

6TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE IN E-GUIDANCE: *WIDENING ACCESS TO LIFELONG GUIDANCE*

ABSTRACT

Harmonize Virtual Mobility and the European Qualification Framework

SHORT AUTHOR(S) PROFILE



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ABSTRACT

Introduction

Europe has been investing in developing and implementing policies and tools to promote trans-European cooperation and mobility in many fields, including in Education. The Bologna Process is creating a European Higher Education Area where mobility, transparency and competitiveness are key concepts. The recent formal adoption of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) was an additional and important step to achieve mobility in higher and continuing education.

Joining e-learning and mobility together, we obtain a new concept Virtual Mobility, defined by elearningeuropa.info as “The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to obtain the same benefits as one would have with physical mobility but without the need to travel”.

The project of this network proposes to help educational and training institutions to achieve Virtual Mobility and to guarantee EQF implementation through e-learning, aiming at finding specific obstacles in institutions and proposing concrete and innovative solutions.

General Information of the Network

The network is entitled VIRQUAL: Network for integrating Virtual Mobility and European Qualification Framework in HE and CE Institutions. The reference designating the project in European database is 143748-PT-KA3NW. The start date is 1st January 2009 with the duration of three years. It is being financed by the LLL programme of the Socrates projects in Key Activity 3 concerning ICT/Network. The current site is virqual.up.pt.

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The list of partners are Universidade do Porto, Portugal, Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, Spain, Technische Universität Wien, Austria, Eesti Infotehnoloogia Sihtasutus, Estonia, Gábor Dénes Főiskola, Turkey, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi – Sürekli Eğitim Merkezi, Turkey, Universidade Aberta, Portugal,

Organization and themes addressed

The project is organized in twelve workpackages that cover all activities of the project. The core group is composed by four subject interest groups (SIG) that address the main objectives of the network.

SIG 1 is dedicated to Virtual Mobility, ECTS and E-learning. Some of the questions addressed in this group are:

- How Institutions are dealing with Bologna?
- Which are the main obstacles?
- How can we adapt the ECTS system to on-line courses?
- How can we quantify ECTS in e-learning courses?
- How can we develop competences and attitudes?
- What type of information systems can be defined?

In the first phase, SIG 1 will gather information about the implementation of the Bologna process and will collect information about national/international mobility programs and integration in the labour market, looking for obstacles to mobility. Finally, will obtain information on on-line and blended-learning courses, researching how ECTS have been quantified on those courses. On a second phase, SIG 1 will aim at identifying potential barriers and facilitators to virtual mobility. Also, it will try to define specific rules to apply virtual mobility.

SIG 2 is dedicated to Research and will include the following questions:

- What research what has been done in projects in the area of virtual mobility?
- Was virtual mobility addressed in the EQF?
- What was researched on the definition of ECTS in virtual mobility?
- Are there research projects done in e-learning with guidelines that may be used in general?

This SIG will compile contributions of Partners into a database of Projects, Networks and Initiatives related to Virtual Mobility and to EQF implementation, using a pre-defined structure. It will include basic data about the project, justification for selection, objectives and outcomes, strengths and weaknesses, applicability of the project to VIRQUAL

SIG 3 was denominated as E-learning and evaluation of Learning Outcomes of EQF. The questions to analyze and search for an answer are:

- How can e-learning tools contribute to the evaluation of the learning objectives?
- How can we compare learning objectives with the learning outcomes?



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- How can the learning outcomes be related with a possible insertion in the qualifications of the EQF?
- Can all learning outcomes be evaluated through e-learning?
- Which are the Learning outcomes that can be evaluated through e-learning in a systematic process?

This SIG, will compile information about how e-learning can contribute to the evaluation of Learning Outcomes. More specifically, will research on how we can relate Learning Objectives with Learning Outcomes. Also, will look on how to define Learning Outcomes in an e-learning course and how we can identify Learning Outcomes accomplished by students. Finally, will look at assessment and validation of Learning Outcomes using e-learning.

E-learning and EQF is the title of SIG 4. The questions concerning this SIG are:

- How can e-learning courses contribute to the acquisition of qualifications in different levels of the EQF?
- Can we acquire all types of qualifications through e-learning?
- Which are the qualifications acquired by e-learning and the characteristics of these qualifications?
- What are the reasons why some qualifications can not be acquired by e-learning?

This SIG will gather information about the adoption of EQF in different countries and report examples of Good practices. SIG4 will also analyse and decompose levels 5 to 8 of Learning Outcomes of EQF and propose concrete e-learning strategies that would contribute to the acquisition of EQF levels, describing experiences that lead to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFO

<http://virqual.up.pt>