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Certified Coaches in Youth Initiatives:

Enhancing professional development of coaches supporting youth initiatives, developing and testing a new European competence standard established by MoU ECVET and a transnational common curriculum applied through joint training events and mobility

Erasmus+ EU Programme 2014-2020
Key Action 2 Strategic Partnerships for Youth - Call for proposal 2013 EAC/S11/13
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Activity O9-A1

Endorsement of the new European common professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives" within specific youth work contexts and learning systems of involved countries

Intellectual Output O9

Report on the activities for the endorsement and application/testing within specific youth work contexts and learning systems of participating countries, of the new European common professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives"

Intermediate results of the endorsement in participating countries of the new European common professional and training standards for coaching in youth initiatives, focusing on first results of the endorsement process, before the beginning of the transnational joint learning programme for getting the qualification "Coach in Youth Initiatives"

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Premise: main features of O9-A1 activity and related O9 intellectual output

The activity O9-A1, in the context of the project overall aims (to develop and test at transnational level an innovative European competence standard and a common curriculum and learning pathway in youth work field, particularly for coaching of youth initiatives, targeted on professionals, people on labour market or training /studying for youth work, and to ensure recognition and certification of acquired skills and competences across borders of involved EU countries applying European principles and tools for transparency of learning outcomes and qualifications EQF, ECVET and Europass, and promoting stronger coherence between those and national transparency and recognition tools), includes the activities designed to ensure that the new European common professional/competence standard established by MoU ECVET, and the coherent training standards (curriculum and transnational joint learning programme design) for the "Coach in Youth Initiatives" defined by the project, are effectively endorsed within concerned specific youth work contexts and learning systems of involved countries, also and particularly within National and Regional Qualification Frameworks of them - i.e., supported, adopted and integrated in respective VET systems - before the beginning of the transnational joint learning programme, so that the learning outcomes acquired participating to the learning programme are fully officially recognised and certified within and across all participating country.

More in particular, the endorsement of the competence and training standards includes the activities needed to elaborate and/or fill in the formal documentation (e.g., models for new qualifications/competence standards/training standards defined by public institution deciding the officially recognised qualifications included in National and Regional Qualification Frameworks) which has to be prepared to propose to the interested public institutions competent on youth and VET, to education and training organisations providing learning opportunities in the youth work field, as well as to youth organisations, and community and civil society organisations active in youth field and then also relevant for work-based learning experiences in youth work, to support, adopt and integrate in the respective learning systems and activities, the new European common professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives", as well as the relation, networking and follow-up activities addressed to these key actors.

These endorsement activities are reported by the Intellectual Output O9, which has a first milestone before the starting of the joint transnational learning programme to be tested within the project with the participation of 4 Italian, 3 French, and 3 Hungarian learners, and a second milestone at the end of the pilot application of the transnational learning programme (even if continuing also after the project completion, since the MoU ECVET "Coach in Youth Initiatives" it has already established follow up mechanisms for sustainability, included permanent joint governance body and periodical meetings to implement the MoU, and for dialogue and administrative co-operation).

The present first elaboration of the Intellectual Output O9 is then reporting on the intermediate results of the endorsement of the new European common professional and training standards for coaching in youth initiatives, focusing on first results of the endorsement process, before the beginning of the transnational joint learning programme for getting the qualification "Coach in Youth Initiatives" across participating countries, in Italy, France, and Hungary, as well as in Belgium where, though not involved in sending and/or receiving learners within the joint transnational learning programme to be tested within the project, the Belgian partner Diesis supported the dissemination of the new European common professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives", also at European level.

During the fifth transnational project meeting (Perugia - Italy, 9th of March 2016), the partners have shared, on the basis of a draft elaborated by the applicant, the definition of common approaches and tools for these activities, which have been then applied and developed by the partners, also through Skype meetings. The endorsement results at national and European level have been assembled in an integrated draft by the applicant, discussed and validated by all the partners during the eight transnational project meeting (Gubbio - Italy, 7th of September 2016), and then published in the public open area of the project website (<http://www.certifiedcoaches.it>).

The integral version of the product has been published in English, while a synthetic version for dissemination has been published in all the languages of the partnership (English, Italian, French and Hungarian).

