards	35
	Slovenia	37
	Vocational Education and Training System in Slovenia	37
	Germany	44
	General description of the Vocational Qualification System	44
	Awarding Bodies.....	47



Training Centres	48
National Occupational Standards.....	48
Albania.....	50
Chapter 3 Accreditation of New Vocational Qualifications	51
United Kingdom.....	51
Accreditation Bodies	51
Accreditation Process.....	51
Greece	51
Accreditation Awarding Bodies	51
Accreditation Process.....	52
Italy.....	53
Accreditation Bodies	53
Accreditation Process.....	54
Poland.....	55
Accreditation Bodies	55
Accreditation Process.....	56
Spain	56
Accreditation Bodies.....	57
Accreditation Process.....	57
Slovenia	58
Accreditation Bodies	58
Accreditation Process.....	58
Germany	61
Accreditation Bodies	61
Accreditation Process.....	61
Albania.....	62
Chapter 4 Award Implementation Plan Considerations	62
United Kingdom.....	63
Greece	63
Italy.....	64
Poland.....	67
Spain	69
Slovenia.....	69
Germany	70



Albania..... 71



Chapter 1 Executive Summary

The project partners conducted a thorough investigation of the VET system in order to identify what the current organisational set up was and how best the project outputs could be interfaced with it.

In all partner member states there was a clearly identifiable structure to VET and each partner member state has a VET system which is clearly defined and through which we have available pathways to introduce a new VET qualification.

In each case the project partner has identified the route through which any new VET award can be introduced to the system and therefore available for uptake by prospective candidates.

The idea is to create a network of decision makers from within these structures in order to facilitate a strategy for award/qualification implementation later in the project.



Chapter 2 Overview of the Vocational Qualification System

United Kingdom

General description of the Vocational Qualification System

Education

National priorities for further and higher education are determined by the UK and Scottish parliaments and the Welsh and Northern Ireland assemblies. Policy development, planning and implementation rest with the government departments responsible for each national education division – the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) in England, the Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DELNI), the Scottish Government, and the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) in Wales.

In England, delivery of further education is subject to external audit and public reporting by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Schools (Ofsted). In Scotland, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) has overall responsibility for planning, funding and quality assurance of further education through its work with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE).

DCELLS is responsible for planning, funding and promotion of all post-school education in Wales. ESTYN (the Welsh-language acronym for Her Majesty's inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales) is the appointed authority for audit of the quality of provision and related areas. The Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI) is responsible for planning and funding of further education provision in Northern Ireland. Inspection and audit are undertaken by the Education and Training Inspectorate on behalf of the Department.

Waste Facilities

In terms of the legal requirements for waste management facilities, the specific requirements differ in each country due to the different versions of legislation. The management of healthcare waste falls under general waste management legislation, and waste management guidance including, where necessary, hazardous waste legislation/guidance applicable in each of the four devolved nations.

Technical Competence

In the UK, under legislation and waste permitting regulations, a waste manager or operator must be able to "demonstrate competence" and this is usually done through obtaining the relevant waste management National or Scottish Vocational Qualification (N/SVO), and the candidate can then apply for a Certificate of Technical Competence (COTC). There are other means of demonstrating competence, but this is the most common route.



The competence arrangements vary in each of the four countries, but the underlying theme is that waste operators/managers must be able to demonstrate competence.

An outline of the requirements is show below.

Scotland

The Waste Management Licensing Regulations (Scotland) 2003 were revised in March 2011. The changes made affected the means of demonstrating technical competence; it is no longer a legal requirement for a Technically Competent Person in Scotland to hold a COTC, however COTCs remain an appropriate qualification to demonstrate competence in Scotland. The SEPA regulatory officer will advise if there are other competence arrangements to be adhered to.

England & Wales

On 6 April 2008 the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2007 regulations came into force. At the same time, the Waste Management Licensing Regulations (England and Wales) 2003, were abolished and this brought about changes in the way that the Technical Competence provision can be demonstrated by the relevant manager, or managers, at the 'Permitted' waste management facility. Several schemes are now in place called "competence schemes" which address these issues of technical competence.

NVOs can still be used to demonstrate competence, however, this system differs from Scotland and N. Ireland as it is a "risk-based system". This means that the qualifications required to demonstrate competence and to satisfy legal requirements will differ depending on the type of waste facility. High risk facilities (e.g. thermal treatment of hazardous waste) will be required to undertake a qualification with more units, than a low risk facility (e.g. recycling facility).

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the Certificate of Technical Competence (COTC) remains the primary means for managers of appropriate Waste management facilities to demonstrate their Technical Competence in accordance with the Waste Management Licensing Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003.

Awarding Bodies

Legal requirements/ standards for issuing institutions

A degree of convergence does exist in the area of quality assurance of qualifications. England, Wales and Northern Ireland share a common qualifications system, and the regulators in each country (listed below) work



together in regulating qualifications for use across the three countries. Scotland has a separate qualifications system, although there is close correlation across all four countries, particularly in the area of vocational qualifications. Individuals attending college will be school leavers, aged 15 or over. The following four bodies are responsible for the accreditation and standards of external qualifications and for curriculum and assessment for schools and colleges:

- England – Ofqual (Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator);
- Northern Ireland – Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA);
- Scotland – Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA);
- Wales – Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS).

CCEA is also an Awarding Body for qualifications in Northern Ireland. SQA is also an Awarding Body that develops and validates SQA branded qualifications including National Qualifications (Access, Intermediate, Higher and Advanced Higher Levels), Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, Scottish Vocational Qualifications and Scottish Professional Awards.

In higher education the responsibility for standards and quality rests with each institution. All institutions work with the independent Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Institutional audits and subject-level reviews are undertaken by QAA.

In terms of vocational qualifications, all approved waste management vocational qualifications, developed in line with the National Occupational Standards, must be regulated by a designated body. Following the accreditation of a qualification, the regulators systematically monitor awarding bodies against the requirements set out in the statutory regulations. The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2004) sets out the requirements for regulation of awarding bodies for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

In Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority is both the regulatory and awarding body. According to the Scottish Qualifications Act 2002, ultimately the responsibility for regulating SQA's procedures lies with Scottish Ministers. The Act states that it confers 'power on the Scottish Ministers to regulate the procedures of the Authority'.

SQA is largely self-regulating in respect of how qualification and assessment standards are set, maintained, and monitored. Along with the Board of Management, there are two other advisory bodies that perform a crucial role in safeguarding qualification standards. These are:



- SQA's Advisory Council
- SQA's Qualifications Committee

SQA is also accredited to offer Ofqual-regulated qualifications. Therefore, in addition to SQA's own quality criteria and processes, these qualifications are subject to the NVQ code of practice and the QCF Regulatory Arrangements, as appropriate.

Certification (Awarding) bodies

There are various waste management courses available throughout the UK and, in order to establish the awarding body, the relevant qualification must be identified first. The educational bodies responsible for delivering qualifications in waste management include:

- Colleges
- Universities
- Trade Associations
- Approved centres

In order to have a qualification recognised in the UK and be able to transfer credits between learning courses, educational institutions and occupations, the qualification must be accredited through one of qualification awarding bodies in the UK. More than 160 institutions in the UK have the power to award qualifications. This includes colleges and universities. The main awarding bodies for waste management qualifications are:

- WAMITAB in England, Wales and N. Ireland.
- WAMITAB/SQA in Scotland

Additionally, there is the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) which is a council representing the seven largest qualification providers in the UK (which offer GCSEs, GCEs, AEsAs, Scottish Highers, Vocational and vocationally related qualifications):

- AQA
- City & Guilds
- CCEA
- Edexcel
- OCR
- SQA
- WJEC

ASDAN, EDI plc. and NCFE are also large awarding bodies that deliver a range of environment related



qualifications.

Vocational Training Centres

Schools and Colleges

England, Wales and Northern Ireland have several exam boards, with schools and colleges able to freely choose between them on a subject-by-subject basis. Currently, there are seven exam boards available to state schools:

- AQA (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance)
- CIE (University of Cambridge International Examinations)
- CCEA (Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment)
- Edexcel (Pearson Edexcel as of April 2013)
- ICAAE (International Curriculum and Assessment Agency Examinations)
- OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
- WJEC (Welsh Joint Education Committee)

This is unusual and, in contrast, with the exception of university degrees, all Scottish qualifications are regulated and awarded by SQA. Within the UK, most universities act as their own awarding body for the qualifications they deliver.

Other

Certificates can be awarded after completion of a recognised/accredited training programme carried out by, for example, trade association. CIWM have a range of courses in which the individual will receive a certificate for at the end. CIWEM provide some training courses (including online) for some environmental and waste related subjects.

Training organisations

Requirements for institutions delivering training programmes

All institutions delivering training programmes or qualifications are regulated by the awarding body – and the awarding bodies are regulated by external qualifications regulators. Depending on the institution, various regulatory/quality assurance procedures will be followed. For the delivery of vocational qualifications, one of the key roles of the awarding body is to ensure that the approved centres, delivering their qualifications, are regulated. This is done through regular external verification visits by the awarding body, to the approved centre.

There is set criteria for the external verification procedure. Should the centre fail to meet any of the criteria, the centre will be given a risk-based score. If the score is within the “high risk” category, then a hold will be placed



upon the centre until the issues are resolved. For a “low risk” score, the awarding body will guide the centre in the right direction in order that they can make the necessary changes. Low risk scores are common, and do not result in a hold. It is important that approved centres aim to meet all of the requirements laid out by the awarding body/bodies.

Types and number of organisations providing training programmes

In 2010, there were 115 universities, 165 higher education institutions and 419 further education colleges (of which 95 were sixth form colleges) registered in the UK. Of the universities, 89 are in England (including The Open University), 10 are in Wales, 14 are in Scotland and two are in Northern Ireland. Courses include those for first and second degrees, certain graduate-equivalent qualifications, and the examinations of the principal professional associations. These institutions also provide courses leading to important qualifications below degree level, such as Foundation degrees, Higher National Diplomas and Certificates, and Diplomas of Higher Education.

There are over 80 Approved Centres across the UK which delivers vocational qualifications to the waste management sector – this includes colleges which have the ability to deliver vocational waste management qualifications. The main trade association for delivering waste management courses/training programmes is the Chartered Institute of Waste Management (CIWM). They may deliver these training courses as an institution, or they may use approved centres to deliver their courses/training programmes.

Some companies (waste contractors/service providers) also offer in-house training packages for waste management companies and businesses. These training packages may have been accredited by WAMITAB or CIWM. Similarly, equipment providers usually have an associated training packaged as part of the installation/commissioning of the plant/machinery.

National Occupational Standards

National Occupational Standards (NOS) are statements of the standards of performance individuals must achieve when carrying out functions in the workplace, together with specifications of the underpinning knowledge and understanding. NOS are National because they can be used in every part of the UK where the functions are carried out. NOS are Occupational because they describe the performance required of an individual when carrying out functions in the workplace, i.e. in their occupation (as a plumber, police officer, production engineer etc). NOS are Standards because they are statements of effective performance which have been agreed by a representative sample of employers and other key stakeholders and approved by the UK NOS Panel. NOS are developed for employers by employers through the relevant Sector Skills Council or Standards Setting Organisation.



Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)

Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) are employer-led organisations that cover specific industries in the United Kingdom. They have four key goals:

- to support employers in developing and managing apprenticeship standards
- to reduce skills gaps and shortages and improve productivity
- to boost the skills of their sector workforces
- to improve learning supply

SSCs achieve these aims by developing an understanding of the future skills needs in their industry, and contributing to the development of National Occupational Standards, the design and approval of apprenticeship frameworks and the New Apprenticeship Standards and creating Sector Qualification Strategies.

There are currently nineteen SSCs, covering about 80 per cent of the British workforce. SSCs are licensed by the government through the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES). The Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) was formerly responsible for funding, supporting and monitoring SSCs and for overseeing industries that fell outside an SSC footprint. From 1st April 2008, the SSDA was replaced by the UKCES and the Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards comprising all 19 Sector Skills Councils (SSCs). The Federation is responsible for managing the process of certifying Apprentices in England, Scotland and Wales. It seeks to:

- promote professional practices among those organisations that are sector based and who set and maintain skills standards
- manage the standards of those Employer-Led Partnerships which maintain these standards to ensure high quality
- provide insight, intelligence and ideas flow between the Governments of the four nations and the SSCs

Greece

The **National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)** is the newly established Hellenic national authority, *whose mission is geared towards linking VET with labour market*



needs, upgrading people's occupational qualifications, reinforcing their employment perspectives and strengthening social cohesion.

EOPPEP operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Education & Religious Affairs, Culture & Sports. It has derived from the amalgamation of three national bodies:

- the National Centre for the Accreditation of Lifelong Learning Providers (EKEPIS),
- the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications (EOPP) &
- the National Centre for Vocational Guidance (EKEP).

EOPPEP is also the statutory body for the development and implementation of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework (NQF) in correspondence with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Additionally, EOPPEP is the **National Coordination Point for EQF in Greece** <http://en.nqf.gov.gr>

General description of the Hellenic Vocational Qualification System

EOPPEP develops the regulatory framework for the certification of qualifications, i.e. the learning outcomes of non-formal education and informal learning, in response to labour market needs and priorities and in liaison with the accreditation of inputs, i.e. providers, trainers, occupational profiles and curricula standards. EOPPEP's current fields of responsibility are the certification of the qualifications and the licensing of awarding bodies.

With the establishment of the Hellenic Qualification Framework (HQF) all forms of formal, non-formal and informal learning at all levels are correlated with each other, their results are recognized and classified in levels taking into account the respective European Qualification Framework levels. HQF uses the same 8 reference levels with EQF based on learning outcomes to describe what a learner knows, understands and is able to make a person after completion of a learning process. The Hellenic Qualifications Framework is planned to be developed in 4 stages. After a period of planning, public consultation, legal consolidation, and preparation, Hellas is now entering the 3rd phase, which is the Implementation Phase. This one consists the core phase of the HQF and it will be completed by engaging all stakeholders and the formation of the necessary Working Groups.

It is worthwhile mentioning that one of the main actions during the HQF implementation phase foresees the undertaking of pilot projects for the certification of specific continuing vocational training on "green" jobs and tourism sector and respective On-the-Job Training courses. Based on the above mentioned it is resulting that no National Qualification Framework has been developed in Greece, so far.

Awarding Bodies



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University Departments and Technological Institutes (TEI) are the bodies that can award diplomas, within the Hellenic Educational System. They do not award diplomas directly related to Solid Waste Management profession but mainly for Environmental Management. Both organisations (university and TEI) offer training for solid waste management including technical lessons within their Environmental Management curriculum. The same stands for post-graduate studies, usually offered by **University and Polytechnical Schools depts.**

Waste management lessons are included mainly to the curriculum of Engineering Departments such as Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Civil Engineering depts. The lessons focus on the technical part of solid waste management issues such as:

- Solid Waste origin, their classification and their characteristics (physical, chemical, qualitative and quantitative)
- The National Legislative Framework
- Temporary Warehousing, Collection and Transportation
- Separation at Source and Recycling
- Mechanical Separation
- Composting
- Thermal Treatment
- Landfill sites operation
- Biogas production

According to the Mechanical Engineering Dept of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the engineers are involved more and more into the processes of solid waste management, both indirectly (since any production process involves the production of waste) and directly (i.e. as a facilities designer and/or operator, manager, equipment supplier, etc.). Therefore the modern engineer must:

- understand the methods of treatment and disposal of solid waste
- be able to assess the feasibility of harnessing the energy and raw materials contained in waste.

