**Summary of the Project**

**PROJECT TITLE: Strategic Partnership for the Implementing Credit Transfer in the Vocational Qualifications System.**

Within the context of the strategic partnership Project to be implemented, it is aimed that cooperation is made with EU countries for exchanging methodologies and building coherent structures and prosedures to facilitate the implementation of credit transfer sytem for the vocational qualifications acquired through informal and nonformal learning. Project will include activities based on **cooperative technical expertise sharing and the exchange of good practices for ensuring horizontal and vertical transitions between the qualifications, and developing prosedures and methodologies to set up credit transfer system substrastructures.** The expected outcomes of the project are; developing methodologies for the credit rating, accumulation and transfer of the learning outcomes at both national and international level and through these facilitating the recognition of prior learning and mobility.

**About VQA**

Vocational Qualifications Authority is a public institution which was for established for operating the national qualifications system in Turkey, and is responsible for the development and implementation of the Turkish Qualifications Framework.

National occupational standards and national qualifications, which are the fundamental components of the national qualifications system, are developed in line with the labour market needs by gathering the relevant parties under the coordination of VQA.

National occupational standards are official documents which provide full and accurate information about professions in Turkey, while national qualifications are official documents demonstrating how to conduct the assessment and evaluation for a profession, both of which are developed as a result of the cooperation and negotiation of related parties under the coordination of VQA.

Within the national qualifications system, testing and certification activities for the recognition and validation of prior learning are carried out in accordance with the principles determined through national qualifications. Testing and certification activities for the recognition and validation of prior learning according to national qualifications are carried out by the entities authorised by VQA in accordance with the regulations set out by VQA. Thus, in order to validate, recognize and certify the qualifications that the person has acquired through different ways of learning, testing and certification activities are carried out in accordance with the national qualifications by the entities authorized by VQA.

The development and operation of the Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF), which is in line with the "European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF)", is in the field of work of VQA. TQF refers to the national qualifications framework, which was designed in harmony with the EQF under the coordination of VQA, demonstrating all the fundamentals of qualifications gained through vocational, general and academic education including first, middle and higher education, training programs and other ways of learning. Within the context of TQF, it has been committed to develop the crediting system in order to ensure the comparison of qualifications which have been referenced to EQF.

**ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION**

# **1.1 Current State in Turkish National Qualification System**

It is necessary to establish the required structures in order to ensure the accumulation, recognition and the transfer of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competence) acquired in different ways within the national qualifications systems. In different countries of the European Union; the transfer, recognition and accumulation of learning outcomes are ensured by using the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

ECVET makes it possible to facilitate the understanding and transparency of learning outcomes that an individual has acquired; the transfer and mobility of the learning outcomes among the EU member states and additionally the mobility and transfer of qualifications in the labour market and among different sectors at national level.

Due to the fact that there is not a structured crediting and credit transfer system within the Turkish National Qualifications System, some obstacles regarding the achievement of horizontal and vertical transitions between qualification types and levels, accumulation, transfer and recognition of learning outcomes are encountered. In order to overcome these obstacles, the most important step to be taken by VQA is to establish a credit transfer system that complies with the National Qualification System and is in harmony with ECVET

In order for the Turkish National Vocational Qualifications System to support and promote life-long learning and ensure horizontal and vertical transitions between different qualification types and levels, it is necessary to create methodologies and prosedures for implementing a credit transfer system compatible with ECVET principles.

***Although the titles are included in the current qualification format, the content of the titles cannot be filled due to the lack of required technical capacity. VQA is responsible for coordinating the preparation process of national qualifications and providing the necessary technical support and expertise to the relevant parties conducting the preparatory work. However, these studies can not be conducted due to the fact that VQA does not have sufficient technical expertise capacity for the determination of horizontal-vertical transition ways and appointment of credit value. Through the exchange of experience sharing and good practice, the determination of horizontal and vertical transition ways and identification of credit values should be ensured in the national qualification documents.***

In this context, sharing exchaning experience and building cooperation with the EU countries, which have well operating structures or are in process of developing structures regarding the accumulation and transfer of learning outcomes and implementing ECVET at the national level, are required.