The endorsement of the new European common professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives" : intermediate results in Italy

In Italy, due to decentralised Italian national vocational education system (accordingly to exclusive competence in professional qualification matter attributed to the Regions by the art. 117 of Italian Constitution), the endorsement of the new European common professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives" is supported by the Italian project partners at regional level, in Umbria, where are located and operate Aris Formazione e Ricerca Società Cooperativa, ASAD Cooperativa Sociale, and Arte Cultura e Dintorni association.

The endorsement in Italy of the new European common professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives", it proceed then within the Umbrian regional VET system and rules, in particular those defining the Umbrian regional system of professional, training and certification standards (DGR - Deliberation of the Government of the Region 51/2010), and the Umbrian regional system for recognition of training credits, also coming from informal and non formal learning (DGR 1429/2007, "Credits Directive").

The DGR 51/2010, in particular, it establish that in Umbria region the professional, training and certification standards are formally established/updated by the Regional Government (art. 4), after consultation (art. 7.2) with the social partners, the professional associations and the VET providers: the Regional offices (art 7.1) evaluate the informal proposals coming from the key actors, then the Regional Government formally decide about them (cfr., www.regione.umbria.it/lavoro-formazione/sistema-regionale-standard-professionali-formativi-di-certificazione-riconoscimento-dei-crediti).

Accordingly to these provisions, the Italian project partners (particularly Aris Formazione e Ricerca Società Cooperativa and ASAD Cooperativa Sociale, since VET providers accredited by the Umbria Region) have started a dialogue process with the competent regional offices, also producing and addressing to the competent Education, University and Research Service of the Umbria Region an informal proposal for the official insertion of the new professional standard "*Coach nelle Iniziative Giovani*" (Coach in Youth Initiatives) within the Umbrian professional standards catalogue (*Repertorio dei Profili Professionali della Regione Umbria*). The proposal articulates and integrates, following the regional rules on professional standards, all the learning outcomes defined by the MoU. Furthermore, the same partners have proposed to the competent regional service also a coherent training standard (*Standard di Percorso Formativo*) to be inserted in the official Umbrian training standards catalogue (*Repertorio degli Standard di Percorso Formativo*). Also this proposal articulates and integrates, following the regional rules on training standards, all the training units of the curriculum "Coach in Youth Initiatives", in turn corresponding - in a ratio 1:1 - to the learning outcomes units defined by the MoU.

In parallel with these endorsement activities about the professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives" in Umbria Region, all the Italian project partners implemented in meantime the activities for involving 4 Italian people (professionals, people on labour market or training /studying for youth work) interested in the participation to the pilot joint transnational learning programme for getting the qualification "Coach in Youth Initiatives", till the signature of the Learning Agreements among them and the sending and hosting organisations, utilising at this aim the common model defined together with the transnational partners (cfr., Intellectual Output O7).

The above mentioned documents are downloadable in the public open area of the project website (<http://www.certifiedcoaches.it>)¹.

¹ Due to the rules on privacy matter, name and surname of directly involved people have been substituted within the signed Learning Agreement by a code: e.g., Italia-01. Instead, the name and surname of these persons will be specified in the confidential part of final report on the project, addressed to ANG.

The endorsement of the new European common professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives" : intermediate results in France

The endorsement of the new European common professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives" linked to the MoU and signed in each country figures a major step of the implementation of the project.

The major obstacle is the current organization of the training and certification of the French qualifications acting in the frame of the vocational education and training supervised by the French ministry of education.

Furthermore since the French law enables since 2002 the validation (recognition/certification) of the acquired experience through the VAE process (Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience), we used the opportunity to give an added value to the learning activities for a formal recognition of their skills.

The French law enables as well the recognition/certification of skills gained abroad (EU and worldwide); this is under the authority of the French ministry of education, represented at a regional level (Academie) by the Head (Recteur) of each of the 30 French Academies.

The experimentation of these principles within the learning programme defined within the project is planned to be effective starting from September 2016, but some issues related to this experimentation project are not solved yet:

- the place of the future certificate and its effective valorisation in the landscape of the regulations at the different local/national levels regards the already existing qualification and salary grids negotiated with the social partners (trade unions and professional bodies);
- the links to be organized and recognized between this new profile, training and certificate and the ECVET in the EQF.