At the Dept of Environmental Engineering in Thrace University the Solid Waste Management course has the purpose to present the principles of science and technology that are the basis of Integrated Solid Waste Management. After successful completion of the course, the student will be able to do preliminary design, evaluation and combination of various solid waste management systems, as: (1) Production (2) Temporary storage and processing of the source, (3) Collection and transportation, (4) a Recovery and Utilization of materials and energy and (5) Disposal. The curriculum includes the following lessons:

- Introduction in solid waste management



- National and European legislation
- Production (sources, types and composition) of solid waste
- Physical, chemical and biological characteristics of solid waste
- Hazardous wastes as components of solid waste
- Separation, temporary storage and processing at the source
- Collection of urban solid waste and materials separated at source

- Transportation and transfer stations municipal solid waste
- Mechanical processing and separation of solid waste
- Material recovery facilities
- Biological treatment technologies (composting, anaerobic digestion)
- Heat treatment technologies
- Landfill sites

Vocational Training Centres (KEK)

KEK provide services of continuing vocational services complementing, updating and/or upgrading knowledge, skills and competencies of the labour force aiming at the integration & reintegration of learners into the labour market, job security and professional as well as personal development.

Vocational training centres can be accredited in different fields of training but only those that are accredited in the environmental field can provide training courses for solid waste management and facilities. Vocational training courses on solid waste management are usually organised whenever the Hellenic Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs foresees the existence of such a training need within the labour market. These training programmes are usually addressed to unemployed, educated people that will provide them with additional knowledge and skills and make them more eligible in the labour market of solid waste management. During the last ten years three different series of training programs were organised by vocational training centres, all over Hellas for solid waste management professions. Those programs were funded by the Hellenic Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and referred to:

1. Solid Waste Management and Treatment.
2. Solid Waste Recycling.
3. Landfill sites operation.

All three training courses were addressed to unemployed university and technological institutes' graduates.



National Occupational Standards

EOPPEP accredits occupational profiles with the active contribution of the respective social partners during the process of their development. An occupational profile is defined as the job functions and the required knowledge, skills and competencies for exercising an occupation or speciality. Based upon accredited occupational profiles, EOPPEP is planning to develop standards and specifications for modularised curricula with credits.

The National Centre for the Accreditation of Lifelong Learning Providers (EKEPIS) has issued two occupational profiles which include several Solid Waste Management training topics. These are:

1. The occupational profile for the “**Technician for the Management and Control of Environmental Protection Systems**”. As Technician for the Management and Control of Environmental Protection Systems is considered any employee of private and public Sector performing technical operation and maintenance works, supervising the operation and control of devices, instruments and machinery of Environmental Protection Systems, aiming to pollution prevention and control, minimizing risks, of any source threatening human health and safety during the operation and maintenance of the pre-mentioned systems. The job profile was developed by the joint collaboration of the following social partners and organisations:
 - Vocational Centre of Hellenic Workers' Federation and of Hellenic Labor Institute,
 - Federation of Hellenic Industries,
 - Vocational Centre of the Hellenic Federation of Professionals and Traders,
 - National Federation of Hellenic Commerce

All under the coordination of the Hellenic Foundation of Economic and Industrial Research and certified from the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. (ANNEX)

2. The occupational profile of the “**Technician of Hazardous Waste Management (except radioactive waste)**” was also developed but not certified. As Technician of Hazardous Waste Management (except radioactive waste) is considered any employee of private and public sector performing technical activities of mechanical equipment, operation, maintenance, surveillance and control at installations where hazardous waste is treated. This includes employees responsible for performing preventive and technical activities (collection, transport, storage, delivery, treatment and final disposal of hazardous waste) as well as those performing activities aiming to treat pollution caused by hazardous waste through cleansing and sanitation of the environment.



Additionally, during a Leonardo da Vinci project in 2006, the functional operations and the curriculum of the Technician on (Solid) Waste Treatment and Recycling was developed under the auspices of the General Secretariat of Lifelong Learning that belongs to the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. Both functional operations and curriculum were not certified.

Italy

General description of the Vocational Qualification System

In Italy the offer in the fields of education and of VET is related to different institutions: vocational training depends on the Regions while the upper secondary school offer and the academic offer are managed by the Ministry of Education, University and Research. The Regions determine autonomously the professional profiles on the basis of a national inventory which defines the minimum requirements and standards of reference. Starting from the national profiles, the Regions then adapt them in terms of learning outcomes on the basis of local needs arising from the regional economy and labour market. While adapting the professional profiles the Regions must however keep the minimum standards that are defined at national level. At present the regional inventory consists of 126 qualifications referred to 38 professional areas. The qualifications are grouped as follow according to the national training standards:

- 26 Qualifications for the "Access to a professional area" (EQF Level 3)
- 14 Qualifications for "Either access and deepening/specialisation" (EQF Level 4)
- 86 Qualifications for the "Deepening/specialisation" (EQF Level 5, 6 and 7)

The minimum standards defined by type and level of qualification are defined below.

■ Qualifications for the "Access to a professional area" (EQF Level 3)

This type of qualification may be considered for entering to the profession. The learning objectives set up by the qualification are achievable by persons holding general knowledge and skills that are not related to the professional area.

a) Courses lasting 2.000 hours (2 cycles of 1.000 hours each)

These courses aim to develop general and professional competences of people who have to finish compulsory education.



The courses must include a quota of hours of internship that can swing from 25% to 35% of the total number of hours. Internships have to be organised in working contexts where processes and activities are consistent with those of reference of the qualification.

b) Courses lasting 600 hours

These courses aim to develop general and professional competences to be acquired through vocational and education courses for people who have never entered the labour market.

The courses must include a quota of hours of internship that can swing from 30% to 40% of the total number of hours. Internships have to be organised in working contexts where processes and activities are consistent with those of reference of the qualification.

c) Courses lasting 600 hours

These courses aim to develop general and professional competences to be acquired through vocational and education courses or work experience, addressing unemployed people.

The courses must include a quota of hours of internship, workshops or other activities, that can swing from 30% to 40% of the total number of hours. Internships, workshops or other activities, have to be organised in working contexts where processes and activities are consistent with those of reference of the qualification.

Workshops and other activities must reproduce the processes and activities typical of working contexts of reference of the qualification.

d) Courses lasting 240 hours

These courses aim to professionalize persons employed with a contract of apprenticeship.

■ Qualifications for the “Either access and deepening” (EQF Level 4)

This type of qualification may be considered for entering to the profession and for technical deepening/specialization. The training objectives set up by qualification are achievable:

- by persons with general knowledge and skills that the training offer aims to develop;
- by persons with knowledge and skills that are relevant to the professional area and that the training offer aims to further develop/deepen. These knowledge and skills may be acquired through vocational and education courses or work experience.

a) Courses lasting 600 hours

These courses aim to professionalize people with general knowledge and skills to be acquired through vocational and education courses addressing people who have never entered the labour market.



The courses must include a quota of hours of internship that can swing from 30% to 40% of the total number of hours. Internships have to be organised in working contexts where processes and activities are consistent with those of reference of the qualification.

b) Courses lasting 600 hours

These courses aim to professionalize people with general knowledge and skills to be acquired through vocational and education courses or work experience, addressing unemployed people.

The courses must include a quota of hours of internship, workshops or other activities, that can swing from 30% to 40% of the total number of hours. Internships, workshops or other activities, have to be organised in working contexts where

processes and activities are consistent with those of reference of the qualification. Workshops and other activities must reproduce the processes and activities typical of working contexts of reference of the qualification.

c) Courses lasting 300 hours

These courses aim to professionalize people with knowledge and skills that are relevant to the professional area of the qualification, to be acquired through vocational and education courses or work experience, addressing employed people.

The courses must include a quota of hours of internship, workshops or other activities, that can swing from 20% to 40% of the total number of hours. Internships, workshops or other activities, have to be organised in working contexts where processes and activities are consistent with those of reference of the qualification.

Workshops and other activities must reproduce the processes and activities typical of working contexts of reference of the qualification.

d) Courses lasting 300 hours

These courses aim to professionalize people with knowledge and skills that are relevant to the professional area of the qualification, to be acquired through vocational and education courses or work experience, addressing unemployed people.

The courses must include a quota of hours of internship, workshops or other activities, that can swing from 20% to 40% of the total number of hours. Internships, workshops or other activities, have to be organised in working contexts where processes and activities are consistent with those of reference of the qualification. Workshops and other activities must reproduce the processes and activities typical of working contexts of reference of the qualification.

e) Courses lasting 240 hours

These courses aim to professionalize persons employed with a contract of apprenticeship.

■ Qualifications for the “Deepening/specialization” (EQF Level 5, 6 and 7)



This type of qualification may be considered as a deepening/specialization in respect to the professional area. The training objectives set up by the qualification are achievable by people holding knowledge and skills that are relevant to the professional area and that the training offer aims to further develop/deepen. These knowledge and skills may be acquired through vocational and education courses or work experience.

a) Courses lasting 500 hours

These courses aim to professionalize people with knowledge and skills that are relevant to the professional area to be acquired through vocational and education courses addressing people who have never entered the labour market.

The courses must include a quota of hours of internship that can swing from 35% to 45% of the total number of hours. Internships have to be organised in working contexts where processes and activities are consistent with those of reference of the qualification.

b) Courses lasting 300 hours

These courses aim to professionalize people with knowledge and skills that are relevant to the professional area of the qualification, to be acquired through vocational and education courses or work experience, addressing employed people.

The courses must include a quota of hours of internship, workshops or other activities, that can swing from 20% to 40% of the total number of hours. Internships, workshops or other activities, have to be organised in working contexts where processes and activities are consistent with those of reference of the qualification. Workshops and other activities must reproduce the processes and activities typical of working contexts of reference of the qualification.

c) Courses lasting 300 hours

These courses aim to professionalize people with knowledge and skills that are relevant to the professional area of the qualification, to be acquired through vocational and education courses or work experience, addressing unemployed people.

The courses must include a quota of hours of internship, workshops or other activities, that can swing from 20% to 40% of the total number of hours. Internships, workshops or other activities, have to be organised in working contexts where processes and activities are consistent with those of reference of the qualification. Workshops and other activities must reproduce the processes and activities typical of working contexts of reference of the qualification.

d) Courses lasting 240 hours

These courses aim to professionalize persons employed with a contract of apprenticeship.



Awarding Bodies

As specified before, Vocational Education and Training is governed and managed by the Regions. The Regions in turn may delegate to the Provinces the management of certain sectors. The implementation of training policies lies with the following actors:

- a) public bodies engaged in vocational training;
- b) non-profit organizations with statutory activities concerning the educational and social fields;
- c) associations and consortium companies with public participation;
- d) companies;
- e) educational institutions and universities.

The Social Partners contribute to the definition of educational policies by participating in the following consultative bodies:

- Secretariat for training and career guidance: support for the planning at regional and provincial level;
- Steering Committee for the quality: defining the characteristics, requirements and standards;
- Regional Commission for consultation: expresses binding opinions in respect to plans and programmes.

In paragraph 3.1 Accreditation Bodies, the role of regional bodies in the process for the creation of qualifications is shown in detail.

Vocational Training Centres

In order to issue a qualification at the end of training courses, VET providers must be accredited to the relevant Region. The law on accreditation of the Emilia-Romagna Region has been approved pursuant to art. 33 of L.R. 12/2003, through the deliberation of the Regional Council n. 177/2003 and subsequently integrated with the resolutions n. 266/2005 e 645/2011. VET providers must also:

- prove that their statutes have training purposes and that their volume of vocational training activities is greater than or equal to 51% of the total, verifiable from the financial statements;
- have a balance sheet with net assets of at least EUR 30,000.00 and divided by segments of production values;
- have a minimum number of employees hired with a specific contract in the sector of Vocational Training (at least 1 employee for the accreditation of the VET centre in the fields of "higher education" and "continuing education" - at least 3 employees for the accreditation of the VET centre in the fields of "compulsory education").
- prove to have the availability of an operational headquarters under exclusive use that must be equipped with at least one classroom and one computer lab with 10 PCs. The headquarters must comply with the laws on



occupational health and safety.

There are also other requirements related to managerial capacities and professional competences (i.e. human resources organisation) that should be documented and are subject to evaluation. In order to issue the qualification, the VET providers are responsible for defining the training path on the basis of the standards established for the qualifications, and they are responsible also for delivering the training course.

In order to issue the said qualification, at the end of the training course VET providers must implement a system for the formalization and certification of competences that has been set up in 2006 by the Emilia-Romagna Region.

National Occupational Standards

A national inventory on education and training qualifications has been established through Law Decree n.13/2013 in order to comply with EU directives and to facilitate the matching of supply and demand in the labour market. The inventory is the frame of reference for the certification of competences and for the training standards. All the qualifications of the inventory observe the following criteria:

1. identification of the competent public body;
2. identification of qualifications and of the competences forming the inventory;
3. reference of qualifications to statistical codes of economic activities (ATECO) and to the classification of professional units (ISTAT);
4. reference of qualifications to the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

At present the national inventory is formed by the professional profiles of the leFP system (Vocational Education and Training), of the IFTS specializations (Higher Education in the VET sector) and by the profiles of the ITS (Higher Technical Institutes). The national inventory does not include yet the qualifications established at regional level.

The definition of professional areas and profiles

In Italy, two specific organisations are responsible for defining the professional profiles: the ISTAT (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica - National Statistical Institute) and the Ministry of Education, University and Research through the ISFOL (Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori - Institute for the Development of Vocational Training of Workers). In 2007, ISTAT and ISFOL have worked jointly to create a common classification named "Classification of Professional Units" ("Nomenclatura delle Unità Professionali", NUP). Since 2011, ISTAT adopted the new classification named "CP2011", in order to introduce the innovations resulting from the International Standard Classification of Occupations - Isco08. The occupation – which is the core element of the classification - is defined as a group of professional activities actually recalling knowledge, skills and abilities.



The logic used to aggregate different professions within the same group is based on the concept of competence and specifically on the *level of competence* and on the *field of competence* which are required for practicing the profession. The “CP2011” classification uses the same format of the “NUP”, describing contents and general characteristics of each profession. In 2002 the ISFOL has also established the Orientaonline project (www.isfol.it/orientaonline) which is a complex methodological analysis set up to address to the structural weaknesses in the job classification which is in force in Italy. The professional profiles are available for consultation via the online platform where each profession is detailed in terms of possible training paths, competences and trends in occupation.