**Negative Aspects**

* Although horizontal and vertical transition and credit value parts take place in national qualification documents, credit value is not yet assigned, the learning outcomes are not transferable and able to be accumulated

*The importance of qualifications, qualification units and learning outcomes, and their impact on the workload are not understood due to the lack of assigned credit points within the qualifications. This situation makes it difficult to understand the scope of Vocational Qualification Certificates. This causes problems for horizontal and vertical transitions within the qualification types and levels due to the fact that the comparison of the qualifications along with the determination of learning outcome weights can not be made objectively.*

* The vertical and horizontal transition pathways are not defined in a proper way

*Due to the lack of defined vertical and horizontal transition pathways, there is insufficient guidance for individuals on how to make progress.* *In addition, this situation does not provide adequate information for education providers, certification bodies, employers and employees on what learning outcomes should be achieved for a specific horizontal/vertical transition.*

* There is not yet a regulation or a system involving methodologies for horizontal and vertical transition between the qualifications

*Currently, lack of a credit transfer and a methodology for horizontal and vertical transition poses an obstacle to the recognition of prior learning. When individuals want to reach a higher level of, or a different type of qualification, they are expected to prove the learning outcomes that they already have by going through various processes. They have to go through education or assessment-evaluation steps once again; which prevents effective and efficient use of time and financial resources.*

# **1.2 Regulatory Basis of the Project:**

* Vocational Qualifications Authority Law of 5544
* Regulation on the Procedures and Principles for the Implementation of Turkish Qualifications Framework
* Recommendation on the European Qualifications Framework(EQF) for life long learning
* Recommendation on ECVET (European credit system for vocational education and training)

# **1.3 Final Beneficiaries**

* Institutions/organisations responsible for developing National Qualification Frameworks and National Vocational Qualificatiom Systems.
* Institutions/organisations responsible for developing Occupational Standards and National Qualifications,
* Institutions/organisations for designing and implementing recognition and validaiton prosudures.
* Certification Bodies,
* Education-providers,
* Employers, Employees, Learners

**PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT**

The first objective of the Project is developing methodologies in order to assign credit points to national qualifications. The second objective is defining pathways for horizontal and vertical transitions. Within this context, it is aimed that project partners gather to conduct technical studies regarding the establishment of a credit transfer system by using ECVET principles and principles and procedures be developed to support transitions and mobility within the National Qualification Systems.

**PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

**Within the scope of the Project, following activities will be conducted:**

* A technical study group will be established for developing methodologies in order to assign credit points to national qualifications and defining pathways for horizontal and vertical transitions
* Exchanging information on the qualification systems of project partner countries
* Analyzing credit point- assigning methods for the qualifications acquired through informal and non-formal learning
* Analyzing methodologies for the use of credit points in mobility
* Exchanging information on horizontal and vertical mobility at both national and international levels in project partner countries
* Analyzing how ECVET tools and principles could be used in horizontal and vertical transitions
* A guideline on credit point- assigning methods will be prepared
* Principles and procedures will be developed to support transitions and mobility within the National Qualification Systems
* A pilot study will be conducted. Two qualifications will be selected; credit points will be assigned and pathways for horizontal and vertical transitions will be defined.
* Visibility activities will be conducted.

**PROJECT OUTCOMES**

* ‘’A guideline on the methods for assigning credit points to the qualifications acquired through informal and non-formal learning’’
* ‘’Principles and procedures on transition and mobility within the National Qualification Systems’’
* ‘’Two qualifications in which credit points along with horizontal and vertical transitions are defined’’

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

* Determining the weight of learning outcomes depending on the assignment of credit values and determination of the workload
* Adequate guidance to the individuals on ways of making progress
* Providing adequate information for the final beneficiaries and target groups
* Providing input for regulatory arrangements for national qualification frameworks
* Recognition of prior learning more effectively; thus contributing to the effective use of country resources in the long term
* Facilitating mutual recognition of qualifications, international mobility and life-long learning in the long-term
* Implementing credit transfer systems which is compatible with ECVET and EU Countries.