The endorsement of the new European common professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives": intermediate results in Hungary

Normally at the end of elementary school (at age 14) students are directed to one of three types of upper secondary education: one academic track (gymnasium) and two vocational tracks. Vocational secondary schools (szakközépiskola) provide four years of general education and also prepare students for the "maturata" (school leaving certificate). These schools combine general education with some specific subjects, referred to as pre-vocational education and career orientation. At that point many students enrol in a post-secondary VET programme often at the same institution, to obtain a vocational qualification, although they may also seek entry to tertiary education.

Vocational training schools (szakiskola) initially provide two years of general education, combined with some pre-vocational education and career orientation, they then choose an occupation, and then receive two or three years of vocational education and training focusing on that occupation—such as bricklayer. Students do not obtain the "maturata" but a vocational qualification at the end of a successfully completed programme. Demand for vocational training schools, both from the labour market and among students, has declined while it has increased for upper secondary schools

In Hungary, due to centralised Hungarian national vocational education system (2013 évi LXXVII törvény a felnőttképzésről and 2011. évi CLXXXVII törvény a szakképzésről)

the endorsement of the new European common professional and training standards for "Coach in Youth Initiatives" is supported by the Hungarian project partner Tradenet Global Szakképzés-szervezési Innovációs Nonprofit Kft, Budapest at national level, in Hungary.

In Hungary the vocational education is centralised and the endorsement of a training or a new qualification is allowed by a licence of the Hungarian Government Administration (since 2016)

Accordingly to these provisions, the Hungarian project partner Tradenet Global since VET provider accredited by the Hungarian National Vocational and Adult Educational Institut have started a dialogue process with the competent offices in Budapest an informal proposal for the official insertion of the new professional standard "Coach az ifjúsági kezdeményezésekben" (Coach in Youth Initiatives) within the Hungarian professional standards catalogue OKJ (National Education List) The proposal articulates and integrates, following the national rules on professional standards, all the learning outcomes defined by the MoU. Furthermore, the same partners have proposed to the competent Chamber of Commerce - Educational Department which is competent for the licencing of trainings in Hungary.

The endorsement of the new European common professional and training standards for “Coach in Youth Initiatives” : intermediate results in Belgium

Diesis was very much involved into the project management in order to deliver the results on time but also to monitor the results and the advancement of the activities. Three employees from Diesis worked for the project: one manager was in charge of supervising, monitoring, validating the communication and the work realised. One researcher worked more especially on the research realised within the project but also to support and assist the activities and to provide feedback, advises and comments on the ongoing activities and to support the organisation of the final conference and the reporting. One technician was in charge of attending the meetings and also of the dissemination, the organisation of the final conference.

Diesis consulted several time the project leader in order to validate each communication proposed but also regarding activities and to exchange experience on the pilot phase implementation.

DIESIS is not directly involved in the joint training events and mobility activities, however it will support the definition of the design of the European common competence standard and the Memorandum of Understanding as well as their implementation in Belgium contacting local and European organisations directly working on the field of youth or coaching.

Diesis is creating a large data base composed by the Belgium and European stakeholders in the fields of youth, training and VET education. In particular, Diesis identified the Belgian Youth Council and the competence public institutions in terms of qualification recognition and competence in youth. Diesis added to this list several associations, museums, training centres and professionals, which were considered important to involve in the project. During this first period, Diesis had physical Meetings and phone calls with stakeholders at Belgium and European level in order to present the project and to collect already their interest. Diesis had to promote and to contact individually the main stakeholders in Belgium and the VET providers in order to involve them into the project and to collect their opinion. Many of the stakeholders, the federations, the institutions and the professionals themselves did not actually understood the benefit of the project and Diesis had to realise a huge work of communication and of awareness on coaching in youth activities. Diesis will still the contact point for Belgium and will participate to meetings in the next year in order to follow the development of the topic. Diesis will still disseminate the information and the news about the project in Belgium and at EU level. In addition, being in Brussels, Diesis will participate in name of the partnership to European meetings related to youth and coaching in order to follow the topic.