Profiles can be searched on the basis of four modes:

- by areas of interest
- by occupational areas
- by degree
- by alphabetical order

The description of each professional profiles includes:

1. Definition of the profile
2. Competences
3. Training
4. Career path
5. Work environment
6. Trends in occupation
7. Similar professional profiles

Poland

General description of the Vocational Qualification System

National legislation

There is no separate legislative and institutional framework for continuing vocational education and training (VET) in Poland.

The basic legislative act which regulates the functioning of the education system in Poland for youths and adults, including vocational education and continuing education, is the Education System Act of 7 September 1991, with



further amendments. The training for unemployed, job-seekers and vocational guidance and counselling is regulated by the Act of 20 April 2004 on promotion of employment and labour market institutions, and by various ordinances of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MPiPS) and the Ministry of National Education (MEN).

Key Legislation on school and adult education

Parliamentary acts:

- School Education Act of 7 September 1991 (with further amendments),
- Act of 26 January 1982 – The Teachers' Charter (with further amendments),
- Act of 8 January 1999 on the Implementation of the School System Reform.

Regulations:

- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 27 August 2012 on the core curricula for pre-school education and general education in individual types of schools,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 30 April 2007 on the conditions and rules for pupil assessment, eligibility for assessment, promotion and examinations and tests in public schools, further amended by the Regulation of 25 April 2013,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 21 June 2012 on the approval of pre-school education curricula, school curricula and textbooks for the use in school,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 October 2009 on pedagogical supervision, further amended by the Regulation of 10 May 2013,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 December 2011 on the classification of occupations for vocational education,
- Regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 7 August 2014 on the classification of occupations and specialisations for labour market and the scope of its applications,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 February 2012 on the core curriculum for vocational education,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 11 January 2012 on continuing education in out-of-school settings,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 11 January 2012 on extramural examinations,
- Regulation of the Ministry of National Education and Sport of 20 December 2003 on the accreditation of institutions and centres conducting continuous education in non-school settings.

Key Legislation on higher education

Parliamentary acts:

- Act of 27 July 2005 – The Law on Higher Education (with further amendments),



- Act of 14 March 2003 on Academic Degrees and Title, and on the Degrees and Title in the field of Art (with further amendments).

Regulations:

- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 5 October 2011 on the conditions of providing degree programmes in a given field and at a given level of study, further amended by the Regulation of 23 August 2012,
- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 14 September 2011 on the requirements and procedures for the transfer of student achievements,
- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 1 September 2011 on the types of degrees for graduates, conditions of issue and necessary elements of the diplomas confirming the completion of study programmes and the certificates confirming the completion of non-degree postgraduate study programmes, as well as the specimen of the Diploma Supplement.

Education system in Poland

Compulsory education

Full-time compulsory education (to be received in school) covers children and young people aged 6–16 years and includes the final year of pre-primary education, 6-year primary education and 3-year lower-secondary education.

Upper-secondary education

Lower-secondary school graduates can continue their education in the following types of schools:

- 3-year general upper-secondary schools (liceum ogólnokształcące) leading to the award of the matriculation certificate (świadectwo maturalne) upon passing the external matriculation examination (egzamin maturalny);
- 4-year technical upper-secondary schools (technikum) leading to the award of a vocational diploma upon passing external examinations confirming vocational qualifications in a given occupation, and also offering the possibility of the award of the matriculation certificate upon passing the external matriculation examination;
- 3-year basic vocational schools (zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa) leading to the award of a vocational diploma upon passing external examinations confirming vocational qualifications in a given occupation. Basic vocational school leavers may continue their education in the 3-year general upper-secondary school for adults starting with the second grade;
- 3-year special schools preparing pupils with disabilities (special educational needs) for employment leading to the award of a certificate confirming preparation for work.

Post-secondary education

Graduates of general upper-secondary schools can continue their education in a post-secondary school for a



maximum of 2.5 years. This leads to the award of a vocational diploma upon passing external examinations confirming vocational qualifications in a given occupation.

There are post-secondary schools for young people or adult learners. This type of school prepares general upper-secondary school leavers for employment in the following groups of occupations: middle-level technical staff, middle-level technical staff in biological sciences and health protection, office staff, personal services and security workers, and workers in other areas of specialization.

Higher education

Graduates of upper-secondary schools in Poland who hold the matriculation certificate have the following educational possibilities at the level of tertiary education:

- degree programmes, provided by both public and non-public university-type and non-university higher education institutions (HEIs) which comply with relevant requirements, including:
 - first-cycle (Bachelor's degree) programmes; holders of a Bachelor's degree can enrol in second-cycle (Master's degree) programmes;
 - long-cycle (Master's degree) programmes; holders of a Master's degree or equivalent may apply to third-cycle programmes, i.e. doctoral studies;
- college programmes (which, according to the legislation, are part of the school education sector).

Holders of a Bachelor's and a Master's degree may also follow non-degree post-graduate programmes that typically last one or two years.

HEIs may be:

- public institutions, established by the State represented by the competent authority or public administration body;
- non-public institutions, established by a natural person or a corporate body other than a corporate body administered by national or local authorities.

HEIs may be organised as:

- a university-type higher education institution (uczelnia akademicka): where at least one organisational unit is authorised to award doctoral degrees;
- a non-university institution (uczelnia zawodowa): which offers 1st or the 2nd cycle programmes or long-cycle programmes and is not authorised to award doctoral degrees;
- a military higher education institution: a public HEI supervised by the Minister of National Defence;
- a government service higher education institution: a public HEI supervised by the minister responsible for home affairs;
- a higher education for art studies: a public HEI supervised by the minister responsible for culture and national



heritage;

- a medical higher education institution: a public HEI supervised by the minister responsible for health;
- a higher education institution for maritime studies: a public HEI supervised by the minister responsible for maritime economy.

HEIs may use the following names:

- „university" if HEI organisational units are authorised to award doctoral degrees in at least ten disciplines, including at least two in (1) humanities, legal, economic or theological sciences, (2) mathematical, physical or earth sciences, or engineering and technology, (3) natural sciences, pharmaceutical, agricultural or veterinary sciences;
- „technical university" if HEI organisational units are authorised to award doctoral degrees in at least ten disciplines, including at least six in engineering and technology sciences;
- „university" together with an adjective or adjectives used to define the profile of a HEI if its organisational units are authorised to award doctoral degrees in at least 6 disciplines, including at least 4 in the areas which correspond to the profile of the HEI;
- „university of applied sciences" if HEI organisational units are authorised to award doctoral degrees in at least 6 disciplines, including at least 4 in engineering and technology sciences;
- academy if HEI organisational units are authorised to award doctoral degrees in at least 2 disciplines.

With regard to the form of study, higher education programmes are divided into:

- academic studies – programmes of studies offering theoretical knowledge and competences;
- practical studies – programmes of studies helping students to acquire practical skills and competences.

Adult education

Adults - persons of 18 and not subject to the compulsory education - can obtain or expand their general qualifications in school setting (described above). Adult education is also provided in the form of non-degree postgraduate programmes offered by higher education and research institutions.

Moreover VET for adults is organised in out-of-school forms:

- Public continuing education centres (CECs), practical training centres (PTCs) and continuous and in-service training centres:
 - vocational qualification courses (kwalifikacyjny kurs zawodowy); completing a vocational qualification course allows to take an external examination confirming vocational qualification, conducted under the same conditions and according to the same rules as for IVET students,
 - occupational skills courses (kurs umiejętności zawodowych) – courses for separate units of learning outcomes specified in a given qualification,



- courses of general competencies (kurs kompetencji ogólnych) - courses for separate units of common curriculum of general education,
 - other courses related to occupations included in the classification of occupations and specialisations meeting labour market needs, including courses conducted in cooperation with labour offices allowing acquisition and development of knowledge, skills and qualifications;
- Non-public institutions for continuing education and practical training administered by associations and individuals;
 - People's universities;
 - Employers: courses, on-the-job training, job shadowing, rotation, replacement, learning clubs, supervised individual learning, fairs, conferences, coaching, mentoring, cooperation with equipment and software suppliers;
 - Employers' organisations and trade unions;
 - Training institutions, including those registered in the Register of Training Institutions;
 - Public employment services: support tools, including training, practical placements, vocational training for adults;
 - Research institutions, research foundations and the Polish Academy of Science units: non-degree postgraduate programmes and doctoral programmes, courses, conferences, seminars, workshops;
 - Institutions specialised in specific areas of study.

Practical training

Practical vocational training may be organised in school laboratories and workshops, in conditions as close as possible to real working conditions. Training can also take place in practical or continuing training centres equipped with modern technology or at the employers' premises. Practical vocational training at the employers' premises applies to students of public upper-secondary schools that offer vocational education as well as to juvenile workers/apprentices undergoing practical training as a part of apprenticeship training.

As a part of practical vocational training, traineeships are obligatory for all occupations at technical and post-secondary level and take place in the enterprises relevant for a given occupation. The period of traineeship lasts from 4 to 12 weeks, depending on the occupation.

Vocational education and training

Since 1 September 2012 important changes were introduced into vocational education system in Poland. New approach to vocational education was implemented - occupations are now described in terms of qualifications. The new classification of occupations and specialisations includes 200 occupations which encompass 252 qualifications. Within particular occupations one, two or three qualifications are distinguished. And thus the



classification includes 98 single-qualification occupations, 72 double-qualification occupations and 23 triple-qualification occupations. Seven occupations have no qualifications distinguished.

Each qualification is described as a set of expected learning outcomes which are defined in the Core Curriculum for Vocational Education and Training (VET). Their achievement is necessary for the completion of a given qualification. Moreover, if the employer lacks trained staff, he can request the school or other entity to develop specific qualification, which then can be acquired.

Students and adult learners can acquire qualifications one by one throughout the whole education process and not only upon the completion of the school as was the case before the reform.

The achievement of learning outcomes is confirmed by a certificate issued by the Regional Examination Board upon passing of an examination. Examinations confirming vocational qualifications are held at different stages of education, making it possible for the students to receive a certificate for a single qualification. Each examination is conducted in one qualification only, which means that the number of examinations in an occupation depends on the number of qualifications distinguished in this occupation – in practice it is one, two or three examinations per occupation (one examination per qualification).

The Central Examination Board develops guidelines for each examination. After passing examinations for all the qualifications required for a given occupation, and having completed the required level of education, the students receive a vocational diploma.

The modernized system of examinations confirming vocational qualifications is flexible enough to allow validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes. Starting in September 2012, this system has become open to those persons who had acquired vocational knowledge and experience outside vocational schools. These persons can take an extramural examination in VET, confirming the knowledge, skills and competences acquired in different learning contexts, including professional experience. Extramural vocational examinations are designed for persons with at least 2 years of professional or learning experience who want to confirm their vocational qualifications without going to school/attending courses.

Vocational examinations are taken by:

- students of basic vocational schools and technical upper-secondary schools, as well as students of post-secondary schools;
- graduates of these schools;
- adult learners who have completed a vocational qualification course.

Vocational examination can take place either at a school or at vocational education centre, or in an enterprise.

During vocational qualification courses only qualifications which are included in the classification of occupations and specialisations listed in the regulation of Minister of Labour and Social Policy can be acquired. In total the courses can be organized for 252 qualifications.



Apprenticeship for adults

Apprenticeship for adults is in the scope of responsibility of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy. The aim of this particular active labour market programme, provided by the Local Labour Offices, is to improve employability of unemployed and job seekers, by helping them to confirm their skills and qualifications formally.

Curriculum

General education in vocational schools is based on the 2008 Core Curriculum (as amended in 2012). Vocational training in particular occupations listed in the 2011 classification of occupations for vocational education is carried out in compliance with the updated Core Curriculum for vocational education (2012). Both Curricula are described in terms of learning outcomes and they specify requirements for examination. Teachers in schools for adults may choose curricula and textbooks from the list approved for use in schools. Teachers may also develop their own curricula, provided that they cover contents included in the Core Curriculum.

Teachers may choose teaching methods adjusted to the age and abilities of learners and the specificity of the subject taught. Teachers or trainers who provide various types of training in out-of-school settings may choose teaching methods depending on the level of education, the training programme followed, the number of learners, their age and work experience, and teaching aids available at the institution.

Management of education system in Poland

The education system in Poland is centrally managed by two institutions:

- the Ministry of National Education (general and vocational education);
- the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (higher education).

It is only the national educational policy that is developed and carried out centrally, while the administration of education and the running of schools are decentralized. Nursery, primary and lower-secondary schools are administered by commune (gmina) authorities. Upper-secondary schools are administered by district (powiat) authorities. Post-secondary schools are administered by central administration units, local government units, non-governmental and religious organisations, and associations. Higher education institutions (HEIs) are autonomous organizations.

Awarding Bodies

The education system reform in Poland has introduced a new coherent and standardized assessment system which includes internal and external assessment.

Internal assessment is carried out by school teachers against the requirements which are defined by them on the basis of curricula implemented in a given school. This type of assessment covers pupils' learning achievements



and aims to support their development.

External assessment is carried out by institutions which are external to the school, including the Central Examination Board and Regional Examination Boards, and from 2014 it is based on the requirements included in the core curriculum.

Upper-secondary education

Internal assessment of pupils' achievements involves assessing the level of pupils' knowledge and skills as well as the progress made in relation to the requirements based on the curricula. The results of the assessment carried out during the year are taken into account in the end-of-year assessment. At the end of each school year, pupils receive standardised school leaving certificates issued by the schools. After completing their schooling school leavers receive a school leaving certificates. Additionally:

- after completing 3-year general upper-secondary schools pupils are awarded the matriculation certificate upon passing the external matriculation examination;
- after completing 4-year technical upper-secondary schools pupils are awarded a vocational diploma upon passing examinations confirming vocational qualifications in a given occupation, and also have the possibility of acquiring the award of the matriculation certificate upon passing the external matriculation examination;
- after completing 3-year basic vocational schools pupils are awarded a vocational diploma upon passing external examinations confirming vocational qualifications in a given occupation.

Matriculation certificate includes the results of the exam and is issued by the Regional Examination Boards.

Post-secondary education

After completing post-secondary school pupils/adult learners are awarded a vocational diploma upon passing external examinations confirming vocational qualifications in a given occupation. Certificates confirming vocational qualifications are issued by Regional Examination Boards.

Higher education

First-cycle programmes offered both in university-type and non-university HEIs end with the final (diploma) examination (egzamin dyplomowy). The examination is conducted by an examination board composed of academic teachers of the organisational unit of a HEI (e.g. faculty or department) which offers a given programme. Students who have passed the final examination are awarded a higher education diploma (dyplom ukończenia studiów wyższych) which confirms the completion of a given type of programme and the award of the relevant degree in a given field of study. If the study programme does not provide for the final examination, students are only required to have completed all courses and practical placements in order to obtain a diploma confirming the award of the relevant degree.

Diplomas are issued in accordance with specimens defined in a regulation by the minister responsible for higher education and are officially recognised documents. At the graduate's request, the HEI is obliged to issue a copy of



the diploma in one of the following languages: English, French, Spanish, German or Russian. A Bachelor's degree entitles its holder to practise a given profession and provides access to second-cycle (Master's degree) programmes.

Second-cycle programmes offered in both university-type and non-university HEIs, except in medical fields, end with the final (diploma) examination (egzamin dyplomowy). The examination is conducted by an examination board composed of academic teachers of the organisational unit of a HEI (e.g. faculty or department) which offers a given programme. Students who have passed the final examination are awarded a higher education diploma (dyplom ukończenia studiów wyższych) which confirms the completion of a given type of degree programme and the award of the relevant degree in a given field of study. If the study programme does not provide for the final examination, students are only required to have completed all courses and practical placements in order to obtain a diploma confirming the award of the relevant degree. Diplomas are issued in accordance with specimens defined in a regulation by the minister responsible for higher education and are officially recognised documents. At the graduate's request, the HEI is obliged to issue a copy of the diploma in one of the following languages: English, French, Spanish, German or Russian. A Master's degree or equivalent degree entitles its holder to practise a given profession and provides access to third-cycle (doctoral) programmes.

Institutions providing non-degree postgraduate programmes choose methods for assessing students and define the conditions to be fulfilled for students to complete the programme and receive a diploma. Upon completion of non-degree postgraduate programmes and in-service training courses, graduates receive a diploma confirming the completion of a non-degree postgraduate programme or a certificate issued in accordance with a specimen provided by the minister responsible for higher education in the relevant regulation.

Currently the works are on-going on the law amending the Law on Higher Education, which aim at introducing validation of competences acquired outside the higher education system (self-improvement, job experiences, participation in courses and training). So far, such solutions were not used and are not regulated by the relevant legislation.

Vocational education and training

Students and adult learners can acquire qualifications one by one throughout the whole education process. The achievement of learning outcomes is confirmed by a certificate issued by the Regional Examination Board upon passing of an examination.

Examinations confirming vocational qualifications are held at different stages of education, making it possible for the students to receive a certificate for a single qualification. Each examination is conducted in one qualification only. After passing examinations for all the qualifications required for a given occupation, and having completed the required level of education, the students receive a vocational diploma.

Persons who had acquired vocational knowledge and experience outside vocational schools can validate non-



formal and informal learning outcomes by taking an extramural examination in VET, confirming the knowledge, skills and competences acquired in different learning contexts, including professional experience.

Vocational examination can take place either at a school or at vocational education centre, or in an enterprise.

Adult education

Adult learners after completing vocational qualification courses organised by public continuing education centres (CECs), practical training centres (PTCs) and continuous and in-service training centres are awarded a diploma of vocational qualification after taking an external examination confirming vocational qualification. Certificates are issued by the Regional Examination Boards.

After completing vocational qualification courses in non-public institutions for continuing education and practical training administered by associations and individuals are awarded a diploma of vocational qualification after taking an external examination confirming vocational qualification. Certificates are issued by the Regional Examination Boards.

Methods for confirming learning outcomes of education in non-school settings are specified in the Regulation by the Minister of National Education of 11 January 2012. Methods for assessing learning in these settings are defined by educational and training providers in their curricula or training programmes. Qualification vocational courses, vocational skills course, general competencies courses, theoretical in-service training for juvenile employees and training courses other than those listed end with a pass/fail review that takes the form set by the training providers.

Examinations confirming vocational qualifications

Examinations confirming vocational qualifications are designed to assess the level of acquisition by a pupil/adult learner of the knowledge and skills required for a given qualification, as defined in the core curriculum for vocational education.

As from 1 September 2012 vocational schools provide vocational education in 200 occupations which encompass 252 qualifications. Each qualification is described as a set of expected learning outcomes which are defined in the core curriculum. Their achievement, and thus the completion of a given qualification, is confirmed by the certificate issued by the Regional Examination Board.

Examinations are conducted in one qualification only, which means that the number of examinations in an occupation depends on the number of qualifications distinguished in this occupation – in practice it is one, two or three qualifications per occupation. The Central Examination Board develops guidelines for each examination.

On passing an exam for a single qualification, a pupil/adult learner receives a certificate issued by the Regional Examination Board, and after passing exams for all the qualifications required for a given occupation (and having completed the expected level of general education), he/she receives a diploma confirming all qualifications



necessary for this occupation.

On passing a vocational exam for a single qualification, a pupil/student/adult learner will receive a certificate confirming a vocational qualification issued by the Regional Examination Board, and after passing exams for all the qualifications required for a given occupation (and having completed the expected level of general education), he/she will receive a diploma confirming all qualifications necessary for this occupation.

At the holder's request, the vocational qualification diploma can be issued together with an Europass document: a supplement based on a description of the holder's qualifications or description of the occupation as given in the core curriculum for a given occupation. The document defines the scope of competences of the diploma holder, makes it easier to understand the contents of the diploma, describes the skills and qualifications of the diploma holder, and is closely linked to a given occupation (all diploma holders receive the same supplement in a given country). The document has the same structure as in all other EU countries. Diplomas and diploma supplements are issued by the Regional Examination Boards.

The validation of qualifications in a given vocation (each qualification is validated separately) aims to assess qualifications related to particular occupations as newly defined in core curricula for vocational education. It is conducted for basic vocational school leavers and participants of vocational qualification courses. The contents of the examination as well as the conditions and requirements for taking and passing the exam are defined by the Regional Examination Boards in co-operation with the Central Examination Board and published in a guide. The vocational exam, as it has been organised so far (based on examination standards), takes place twice a year for graduates of all types of vocational schools (including those to be phased out soon) run under the old core curricula (from before 1 Sept 2012) until the school year 2016/17.

Vocational specialisation grades, which confirm high vocational qualifications and skills, may be awarded to those who hold upper secondary and higher education qualifications by the Management Board of the Federation of Scientific-Technical Associations (NOT) and the Management Board of the Polish Economic Society.

Vocational Training Centres

Main institutions and forms of adult education are presented in the table below.



Main institutions and forms of adult education	
School settings	Non-school settings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Public and non-public schools for adults, including: primary schools, lower secondary schools, general upper secondary schools, vocational upper secondary schools, supplementary upper secondary schools, basic vocational schools and post-secondary schools – Public and non-public higher education institutions (HEIs): first- and second-cycle programmes, third-cycle (doctoral) programmes, non-degree postgraduate programmes, open university courses, third-age university courses, incl. those based on distance learning, conferences, workshops and seminars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Public continuing education centres (PTC), practical training centres (CEC), continuous and in-service training centres (courses, vocational courses, seminars, practical placements, on-the-job practical training, theoretical in-service training for juvenile employees, guidance) – Non-public institutions for continuing education and practical training administered by associations and individuals – Popular universities – Employers: courses, on-the job training, job shadowing, rotation, replacement, learning clubs, supervised individual learning, fairs, conferences, coaching, mentoring, cooperation with equipment and software suppliers – Employers' organizations and trade unions – Training institutions, including those registered in the Register of Training Institutions – Public employment services: support tools, including training, practical placements, vocational training for adults – Research institutions, research foundations and the Polish Academy of Science units: non-degree postgraduate programmes and doctoral programmes, courses, conferences, seminars, workshops – Institutions specialised in specific areas of study

National Occupational Standards

Till 2012 in Poland 253 occupational qualification standards (standardy kwalifikacji zawodowych) were developed. Since 2012 standards of professional competence (standardy kompetencji zawodowych) are being developed. They are developed according to:

- Act of 20 April 2004 on promotion of employment and labour market institutions,
- Regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 7 August 2014 on the classification of occupations and specialisations for labour market and the scope of its applications.

The structure of the given standard of professional competence is consistent with requirements of EQF and NQF and comprises of:

- identification of the occupation,
- description of the occupation,
- description of occupational competences,
- profile of key competences,
- glossary.



Currently the database comprises of 253 occupational qualification standards and 300 standards of professional competence. There are no standards for healthcare waste managers.

Spain

General description of the Vocational Qualification System

The Instituto Nacional de las Cualificaciones – INCUAL (National Institute for Qualification) is the responsible for defining, elaborating and maintaining the Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales –CNCP (National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications). The Sistema Nacional de las Cualificaciones y Formación Profesional - SNCFP (National System for Qualifications and Professional Training) is the tool that regulates the professional qualifications that could be recognized or accredited. The CNCP is structured in **professional families and levels**.

It currently comprises 26 professional families (taking into account affinity criteria of the professional competences referred to detected jobs) and 5 qualification levels (taking into account knowledge level, initiative, and level of autonomy and responsibility to carry out the activities). The CNCP is the base for the elaboration of the training offer related to the national accredited professional training. The CNCP defines the training contents associated to each qualification structured in training modules. Currently there are 664 qualifications approved by the Spanish Ministry of Education. A data base with all the qualifications is available at: https://www.educacion.gob.es/icee_xtranet/bdqAction.do

Awarding Bodies

Besides the Instituto Nacional de las Cualificaciones – INCUAL, each Region has a Regional Professional Qualification Authority.

Training Centres

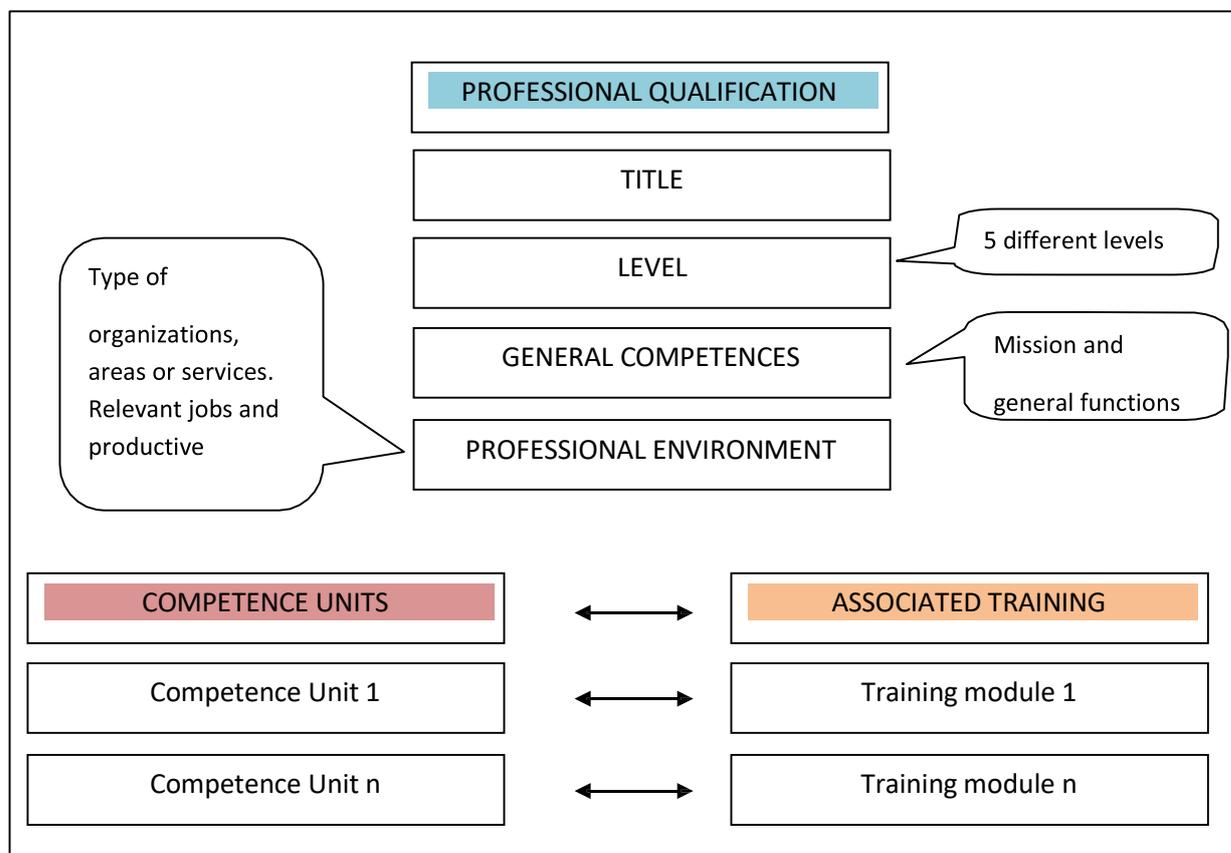
All the accredited Training Centres are included in a general data base. The current legislation establishes requirements related to:

- The training centre (administrative requirements, organization)
- The building and infrastructures (licence, classrooms, spaces with specific conditions, etc.)
- The training team, training resources and capacity to provide the specific training programme.

National Occupational Standards



In SPAIN a VET programme comprises at least 1.400 hours of training, a training programme can be developed once there's a professional qualification. A Professional Qualification is composed by:



A **Competence Unit** is divided into tasks and it also provides the criteria for the assessment of professional competence. Each competence unit describes also the professional context of the competence unit, i.e. production means, outputs from the working activity, information managed and generated, etc. (see Annex I).

Each Competence Unit has associated a **Training Module** that describes the necessary training to achieve the competence unit. The training module describes the capacities and assessment criteria, the contents and the basic requirements for the training context.

The current Spanish education law (Organic Law on General Organisation of the Education System - LOGSE) also provides the possibility to develop a specialization course of about 400 hours (more suitable to the adapted to the contents of the EU-HCWM project), but the administration has not been yet developed the framework to do so.

Slovenia

Vocational Education and Training System in Slovenia

In 2005, the Slovenian Government adopted its development strategy, which defined its objectives, development priorities and corresponding action plans in order to improve the quality of education, encourage lifelong learning and increase the two-way flow of knowledge for economic and social inclusion.

The responsible organisations for VET in Slovenia are state bodies; the Ministry of Education and Sport, responsible for the pre-university education and higher vocational colleges, including the development of concepts, strategies, legislation and regulation for the education system and in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, the responsibility for the vocational and technical education and training, systems for certification of national vocational qualifications, and the agreement of education policies with social partners. In higher education, responsibility falls under the remit of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, which since 2005, has looked after universities and single higher education institutions.

As well as these national bodies, Slovenia also places emphasis on local authorities and schools councils (sveti šol) for education, the former responsible for the administration of pre-primary and basic education establishments and the latter, who act at local level, autonomously.

The system:

Basic - The Slovenian basic education system encompasses a nine-year compulsory education system divided into three, three-year cycles, during which no vocational education is available.

(Initial) IVET - Once students reach the end of the compulsory education, most tend to go into upper secondary schools, which can be publically or privately.

Several options are made available to them, categorised under four different types:

- General upper secondary education (splošno srednje izobraževanje – Gimnazija) – From the ages of 15 to 19 and lasting four years;
- Technical upper secondary education (srednje tehniško in strokovno izobraževanje) – From the ages of 15 to 19 and lasting four years;
- Vocational upper secondary education (Srednje poklicno tehniško izobraževanje) – From the ages of 15 to 19 and lasting three plus two years;
- Run in cooperation with employers.
- Those who pass the final exam in year three have the option to continue for a further two years or enter the job market with the option to re-enter after three years.
- Short-term vocational upper secondary education (Nižje poklicno izobraževanje) – From the ages of 15 to 17 and lasting two-and-a-half years to three years;

Around 98% of students continue on to secondary education, 40% of which choose general courses, 30% choose technical and around 30% choose short-course vocational. While there are four distinct pathways, the Slovenian education system is set up in such a way that only two have long-term prospects for students; the general upper secondary education and the vocational upper secondary education.

The short-term vocational upper secondary education is set up for those who have failed basic education and can



continue with a special two-and-a-half year course, which upon completion, will allow direct entrance into the first year of any other upper secondary school, and the technical upper secondary education is aimed the preparation of students for either 1) vocational higher education or 2) professionally-oriented higher education.

For those who want to continue with the vocational path, the final stage is the higher vocational education, a two-year post-secondary vocational education at sub-degree level, is provided at higher vocational colleges (višje strokovne šole). The new Higher Vocational Education Act (2004) regulates this level of vocational education separately from the upper secondary level, although it is undergoing several changes imposed by the Bologna process, including modular, broader programmes being made available and the harmonisation of tertiary education.

(Continuing) CVET- The field of CVET is strongly established in the national professional document as a completely equal field in the education system, having been identified as a key element of lifelong learning in the Adult Education Master Plan by the Slovenian Parliament in 2004. With this document, as well as enabling more resources to be allocated to CVET, four major aims were established:

- Improving access to education and learning;
- Improving the quality of education and training by modernising programmes, curricula and catalogues of knowledge from the lifelong learning 'strategic cores';
- The development of the education levels of the elderly; and
- The accreditation of prior learning by adults, allowing them to gain national vocational qualifications **(National Vocational Qualifications Act of 2006)**.

The largest share of adult and continuing vocational education and training in Slovenia is provided in non-formal programmes or courses and training and learning activities. According to a 2004 National Institute for Education study on the participation of adults (aged 16 to 64) in education and training, 8% took part in formal education and about 34% took part in non-formal education.

Responsibility for the development and implementation of CVET is currently shared by the state and social partners. The Ministry of Education and Sports (Ministrstvo za solstvo in sport, MSS) is mainly responsible for legislation in the field of formal CVET, including the preparation of methodology for the standards of knowledge and skills in the certification system and regulating the assessment and certification procedures for national vocational qualifications obtained in that same system. Social partners, such as the Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Chamber of Crafts of Slovenia are the organisations that represent employers in the social dialogue and carry out technical, developmental and counselling work in vocational education. Trade unions also involved, but limited to developing the procedure of certification of national vocational qualifications.

Other training programmes are also offered, in line with other European Partners, including programmes aimed at the unemployed, under the supervision of the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS), which every year selects providers via public tenders. Their major programme, called 10 000+, has been in existence since 1997 in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Sport and social partners, primarily targeting school drop-outs, those with no vocational qualifications or with vocational qualifications not in demand in the labour market who have been unemployed for more than six months. There are not, however, any state-provided tax incentives to employers to increase investment in education and training of their employees.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance in Slovenia is somewhat fragmented. Although amendments of the Higher Education Act in



2004 announced the introduction of a full evaluation system, covering all aspects of quality assurance, as well as the establishment of an independent national agency for quality assurance, most of this legislation was abolished with the amendments passed in the Higher Education Act in 2006. While some quality indicators were adopted in October 2007 by the National Council of Experts for Vocational and Technical Education, major differences still exist between formal education and training (which results in a national certificate or diploma), publicly accredited non-formal training courses and non-formal training without public accreditation. The following distinctions are made:

- Formal education and training: Must meet guidelines set out in legislation and is based on a self-evaluation model, though the use of external assessments, amongst other methods.
- Publicly accredited programmes: Must meet guidelines set out in legislation, as well as the accreditation of providers, granted by the Ministry of Education and Sport, combined with an element of self-evaluation.
- Non-formal training: Quality assurance is linked to public funding and often based on public tenders.

Overall, the education inspectorate is the responsibility of the National Inspectorate for Education and Sport, under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Sport. Higher Education is overseen by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and quality assurance for adult learners comes under the responsibility of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, which has also developed a model of self-evaluation for adult education under the name Offering Quality Education to Adults.

A national vocational qualification

A national vocational qualification (NVQ) is a formally recognised work-related, competence-based qualification, which reflects the skills and knowledge needed to do a job effectively and shows that a candidate is competent in an area of work, or individual segments of work, within an area at a certain level of achievement, and as such, part of the national qualification framework.

An NVQ is shown by a public document – a certificate whose form and content are defined by the Minister of Labour.

The system of assessment and certification of NVQs in Slovenia is regulated by the National Professional Qualifications Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos 81/2000, 55/2003, 118/2006, 1/2007) adopted by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs. This Act regulates the procedure and the competent bodies, agencies and organisations for adopting catalogues of standards of professional knowledge and skills, and the conditions and procedures for obtaining NVQs.

Institutional frame:

- Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs;
- Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational and Professional Education;
- National Examinations Centre;
- National Institute for Vocational Education and Training;
- Slovenian Institute for Adult Education;
- providers of procedure for NVQ assessment and certification/accredited assessing bodies;
- Employment Service of Slovenia;
- chambers and responsible ministries.



Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training (CPI) takes care for development and application guidelines for the field of vocational education and training (VET) which are being prepared at the state level of the Republic of Slovenia. In cooperation with EU institutions and accepted goals, they are building a common European VET cyberspace for the field of both formal and informal education. Their work is supported by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia as well as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the Chamber of Craft of Slovenia.

The National Examinations Centre performs the following tasks as determined by the National Professional Qualifications Act:

- is in charge of development of methodologies and procedures for assessment and certification of NVQs;
- organises the training of candidates as members of panels for assessment and certification;
- compiles a list of questions and tasks for assessment and certification of NVQs;
- develops the network for assessment and certification of NVQs;
- keeps a register of providers of procedures for assessment and certification of NVQs;
- issues licences to members of panels for assessment and certification;
- keeps records for which it is legally authorised;
- monitors the work of panels for assessment and certification;
- reports yearly to the Minister of Labour;
- performs other tasks in accordance with the corresponding Act and regulations.

The objectives of the system of certification:

- gives public validity to non-formal and informal education, training and learning;
- substitutes for low adaptability in the formal system of education;
- enhances lifelong learning through the public recognition of knowledge;
- enables swifter response to the demands of the labour market for individuals who have acquired a certificate.

Assessment and certification are carried out by a panel of three national vocational qualification (NVQ) assessors appointed by the National Examinations Centre on the accredited assessing body's request. NVQ assessors must hold licences issued by the National Examinations Centre. The manner in which direct assessment and certification of NVQs are carried out is determined by the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills.

Accredited assessing bodies: Assessment and certification procedures may be carried out by chambers, schools, adult-education organisations and business education centres as well as institutions, societies and other legal entities complying with material and staff conditions determined by the Catalogue of Standards.

An accredited assessing body must hold a written statement issued by the National Examinations Centre and has to be listed in the corresponding register at the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs.

NVQ can be directly assessed in one of the following manners:

- written assessment and interview;
- practical performance assessment and interview;
- written and practical performance assessment and interview;
- on-the-job observation and interview;



- role play and interview.

Assessment and certification of NVQ contain:

- portfolio assessment;
- practical performance assessment.

By portfolio assessment, NVQ assessor assesses the value of the portfolio and the proof of competences on the basis of several criteria: authenticity, topicality, relevance etc.

If the candidate for NVQ does not meet all conditions of the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills, the panel of NVQ assessors defines practical performance determined in the Catalogue (knowledge and skills not covered by the portfolio).

Example:

ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION OF NVQ 8150.002.5.1 PEDICURIST PEDICURE VIDEO

Criteria of assessment and certification of NVQ 8150.002.5.1 Pedicurist

- *Planning of, and preparation for, the task*
 1. *Personal preparation (video)*
 2. *Preparation and use of tools (video)*
 3. *Preparation of the client (video)*
- *II Performance of the task*
 1. *Removal of dead skin (video)*
 2. *Corn removal (video)*
 3. *Callus removal (video)*
 4. *Clipping and shaping toenails (video)*
 5. *Treatment of ingrown toenails (video)*
 6. *Performing relaxing foot massage (video)*
 7. *Cleaning and disinfecting tools after the pedicure (video)*
- *III Interview: three questions*
During the practical performance the panel of assessors keep a record of the assessment of NVQ and fill out the assessment form.

A national vocational qualification (NVQ) is a formally recognised competence required for practising the occupation on the basis of the national occupational standard.

In Slovenia, an NVQ can be acquired:

- by completing vocational or professional educational programmes or by completing modules as part of educational programmes;
- by assessment and accreditation of prior learning.

NVQs are intended for youth and adults who, besides traditionally established school-based programmes leading to the acquisition of vocational qualifications, seek other forms of knowledge certification.

NVQ candidates: An NVQ can be achieved by anyone at least 18 years of age.

By way of exception, an NVQ can be achieved by anyone younger than 18 not being an apprentice or a student



but having adequate work experience.

NVO assessors: The National Examinations Centre publishes the invitation for applications for NVO assessors and verifies conditions for assessors from the corresponding Act and the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills.

Nominated assessors are directed to the training programme carried out by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education.

If an assessor successfully completes the training, the National Examinations Centre issues a licence.

Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training establish a **National Reference Point for Occupational Qualifications - Slovenia (NRP SLO)**.

The European Forum on Transparency of Vocational Qualifications formulated two recommendations with the purpose to enhance transparency:

- Establishing the system for the issue of certificate supplements in an official national language with the possibility of translation into one European language or more. The certificate supplement shall be based on the common European format.
- Setting up of a National Reference Point responsible for providing information on national occupational qualifications. The National Reference Point shall be a national partner in the European Network of Reference Points.

A National Reference Point in every EU Member State gives access to information on vocational education and training systems. National reference points are networked.

About NRP SLO

One of the biggest obstacles standing in the way of the people who would like to work or study in another European country is the non-recognition of their qualifications and competences. This problem is being aggravated by the fact that there is broad expansion of qualifications, different national systems of education and training are in place and they undergo constant changes.

The National Reference Point is the first point of contact when questions pertaining to national qualifications, certificates and certificate supplements arise. It is the access provider of relevant information, or to contact point with national institutions which hold the important information. The National Reference Point is also a national partner in the European Network of Reference Points with similar responsibilities.

Greater transparency of occupational qualifications and competences by 2010 constitutes one of the objectives pursued by the Copenhagen Declaration. The already developed tools and networks providing for transparency, such as the European CV, diploma supplement, etc. need to be integrated into the common strategy and framework, both at national and European levels. The website of NRP SLO offers information on occupational qualifications in Slovenia. The following pieces of information are available:

- vocational education and training, as well as the certification system of accreditation of informally acquired competences (legal basis, key institutions in vocational education and training, and in the certification system, as well as their powers);
- occupation classification (nomenklatura) and national occupational standards forming a basis for acquiring national occupational qualifications, both through the formal education system and certification



process;

- educational programmes in lower and upper secondary vocational education, as well as in secondary professional and higher professional education with all key elements;
- catalogues of standards of professional knowledge and skills constituting a basis for the certification, and bodies awarding occupational qualifications (accredited assessing agencies for occupational qualifications through the certification system, and agencies for publicly approved programmes in vocational education and training);
- assessment and accreditation procedures of national occupational qualifications.

A transparently structured system containing all important information on vocational education and training will contribute to greater transparency in this area at the national level. At the same time, it will enable international comparability of occupational qualifications, thereby promoting labour force mobility and facilitating Slovenia's integration into the EU. Thus, the National Reference Point is involved in the European network of national centres in other EU countries.

The mission of the National Reference Point is to cater for the needs of various target groups in Slovenia and abroad by providing information on national occupational qualifications.

The national occupational qualification is a formally recognized competence required for practising the occupation on the basis of the national occupational standard.

In Slovenia, the national occupational qualification can be acquired in the following ways:

- by completing the vocational or professional education programmes or by completing modules as parts of the educational programme;
- by assessment and accreditation of NOQ.

Educational programmes are drawn up and implemented in accordance with the Vocational and Professional Education Act (1996) falling within the sphere of responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Sport in cooperation with the social partners. The educational programme tentatively defines the path towards the acquisition of NOQ (subjects, number of lessons, theory-practice ratio, implementation regulations and standards).

The main stress is increasingly shifting towards learning achievements that are tested by way of a final examination or a secondary vocational school leaving examination (poklicna matura). The traditionally established school path leading to the acquisition of occupational qualifications is intended for the youth, but also for the adults. School certificates, however, are losing the role of the only guarantee that confirms the occupational competence of its holder. Certification models are being developed throughout Europe, above all as assessment and accreditation systems of informally acquired knowledge. While looking for methods to measure competence, the focus is increasingly moving towards the ability to mobilize knowledge, skills, habits and actions in order to perform work tasks in various circumstances.

Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education is central to development and consulting institution in the field of vocational education and training in Slovenia. Among the fundamental tasks of the Centre include the preparation of expertise and methodological Platform, competence-based vocational standards, the development of modern modular vesicular-based educational programs and other activities that contribute to greater the quality of vocational and technical education and link education with field of work.



Germany

General description of the Vocational Qualification System

In Germany, young people are compulsory required to attend school from the ages of 6 to 18. Children enter full-time schooling at the age of six and the schooling period lasts nine years (in five states = Länder), it lasts ten years). The primary school last for 4 years, the basic secondary level last for 5-6 years. After completing it, the students will continue with either an advanced secondary full-time-school which will last for two to three years and will allow continuation of tertiary level education, or the students are required to attend part-time or full-time vocational school for three years. According to the German constitution, the competence for school education lies within the federal states (Länder) Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs. The Federal Government however is responsible for designing the content of vocational training (in the dual system) unless training is school-based. The nationally binding recognition of the training occupations ensures that the basic principles agreed with industry and the states are taken into account and that training for a recognized occupation is only provided in accordance with the training regulations adopted by the Federal Government. The core institution at the national level for consensus building between all parties involved in VET is the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB). BIBB conducts research into in-company vocational training and fulfils service and consultancy functions to the Federal Government and vocational training providers. In 2012, the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) concluded an agreement between the Federal Government, the federal states and the social partners on the introduction of the German Qualifications Framework (DQR) for vocational education and training in Germany which states the equivalence of academic and vocational education. Of special relevance is that master craftsmen and technicians will be on the same DQR reference level with Bachelor degrees.

The DQR represents the implementation at a national level of the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Establishment of a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning of April 2008. The aims of the Qualifications Framework are to increase mobility on the European labour market and make the European Education Area more transparent. For the vocational qualification system, it is crucial to understand the differences between the Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVETs) and the Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVETs):

INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (IVET)

The IVET system in Germany assures the future of young people and of the German society, and it has different pathways lead to vocational qualifications:

For the vocational education in Germany, the so called "dual system" is introduced and is the largest



educational area within the secondary education level. In general, a dual education system combines apprenticeships in a company and vocational education at a vocational school in one course which typically last for three years. The great majority of graduates of dual-system training then work as skilled employees – and many later make use of opportunities for vocational further training to become a master craftsman or a technician. Under certain circumstances, graduates of such training can also acquire a university entrance certificate in a year of full-time schooling, and then go on to university studies.

About 1/3 of the students who opt for a vocational education choose to follow a vocational school of which the full-time vocational schools have the highest numbers of students. These schools prepare students for an occupation or for vocational training, usually in the dual system.

Large numbers of students also attend the schools for nurses, midwives, etc., which provide training for non-academic occupations in the healthcare sector, such as nursing and paediatric nursing, midwifery, therapeutic massage and occupational therapy. As regards organisation and premises, many of these schools are attached to hospitals, in which both theoretical and practical training takes place.

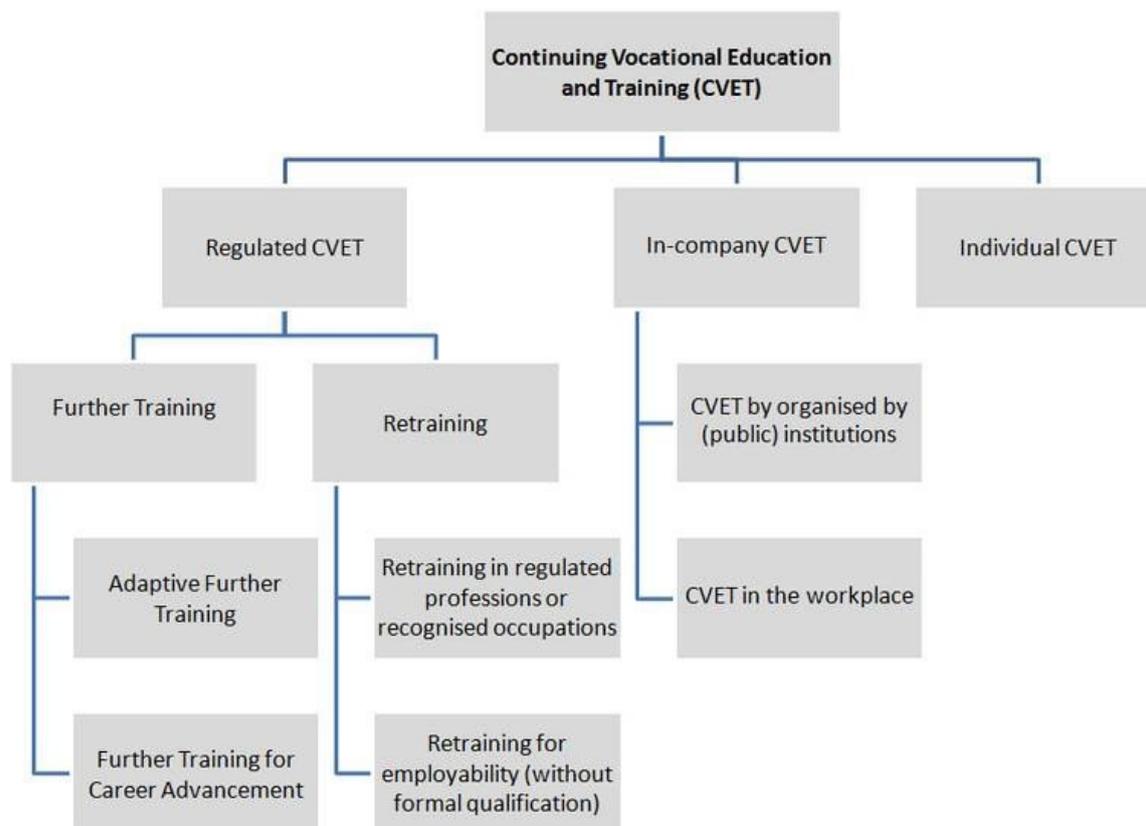
To obtain a higher education entrance qualification, students who followed the secondary vocational level can follow a senior technical school. The tertiary level vocational education sector comprises various types of institutions of higher education and, to a limited extent, some states have vocational academies offering courses leading to vocational qualifications for those who have completed upper secondary education with at least a qualification entitling them to attend a university of applied sciences (Fachhochschule).

CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CVET)

Continuing education and training is understood to be the continuation or resumption of organised learning following completion of an initial phase of education of varying scope (Deutscher Bildungsrat, 1970, p. 197). In addition to continuing 'vocational' education/training, this includes continuing general and political education, which is subsumed under the heading of 'adult education'. The field of CVET in Germany is characterised by a pluralism of providers, a largely market character, and a comparatively minimal degree of regulation by the state. Only a small part of provision leads to a formal vocational qualification. A distinction must be made between two kinds of regulated continuing training, namely further vocational training and vocational retraining (defined in the Vocational Education and Training Act). Another distinction can be made between further training making advancement in the occupation possible (further training for advancement) and further training aimed at maintaining or extending vocational knowledge, skills and competences, or updating them in line with technical or economic developments (adaptive further training). To participate, a completed course of vocational training or appropriate vocational experience, or both, is normally required.



In addition to the regulated CVET, formal in-company training is often provided and it is up to the companies and refers to any type of training (except IVET) that takes place in the enterprise or on the job within working hours and usually financed by the enterprise. However, in-company training it is often outsourced and provided by chambers, professional associations or private training providers. Next to the In-company training, also individually organised and financed CVET provided by adult education centers and other organization exist. , VHS) are the most important publicly funded training providers offering (amongst many other types of courses) numerous work-related CVET trainings, workshops and – inco-operation with chambers and professional associations – preparatory classes for regulated training exams.



(Source: <http://www.euvetsupport.eu>, assessed 21.11.2014)

VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR HEALTHCARE WASTE

The vocational Training for healthcare waste can be divided into training for operational staff, for manager functions and for the mandatory authorized representative services (appointees responsible for waste management, e.g. the responsible officer for healthcare waste management of a hospital).

Operational staff responsible for the collection, storage, transportation and treatment of healthcare waste typically follows an IVET education for waste management technicians within the dual system (see also the chapter on national occupational standards). Within the CVET system, they might receive additional training on healthcare



waste management which however is not mandatory. The management staffs of a waste disposal company or the responsible waste appointee normally is following a tertiary level education in the environmental or cognate disciplines.

In accordance with the §§ 59 KrWG in conjunction with the Ordinance on Company Waste Management Officers hospitals and the waste disposal companies have to appoint an appointee for waste management. This waste appointee (or officer) has to have the requisite qualification. The specific qualification for healthcare waste is normally obtained by participating in a CVET training on healthcare waste.

Awarding Bodies

Of crucial importance for the organisation of out-of-school IVET is the Vocational Education and Training Act. Other important legislation for the organisation of out-of-school vocational training includes the Regulation on Craft Trades, the Ordinance on Trainer Aptitude, and the Protection of Young People in Employment Act.

Continuing vocational training is legally regulated on both federal and country levels. Among the federal laws the following, in addition to those mentioned above in the context of initial training, are also relevant: the Social Code III, the Career Advancement Training Promotion Act and the Distance Learning Protection Act. The Works Constitution Act plays a complementary role.

The recognition of the individual occupations requiring formal training is the task of the federal ministries responsible for the respective occupational field. In the vast majority of cases, responsibility lies with the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi), but approval by the BMBF is required in all cases. The BMBF thus fulfils a coordinating and steering function in terms of vocational training policy for all training occupations. The core institution at the national level for consensus building between all parties involved in VET is the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB). BIBB conducts research into in-company vocational training and fulfils service and consultancy functions to the Federal Government and vocational training providers. The professional competences in occupations to be acquired in in-company training are specified in these training regulations and included by the training enterprise in an individual training plan. The binding requirements of the training regulations guarantee a uniform national standard. For the teaching in the vocational school, a framework curriculum, harmonised with the training regulations, is drawn up for every recognised training occupation. The system is monitored by competent bodies such as the chambers or autonomous trade and industry associations. The Chamber of Crafts and the Chamber of Industry and Commerce are the awarding bodies for IVET under the dual system.

Only a small part of provision leads to a formal vocational qualification which are recognised by law or are awarded by industry's self-governing organisations (Chambers). In the field of further vocational training trade and technical schools (in full-time or part-time form) and master's schools (Fachschulen) provide a further intermediate qualification building on the vocational training completed, e.g. to become a "Meister" (master), technician. Further vocational training as a "Meister" entitles the holder to practise a craft trade independently



and to employ and train apprentices and opens up access to courses at craft academies and Fachhochschulen or even Hochschulen.

Trade and technical schools offer courses in agronomy, design, engineering, business and social affairs, with over 160 subjects. Like master's schools, they end with a final state examination under state law. The conditions for entrance vary depending on the subject area, for trade/technical school an applicant normally requires a qualification in a recognised training occupation of relevance to the objective of the subject concerned, and relevant work experience of at least one year, or a qualification from a full-time vocational school and relevant work experience of at least five years. After obtaining a vocational qualification and gaining work experience, it is possible to take an upgrading qualification (e.g. as a technical engineer, master craftsman, business specialist or certified senior clerk).

As described before, the field of CVET in Germany is characterised by a comparatively minimal degree of regulation by the state. Therefore also the awarding of certificates for waste management training is only partly regulated. In accordance with the §§ 60 of the Closed Cycle Management Act (Kreislaufwirtschaftsgesetz, KrWg), the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation Building and Nuclear Safety has the right to specify the needed requisite qualification for waste appointees. The Ministry has so far not issued an ordinance which describes these formal requirements. Private waste training providers exist who are currently acting as awarding bodies, however these awards have to be confirmed by the local state ministry for environment.

Training Centres

In the general dual system trainees attend part-time vocational school on one or two days per week, where they are mainly taught theoretical and practical knowledge related to their occupation; in addition they attend classes on general subjects such as economic and social studies and foreign languages. Systematic teaching at vocational school is a necessary supplement to process-oriented training in the company which is rather more based on specific in-house requirements. Moreover, there are full-time vocational schools (Berufsfachschulen), for which the states are responsible. The training may include company placements, and covers a period of two or three years depending on the respective occupation. Final qualifications are awarded on passing a school examination which is supervised by the education authority and governed by the training regulations of the respective occupation,

National Occupational Standards

For vocational training under IVET, two main standards for vocational education exist:



A) Title: Recycling and waste management technician

This training (NQF-level 4, equal to EQF 4) is typically provided within the dual system. Trainees follow a three year combined practical and theoretical training. The practical training is provided by the employing waste company, the theoretical training is provided by vocational schools. The following topics are covered during the 3 years of training for achieving the technician level:

- Health and safety,
- Environmental protection,
- Principles of corporate organisation and management,
- State-of-the-art technologies,
- Measurement, regulation and control technology,
- Applying basics of natural sciences,
- Dealing with hazardous materials,
- Dealing with working equipment, storage of materials,
- Customer and business oriented acting,
- Principles of waste classification,
- Waste disposal and recycling techniques,
- Maintenance of equipment,
- Waste streams,
- Quality assurance,
- Information technology,
- National and EU legal requirements, waste management policy principles.

B) Title: Certified specialist for recycling and waste management, and public cleaning services

This training (EQF level 6) is qualifying for management level functions and requires as entrance the technician level training. The content of the further education is regulated and all over Germany the same. The duration of the training is 2 years and includes:

Basic qualifications:

Acting according to the law (environmental law, labour law)

Acting according to business principles (organisation of the company, organisational development, types of costs, costs centers, cost accounting, calculation methods)

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Acting according to information, communication and planning methods (evaluation of planning and analysis methods, application of presentation methods, project management methods, information and communication



methods)

Working together in the company (leadership principles, methods for solving company problems and social conflicts) Basics in the field of natural sciences and technology (application of statistical methods, introduction to chemistry, Calculation of company and process related parameters during tension and movement)

Action specific qualification:

- Technology (operating machinery and equipment in waste management industry; logistics, collection and transport of waste, public cleansing)
- Organization (costs, management a facility/company, monitoring actions and client focus, health and safety and environmental protection, law)
- Human resources (leading and developing employees, management systems)

As described before, for CVET training in the healthcare waste sector so far no formal regulation for occupational standards exist. Legally, the recognition of competencies acquired through non-formal and informal learning is not on an equal footing with the recognition of formal learning. There are barely any regulatory provisions governing the recognition of cross-cutting competencies, or specialised competencies (as distinct from occupation-specific qualifications and skills). Moreover, the issue is widely viewed as less important by those involved in policy and practice. The federal system has few nationwide provisions on the recording and certification of informal education. Little use is made of competencies acquired informally for the formal education system in terms of admission procedures, training and study programmes, and certification at upper secondary level and in higher education. The various qualitative and quantitative certification procedures (examination boards, assessments etc.) are not used in a differentiated way, and any coordination of such procedures does not exist.

Albania

At the moment in Albania there is no formal VET system for the waste industry and indeed the entire concept of VET is very new despite their being a defined roadmap for the implementation of VET. At the present time it is the Ministry of Labour who should take charge of VET overall with QKEV being responsible for all VET within the healthcare sector.



Chapter 3 Accreditation of New Vocational Qualifications

United Kingdom

Accreditation Bodies

WAMITAB and CIWM are the main accreditation bodies for waste management courses which have been developed by professionals/companies/approved centres within the waste management industry. The courses may cover a wide range of waste and management topics including;

- Fundamentals of waste management
- Waste minimisation
- Health and Safety
- Waste prevention
- Environmental monitoring
- Recycling
- Pollution prevention
- Legal compliance
- Technology
- Policy
- Waste management planning/strategy

It is also possible to have a customised qualification accredited, in Scotland, through SQA. These awards will be mapped to the SCQF framework, which can be directly paralleled to the EQF.

Accreditation Process

Greece

Accreditation Awarding Bodies

EOPPEP currently accredits Awarding Bodies certifying computer skills upon legislated criteria and specifications. The accredited awarding bodies conduct the evaluation procedure in examination centres via an automated exam system and award the certificate for computer skills.

EOPPEP plans to develop a system for the accreditation of awarding bodies certifying knowledge & skills in additional areas of expertise.



Accreditation Process

EOPPEP develops the regulatory framework for the certification of qualifications, i.e. the learning outcomes of non-formal education and informal learning, in response to labour market needs and priorities and in liaison with the accreditation of inputs, i.e. providers, trainers, occupational profiles and curricula standards.

EOPPEP's current fields of responsibility are the certification of the qualifications listed below and the licensing of awarding bodies, as follows:

Development of a National System for the Certification of Qualifications

Designing and developing a national system for the certification of qualifications is EOPPEP's principal policy priority in the field of lifelong learning (LLL), comprising the following key areas of responsibility:

- Development of a model system for the accreditation of outputs and setting the respective legal framework. Designing a system for the recognition and certification of qualifications acquired via non-formal and informal learning and establishing the framework for licensing awarding bodies.
- Inspection, monitoring and evaluation of awarding bodies.
- Implementation of certification processes by EOPPEP.

The National System for the Certification of Qualifications aims at:

- certifying those qualifications for which a state interest is attested and those which reinforce employment,
- assuring the certified qualification corresponds to the specifications set in the respective accredited occupational profile and the accreditation/certification process is in compliance with set standards and criteria
- providing equity and open access to qualifications, irrespective of the learning pathway and regardless of the way learning outcomes have been acquired.

Accreditation/Certification procedures

EOPPEP accredits and licenses Providers of non-formal education encompassing initial and continuing vocational training upon legislated criteria for infrastructure, trainers & curricula, as well as enacted specifications for the organisation and operation of the provider, employed staff and provided services.

Accreditation of Vocational Training & Certification of Public Vocational Training Institute (IEK) Graduates. The accreditation of vocational training and the certification of the public vocational training institutes (IEK) graduates embeds a national accreditation exam procedure conducted at national and regional level and based on the vocational training exam regulation framework per speciality. EOPPEP organises at national level the accreditation



examinations for IEK graduates of all specialities. Upon successful examination results, IEK graduates are awarded the Vocational Training Diploma recognised both in Greece and in EU member states (for lower secondary education graduates) or the Certificate Level I (for upper secondary education graduates).

Certification of Vocational Training Centres (KEK), which provide services of continuing vocational services complementing, updating and/or upgrading knowledge, skills and competencies of the labour force aiming at the integration & reintegration of learners into the labour market, job security and professional as well as personal development.

Certification of the teaching qualification of Trainers for Adults of non-formal education. Trainers for adults are required to possess a teaching qualification awarded upon accreditation in order to fulfill eligibility conditions for public funded non-formal education programmes, pursuant to Law 3879, article 19.3 (GOG 163/A/21.09.2010) on "Development of Lifelong Learning". Developing and implementing a comprehensive and innovative accreditation system for the teaching qualification of "Trainers for Adults of non-formal education", including the unification of registers in operation, responds to new social, economic and educational needs:

- gearing the education system to learning outcomes,
- linking education content to labour market & reinforcing social partners' role in human resources development,
- expanding trainers' field of activity into initial & continuing vocational training as well as non-formal education, including adult education,
- updating knowledge, skills and competencies of trainers for adults.

Additionally, the regulatory framework pertaining to the certification of professionals who do not possess a recognised occupational title has been enacted (Government Official Gazette 2160/18-07-2012).

Italy

Accreditation Bodies

The introduction of new qualifications, as well as the review of existing ones within the regional system, is a process controlled and managed by the Emilia-Romagna Region via the Regional Council and the competent department. The procedure for the accreditation of new qualifications is specifically manned by the Region through a competent Regional Service, nowadays represented by the Department of Vocational Education and Training. The Regional Service:

- is the main referent for the "proposal" of new qualifications;



- conducts "preliminary investigation";
- manages the activities of "assessment";
- prepares the final documents for the "approval".

While performing its functions, the Department of Vocational Education and Training employs experts in the field of VET. The evaluation of the proposal for new qualifications is carried out through special committees established by Tripartite Regional Commission (Commissione Regionale Tripartita, CRT) while the decision of approval is issued by the Regional Council, after consultation with the CRT and the Regional Conference for the VET system.

Accreditation Process

The regional qualification inventory is frequently updated through the revision of existing qualifications and through the introduction of new qualifications. The updating is carried out to adapt the description of qualifications to the changes that occur in the world of work. Aims of the updating process are:

- to adapt the qualifications to the evolution and changes of working procedures, of required competences and of training paths;
- to supply the system of qualifications with a view to integrating education, vocational training and the world of work;
- to develop the transparency and recognition of qualifications in line with national and EU regulations and guidelines.

The updating of qualifications in force may concern different aspects of the professional profiles, in particular:

- name, description, professional areas, similar profiles;
- occupational standards: knowledge, skills and competences;
- assessment process for the units of competence: performance indicators, expected results, methodologies.

A specific procedure should be followed to generate and propose new qualifications: the source procedure.

The established procedure has several functions:

- predefines the operational process;
- rules the modes of control;
- ensures cooperation and integration among interested actors.

The source procedure consists of the following phases:



1. Proposal,
2. Preliminary investigation
3. Assessment
4. Approval

The proposal for a new qualification can be submitted by the following actors using a specific form:

- Bilateral Organisms
- Social Partners
- Educational Institutions
- Vocational Education and Training providers

Poland

Accreditation Bodies

Higher education

In higher education the accreditation body is the Polish Accreditation Committee (Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna–PKA). PKA is an independent institution and its primary responsibilities include: assessment of the quality of education in fields of study, including compliance with the requirements for the provision of degree programmes; review of applications for the establishment of higher education institutions; and review of applications by higher education institutions for authorization to provide degree programmes in a given field and at a given level of study. The PKA's opinions and evaluations are submitted to the minister responsible for higher education.

Vocational education

Education superintendent (state administration at the regional level) (kurator oświaty) is responsible for accreditation of public and non-public educational institutions:

- public continuing education centres (CECs),
- practical training centres (PTCs),
- continuous and in-service training centres,
- non-public institutions for continuing education and practical training administered by associations and individuals,
- private training institutions.



On behalf of the head of province, the superintendent is responsible for the implementation of tasks defined in the School Education Act and in the regulations relevant to particular provinces. The most important task is pedagogical supervision over public and non-public schools, including regional in-service teacher training institutions, located in particular provinces.

Accreditation Process

The institution providing education can apply for the accreditation to the education superintendent of the province provided that:

- it conducts training in the field covered by the application for accreditation for at least one year,
- it conducts training in the forms listed in the application,
- the duration of training encompasses no less than 30 hours of education,
- it is implementing and disseminating innovative methodological and organizational measures improving the quality of the education received.

The conditions and procedure for accreditation are defined in the regulation of the Ministry of National Education and Sport of 20 December 2003 on the accreditation of institutions and centres conducting continuous education in non-school settings.

The institution applying for the accreditation is required to submit application to the education superintendent of the province. The application is assessed formally and if it fulfils the formal requirements the education superintendent appoints the accreditation team for the assessment of the application and preliminary assessment of the educational activity of the institution.

Then the accreditation team makes the accreditation visit in the places where the institution conducts the education. During the visit the accreditation team assess the fulfilment of requirements by the education institution of the conditions defined in the regulation. Based on the outcomes of the assessment the education superintendent issues the decision for awarding or not the accreditation. When the accreditation is granted the institution is listed in the education superintendent list of accredited institutions in the database of accredited institutions run by the Ministry of Education.

Spain

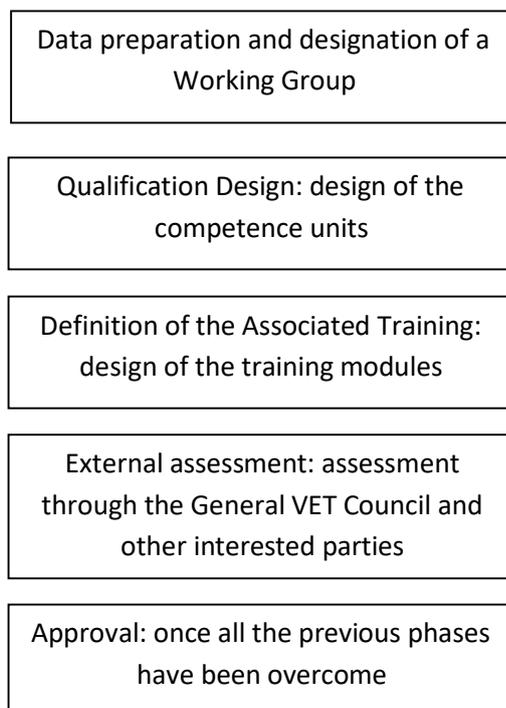


Accreditation Bodies

A professional qualification can be promoted by the National Professional Qualification Authority – INCUAL or proposed by one of the Regional Professional Qualification Authorities. The National Professional Qualification Authority – INCUAL is the body in charge of the accreditation of new awards, once a new award has been accredited, the Regional authorities have the possibility to carry out limited adaptations.

Accreditation Process

The process for the accreditation of a training programme is long (it could be 2 years or more) and it foresees the following procedure:



Slovenia

Accreditation Bodies

Accredited Assessing Bodies:

- propose the date and place of assessment and certification procedure for an NVQ to the National Examinations Centre;
- inform candidates of possibility and conditions for acquisition of an NVQ;
- offer advice to candidates (on how to prepare a portfolio);
- submit requests for members of panels to the National Examinations Centre;
- agree with members of panel about the date and place of portfolio assessment;
- inform candidates about the date, place and contents of their practical performance assessment;
- inform candidates about the results of their practical performance assessment;
- issue the certificate, if candidates fulfil all conditions from the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills;
- issue a written statement, if candidates do not fulfil all conditions from Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills;
- keep records of candidates and issued certificates;
- report yearly to the National Examinations Centre.

Accreditation Process

Assessment and certification of national vocational qualifications (NVQ) are carried out by a three-member panel appointed by the National Examinations Centre. The panel consists of a chairperson and two members who must hold a licence issued by the National Examinations Centre.

How to obtain a licence:

A licence for a member of a panel for assessment and certification of NVQs can be obtained by anyone:

- having acquired a qualification which will be assessed as determined by the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills;
- having work experience within the profession during the last five years;
- having performed a training programme determined by a proposal of the relevant Council of Experts by the Minister.

Candidates for panel members can also obtain proof of qualification through direct assessment based on the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills determined by the Minister.

Based on public invitation for tenders at the National Examinations Centre, the Minister of Labour (or the Minister of Defence for military professions) appoints a list of panel members for each catalogue of standards of



professional knowledge and skills separately. Members are appointed for a period of four years.

Procedure for obtaining a licence:

A candidate for a member of a panel for assessment and certification of a NVQ answers to public invitation for tenders and submits to the National Examinations Centre the following documents:

- an application for acquisition of a licence;
- documents of proof, as determined by the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills, for a vocational qualification in question;
- a statement declaring a panel member would step down if a clash of interest occurred;
- a receipt showing administrative fees have been paid (€47.54).

The National Examinations Centre:

- checks whether staff conditions, as determined by the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills, are met and whether documents of proof of work experience in the profession during the last five years have been submitted;
- refers candidates for a three-day training at the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (after having completed the training, candidates pass an exam and send the certificate to the National Examinations Centre).

If all these criteria are met, the National Examinations Centre issues a licence for a panel member which is valid for four years, after which time it must be renewed.

Renewal of the validity of a licence

A licence for a member of a panel for assessment and certification of NVQ has to be renewed every four years. A member of a panel for assessment and certification of NVQs has to attend, or perform, one of the following activities at least once in the period before the licence expires:

- work in the profession;
- attend education and training in the profession;
- attend or give a lecture at a conference at home or a similar event at home and/or abroad;
- publish an article in a peer review, publication, book or monograph;
make a study visit abroad;
- be given an award by relevant institutions for achievement directly linked to standards of knowledge and skills from the area of vocational qualification for which he/she is a panel member.

As the Act defines that candidates for panel members have to have at least five years of work experience in the profession, it is necessary to attach to the application for the renewal of the licence, a document of proof confirming work experience of the past five years. Members of a panel for assessment and certification of NVQ, subject to basic principles of ethical conduct and basic ethic values (outline – ethic principles of panel members),



have to continually renew their professional competences, help define criteria for the assessment of individual tasks and analyse the reliability of assessment tools and improvement thereof. The register of providers for assessment and certification of NVQs can only include inter-company training centres, schools, organisations for adult education and chambers carrying out training programmes which meet material and staff criteria as determined by the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills, as well as other acts, if thus determined by special regulations. For areas where conditions in organisations from the previous paragraph are not met and if the National Examinations Centre within the period of 30 days after the publication of the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia does not receive an application for entry into the register, the National Examinations Centre selects a provider of procedures for the assessment and certification of NVQs based on public invitation for tenders.

Entry of providers into register of providers of assessment and certification of NVQ

An organisation wishing to become a provider of assessment and certification of NVQ sends to the National Examinations Centre the following documents:

- 1) Proposal for entry into register
- 2) Enclosures for entry into register:
 - data on material conditions;
 - a statement on meeting material conditions determined by the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills;
 - a statement that material conditions, after entry into the register, shall not deteriorate or become inadequate;
 - a certificate on the qualification of portfolio adviser;
 - a statement that the provider shall provide portfolio guidance to candidates wishing to acquire vocational qualifications;
 - a general act of the organisation from which it is evident which organisation unit will be responsible for performing the activity, and paragraphs, if it contains several organisation units;
 - documents of proof of meeting material conditions from which it follows that material conditions for the qualification in question as determined by the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills are met;
 - an estimate of the number of certificates issued per year;
 - a statement whereby the records of issued certificates shall be kept in accordance with regulations and directives of the National Reference Point;



- the name of the person responsible for the performance of procedures of assessment and certification of national vocational qualifications.

An excerpt from the register of companies, not older than 30 days proving that the organisation wishing to become a provider is registered for the activity in question or other educational activity, is acquired by the National Examinations Centre. If all criteria are met, the National Examinations Centre issues a decision on entry into register and enters the provider into register. If not all criteria are met, the National Examinations Centre issues a decision by which it rejects entry into register. It is possible to appeal the decision within 15 days to the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs.

Germany

Accreditation Bodies

For new awards in IVET, the core institution at the national level would be the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB). The professional competences in occupations to be acquired in in-company training are specified in these training regulations and included by the training enterprise in an individual training plan. The binding requirements of the training regulations guarantee a uniform national standard. For the teaching in the vocational school, a framework curriculum, harmonised with the training regulations, is drawn up for every recognised training occupation. The system is monitored by competent bodies such as the chambers or autonomous trade and industry associations. The Chamber of Crafts and the Chamber of Industry and Commerce are the awarding bodies for IVET under the dual system.

Accreditation Process

The legal basis for the criteria to be met by providers and programmes and for the certification procedure is the Accreditation and Certification in Further Training Ordinance (Anerkennungs- und Zulassungsverordnung – Weiterbildung, AZWV) issued by the Federal Ministry of Economics (BMWi), which took force on 1st July 2004. For the accreditation of the requisite qualification to act as a waste appointee for healthcare waste, the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation Building and Nuclear Safety would have to specify the needed requisite qualification. As this is so far not issued, the future accreditation process on national level is unclear and the only possibility for training courses would be to receive recognition on state level from the responsible authorities



Albania

In Albania QKEV is primarily responsible for the accreditation and awarding of VET qualifications in the healthcare sector. At the present time its activities in this regard have been restricted to healthcare professionals however it is hoped that this role will expand, with operational budget consideration, to other aspects of the healthcare sector. Waste management would be a logical progression for QKEV should the additional funding be made available.

Chapter 4 Award Implementation Plan Considerations



Co-funded by the Lifelong
Learning Programme of the
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United Kingdom

There are two options in the UK for implementation of the newly developed award for healthcare waste managers and these are dependent on whether the award should be made available to all VET centres in the UK or whether it would be available to a restricted number of VET centres through a single centre ownership approach.

Fundamentally though the process would involve approval and accreditation of the award by the national awarding bodies in the UK, there are three of them, and thereafter the award would be either given to the centre to whom it belonged or placed on the public register of awards for more general consumption.

In the case of the centre ownership the award is referred to as a customized award and the centre is responsible for the payment of the fees associated with the award approval and accreditation process. The award is then valid for 7 years.

Greece

Healthcare establishments in Greece generate significant quantities of infectious wastes every day, a significant fraction of which is still not properly managed. Sound waste management and environmentally friendly practices have not been given the proper attention by the Hellenic National Health System historically and it was not before 2003 that a Joint Ministerial Decision (37591/2031), titled "Measures and conditions for medical waste management by medical units" (Hellenic Official Gazette, 2003), was issued, addressing contemporary technical and other requirements.

This was the major cross-cutting step to increase awareness, shape behaviour and promote schemes according to the real significance of sanitary healthcare waste treatment and disposal, as well as to allocate budgets for the real cost of waste management. Further steps are still necessary to improve the current legislation and to attain compliance through inspecting mechanisms, whereas more efforts should be made by policy makers in Greece to encourage safe handling and disposal of hospital waste, in order to reduce health and safety risks for the healthcare workers, patients, waste collectors and the entire community. Of the 333,155 tonnes of hazardous waste, produced yearly in Greece, 14,600 tonnes (4.4%) are generated by hospitals (Hellenic Official Gazette, 2007), with the biggest part of this quantity considered to be infectious.

Since the management of hospital wastes has become a subject of interest, hospital administrations are struggling with numerous problems, while trying to avoid past wrong practices, like disposing of, either part or all, hospital wastes, untreated and mixed with municipal waste (MSW), in landfills.



These changes have resulted by today in a wide turn to steam sterilization technology offered by private companies. However, a fraction of healthcare wastes is still disposed without any pre-treatment, due to the following facts

- (a) sterilization is not applicable to some categories (e.g. cytotoxic, anatomic, pharmaceutical),
- (b) proper incineration requires operator training and qualification, waste management plans, measuring and monitoring of pollutants and operating parameters, as well as sufficiently high temperatures for cytotoxic, chemical and pharmaceutical waste,
- (c) general hospital infrastructure for infectious waste management in Greece is still far from perfect.

Today, there is a growing interest on the issue of proper and integrated treatment of infectious hospital waste in Greece and significant investments for the improvement of infrastructure are anticipated, given the vivid interest of both the public sector individual hospitals, as well as private companies to invest in treatment technologies, including thermal treatment technologies.

In this context, the growing needs for qualified Healthcare Waste Professionals and the technological advances implemented in the respective facilities, vocational training in the healthcare waste management sector, in Greece is still degraded.

The last organized vocational training programs for Solid Waste Facilities Managers were organized during 2004. Those programs were addressed to University and Technical Institutes graduates and were funded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Based on the above mentioned it is clear that a qualifications framework for Healthcare Waste Professionals is missing from the Hellenic Vocational and Educational system.

Italy

The proposal for the introduction of a new qualification can be submitted in every moment.

Below the phases of the source procedure are described in detail.



Phase 1 – Proposal

Contents

In order to be verifiable and measurable, the proposal must contain all the adequate elements for the relevant professional profile.

The general elements are:

- the name (initial proposal);
- a (first) summary.

The specific elements are:

- *job roles related to the professional profile* which allow to verify that the proposal is related to profiles existing in the labour market.
- *connotative competences of the profile* which allow to verify that the proposal concerns a profile which can be trained through educational, training and work pathways.
- *working environments* which allow to verify that the proposal concerns a profile with competences related to advanced process in the field of activities.

Actors involved

The proposal for new qualifications may be presented by one of the following interested actors:

- VET providers;
- public and private organisations providing services in the employment area;
- trade unions, industrial and professional associations, gender equality institutions;
- provincial and regional bodies established for institutional collaboration, collaboration and social participation;
- other actors with an interest in the qualification.

The proposal can also be presented by the Region itself for qualifications that the Region intends to regulate and promote on the basis of specific analysis and evaluation.

Modalities

The applicant organisation submit the proposal using a specific form to the competent Regional Service. The proposal may be submitted at any time. The Regional Service then:

- analyses the proposal together with the applicant organisation;
- assesses the proposal against the criteria and prepare the evaluation report;



- periodically inform the CRT on the progress of proposals and the related outcomes.

The Phase ends within 30 days from the acquisition of the proposal by the Regional Service which accepts or rejects it and send the relevant communication to the applicant organisation. Proposals receiving a positive feedback pass to Phase 2.

Phase 2 – Preliminary investigation

Contents

The preliminary investigation concerns the description of the new qualification. The description is prepared according to the following modes and contains:

- the general elements: name – short description –professional area – similar profiles;
- occupational standards: knowledge, skills and competences;
- assessment process for the units of competence: performance indicators, expected results, methodologies.

Actors involved

The preliminary investigation is carried out by the competent Regional Service which collaborates with experts from the labour market and the training sector.

Modalities

The Regional Service:

- performs specific analysis;
- acquires any information which is needed;
- develop the descriptors of the qualification.

The Phase ends, within 30 days from the initial communication to the applicant organisation, with the form describing the qualifications, complete in all its parts, that should undergo Phase 3.

Phase 3 – Assessment

Contents

The assessment phase concerns the exam and the validation of the new qualification. The qualification is assessed against all the elements: general information, occupational standards, proposed procedures for assessing the units of competence. To ensure an adequate assessment of the proposed qualifications, the necessary supporting informative materials are processed.

Actors involved

The verification is performed by specific committees appointed by the CRT and by the Region. The CRT identifies the experts who will form the commission within specific professional areas.

Modalities

The assessment is performed according to the following methodologies:



- the CRT appoints a committee of experts within the concerned professional areas;
- the commission meets together with the representatives of the Regional Service (3 meetings scheduled within a maximum of 6 weeks);
- in preparation of the meetings, the Regional Service develops supporting materials and performs further investigations.

The timing of the phase is defined in agreement with the CRT. The phase ends with the preparation by the Regional Service of the final proposal to be submitted to the next Phase 4.

Phase 4 – Approval

Contents

The approval phase concerns the measure of adoption of new qualifications to be included in regional inventory.

Actors involved

The approval of new qualifications is responsibility of the Regional Council (L.R. 12/03). The competent Regional Service prepares the documents needed for issuing the decision.

Modalities

The approval follows the following modes:

- the Regional Service send the final proposal to the CRT and prepares the official documents for the approval;
- the Regional Council assess the proposal and issue the decision.

The Phase ends with the deliberation for the adoption of the new qualification and with the updating of the regional inventory.

Poland

Education in Poland is restricted to institutions within the education system (schools and HEIs). Education other than formal, in particular non-formal education and adult education, is not highly valued. Learning in settings other than formal, especially in the work place and as part of social and civic activities, is not yet sufficiently attractive and valued. However, due to the reform of vocational education implemented in Poland since September 2012, the system of external examinations confirming vocational qualifications has become open to persons who had acquired vocational knowledge and experience outside vocational schools. Moreover, changes in this respect are provided for in the Bill amending the Law on Higher Education of July 2013. The Bill includes, among other things, some mechanisms facilitating adult persons access to higher education in the framework of lifelong learning. Higher education institutions will be allowed to recognize and confirm competences – expressed in terms of learning



outcomes - acquired outside the higher education system, for instance at workplace, during training courses, through self-education or voluntary work.

Formal VET

Formal vocational education and training is available for occupations included in the Regulation of the Minister of Education on the classification of occupations for vocational education.

Professional associations, employers' organizations and economic organizations can apply to individual ministers with the proposal for establishment of new vocational occupations. Employers applying for an establishment of new occupation and introduction it to the classification of occupations for vocational education in their application should include appropriate arguments, such as:

- evidence for the demand of the economy for the graduates in this occupation;
- information about prospective workplaces for graduates, supported by the results of the market research.

Moreover, the proposal should include:

- general description of the occupation (the graduate profile with the learning outcomes);
- type of school in which the teaching of the new occupation should take place (secondary, post-secondary);
- proposed number and names of the qualifications incorporating into occupation and their general description.

The proposal is a basis for a relevant minister for applying to Minister of National Education for introduction of new occupation to the classification of occupations for vocational education. The application requirements for introduction of new occupation into classification of occupations for vocational education are stipulated in the Education System Act of 7 September 1991.

Future possibilities for accreditation of VET

During the works on the National Qualification Framework the establishment of integrated qualifications register was foreseen. Currently the project of the act implementing the integrated qualifications register is being discussed. The project assumes that it will be possible to include in the register of the given qualification provided that this qualification:

- comprises of the learning outcomes with aligned NQF levels,
- includes information concerning validation of learning outcomes (requirements, criteria, etc.),
- indicates certification body,
- indicates external quality assurance body.

The register will cover qualifications acquired in formal education and higher education and qualifications



acquired in non-formal settings (provided that they will be registered according to legal requirements).

Spain

Following the results of the meetings with the Catalan Professional Qualification Authority and the Catalan Department of Education, in the case of Spain, as the process could be long and complicated it will be very important to:

- Follow the structure of the Competence Units and the Training Modules, so that the competent authorities will find easier to accept studying the qualification process.
- Work closely with the Catalan Waste Agency, the Catalan Health Department and the Catalan Education Department in order to take into consideration their point of view and to obtain their "technical recognition" of the training programme, this will provide a good starting point in order to motivate the need for a professional qualification and to have the possibility to convince the Catalan Professional Qualification Authority to promote the output of the project at State level in order to be accredited. Club EMAS has already involved the above mentioned parties since the beginning of the project and intend to do so along the whole project. In fact, during the workshop in spring 2015, the Club EMAS will provide these parties the opportunity to have a speech and to participate actively in the project.

As the VET programmes in Spain require a great amount of hours (not viable for the EU-HCWM project), the output of the project could be promoted as a training module, rather than a professional qualification.

Demonstrate to the Professional Qualification Authorities that there's a real need of a specific professional qualification / training need for HC waste managers (some inputs will be: the number of HC Centres in the country in order to assess the target of people potentially involved, the requirements within the legislation to define a Responsible for the HC waste Plan).

So the strategy in the case of Spain could be:

As a first step, to obtain an agreement with the relevant authorities at Regional level (Catalonia) in order to start providing specific training in Catalonia, and then try to start the process at Spanish level and extend the training in other regions while the qualification process is accepted by the National Professional Qualification Authority.

To establish an agreement with a specialised training centre to promote the training programme within one or more Regions and then try to start the accreditation process at Spanish level.

Slovenia

Award Implementation Plan Considerations

The development of professional standards is modern answer to market's needs. They are becoming an interface and the link between the education system and the labour market and the economy. A faster economic development, especially the development of new technologies and services, leads to the development of new vocational qualifications. Occupations in the traditional sense no longer follow the dynamics of the labour market, and poorly reflect the complexity of the tasks that are constantly changing in the sphere of work. A professional standard is an instrument which quickly responds to labor market demands and requirements of modern ways of organizing work in companies. The national vocational qualifications individual occurs via two pathways: the successful completion of the training program conducted by the school, and with the recognition and validation of knowledge acquired in other ways, namely by a licensed institutions.



In Slovenia, unlike some other countries, is not recognized the full equivalence results of the two paths. For instant, individuals with school education obtain these qualifications as a professional qualification and education, meanwhile the recognition of non-formal knowledge obtained only professional qualification, but not education. In practice, however, remains controversial reluctance to otherwise certified professional qualifications for individuals who would like this qualification in the school system supplemented with basic and general knowledge, and thus get to a higher level of education.

The process begins with the initiative for NOS taken by the applicant in the prescribed form submitted to the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training (CPI). In initiatives is particularly important to provide information on the labour market needs and on the comparability of standards for the qualification in the EU and, if necessary, compliance with regulations and standards at EU level. Usually, in Slovenia the initiatives for new professional standards and catalogues are given by chambers, employers' associations, professional associations, NGOs, trade unions and relevant ministries. It may occur that our proposition – international project partner's consortium will not be enough to get appropriate support from relevant sides.

If the Regional Committee for Professional Standards believes that the initiative is well founded, the experts, proposed by the relevant Sectoral Committee for Professional Standards with the methodological support of the CPI, prepare a proposal from the profile of the profession. Later on, initiative is coordinated within the sector committees for professional standards in the CPI. Expert Council for Technical and Vocational Education and then Minister of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities proposes a professional standard in the adoption and publication on the National Information Centre (NRP).

Professional standards and catalogues must be prepared in accordance with the methodology specified by the competent expert council on a proposal from sectoral committees for professional standards. Methodological support in the preparation of professional standards and catalogues is offered by Centre for Vocational Education. Accepted catalogues are publicly recognized and published in Orders and Regulations on Occupational Standards and are also available on the website of the National Information Centre for Vocational Qualifications. Sometimes on the basis of one or more occupational standards is develop an educational program for secondary vocational and secondary and higher vocational education.

Additional consider is not to obtain a licence for a member of a panel for assessment and certification of NVOs where are requested a qualification which will be assessed as determined by the Catalogue of Standards of Professional Knowledge and Skills; work experience within the profession during the last five years; performed a training programme determined by a proposal of the relevant Council of Experts by the Minister

Germany

Award Implementation Plan Considerations

For Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVETs):

The IVET Training in Germany for operational staff in the waste sector is fully developed and available. The introduction of a specialized IVET Training for healthcare waste is not foreseen as the specialized know-how should be obtained within the CVET system.

For Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET):

In accordance with the §§ 59 KrWG in conjunction with the Ordinance on Company Waste Management Officers hospitals and the waste disposal companies have to appoint an appointee for waste management. This waste



appointee (or officer) has to have the requisite qualification. The specific qualification for healthcare waste is normally obtained by participating in a CVET training on healthcare waste.

As so far the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation Building and Nuclear Safety did not specify the needed qualification and the accreditation process but as training courses are already provided by different private training providers (see Annex) it should be the core strategy to seek the dialogue with the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation Building and Nuclear Safety to support setting up the framework. Existing training courses in Germany generally follow two strategies:

A) Providing the general requisite qualification for waste manager (normally about 3 to 5 days) plus an additional specific training of waste management in the healthcare sector (normally about 1 day)

Or

B) Providing a specialized training on healthcare waste which includes the necessary know-how for the general requisite qualification for waste manager (normally about 3 to 5 days).

The results of the EU-HCWM project should be shared with the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation Building and Nuclear Safety and could support the setting up of the needed framework.

Albania

In Albania the simplest way to have the award available through the VET system would be to have QKEV adopt the award on the basis of its EU Member State accreditation. This could be by agreement with any of the project partner member states.

