



**ECVET ASSET**

**AUTOMOBILE SERVICE SECTOR ECVET TESTING**

**Final Report**

**Public Party**

## Information concerning the project

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## Summary :

The ASSET ECVET project – AUTOMOBILE SERVICE SECTOR ECVET TEST, ran over three years from January 2009 to December 2011, and took into account the technical specifications of ECVET in order to test their feasibility on qualifications within the automobile service sector. This test was done through periods of mobility. ASSET was therefore able to measure the added value that ECVET can bring to mobility and aims to be completely integrated into individual learning pathways as well as being fully recognised. This experiment concerns four countries (France – Finland – Hungary – Romania) and involves 11 partners belonging to the following three groups:

- ◆ Training centres all having a large experience in mobility
- ◆ Competent authorities each having prior experience and knowledge of ECVET through their participation in other European projects (ex. ECVET Connexion)
- ◆ Representatives of the Economic World

The originality of the ASSET project is due to the double approach which is both “TOP-DOWN” through competent institutions initiating the project but also by a “BOTTOM-UP” approach where the implementation of ECVET was done by the training centres.

The ASSET project was divided up into three parts:

- ◆ A first phase, allowing all the partners to become familiar with ECVET and the building of tools for the future tests.
- ◆ A second phase, where mobility was done between training providers involved in the project and allowing the tools created during the first half of the project to be tested.
- ◆ A final phase of where the results of the mobility tests were analysed.

The final report aims to explain the work done on the project throughout the three years of the project which allowed us to:

- ◆ identify units of learning outcomes for the job profile concerned by the ASSET project, that could be integrated into a mobility programme
- ◆ produce assessment grids and guidelines for each unit.
- ◆ create tools to facilitate mutual trust between the partners involved (partnership agreements and learning agreements).

For more information on ASSET or access to the other documents :  
[www.ecvetasset.eu](http://www.ecvetasset.eu)

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# 1. Objectives

## Context:

After several years of mobility projects within the automobile service branch, it became apparent to the actors concerned (training centres – competent institutions – professional organisations) that there was a lack of recognition for these mobility projects, often leading to frustration by those concerned. It is for this reason that ECVET was immediately perceived as leverage allowing more elaborate mobility projects to be considered with better integration into the training process and centred on objectives concerning the acquisition of competences.

In other words, ECVET is an opportunity to envisage a transition from a “**classic and loosely organised mobility period**” to a “**recognised and structurally integrated mobility period**” within a training course. This recognition is a real added value to mobility and ECVET allows learners to embark on a professional learning pathway with the same possibilities as students in higher education.

It is with this in mind that the partnership for the ASSET project was established between four countries and involving eleven partners made up of four training centres, four competent authorities and three organisations representing the professional world.

It should not be forgotten that this project is based on the results of different feasibility studies concerning the implementation of European Credits (EC) and more particularly, ECVET Connexion. These studies allowed different types of professional training systems in Europe with different levels of compatibility for the implementation of ECVET to be identified.

The choice of countries involved in this project was not limited to countries whose training centres already presented the most favourable conditions for implementing ECVET. In fact, it was quite the opposite. It was decided to take into account the diversity of existing systems in order to fully appreciate the feasibility of implementing ECVET in the most varied situations.

## Objectives:

The ASSET project's main objective was to test ECVET on a sector qualification through mobility. As a consequence, one of the objectives led to an improvement of mobility programmes done by the training centres in order to allow for recognition and integration of these mobility periods.

In order to do this the main steps of the project were the following:

- ◆ Starting from a job profile clearly identified by each one of the partners participating in the project (electro mechanic profile), identify the units which are the most suitable to the organisation of a mobility test
- ◆ Finalise the writing of these units, respecting ECVET technical specifications and create different tools to be used during the implementation of these units

(entry conditions – assessment grid – validation criteria – assessment guidelines).

- ◆ Identify where these units are placed within each of the qualifications concerned and propose a method for the allocation of credit points.
- ◆ Build the necessary tools to allow for the transfer process of the units of learning outcomes acquired in a different training context (partnership agreements and learning agreements)
- ◆ Establish conditions in order to allow the necessary mutual trust to be built between the different partners involved in the ASSET project by organising two classical bilateral periods of mobility (Finland – Hungary and France – Romania) before the ECVET mobility test.
- ◆ Create tools which will allow the learners involved in the mobility to be correctly prepared (brochure presenting the project – glossary of technical terms)
- ◆ Organise two ECVET tests allowing: the pertinence of the tools built to be validated, learning of important lessons from the mobility, identifying the difficulties encountered and finding solutions which could be implemented to overcome them.

« **ECVET- From Principles To Reality** » : this expression clearly reflects the determination of all of the partners involved in the ASSET project to test ECVET starting from a concept with a certain number of technical specifications and finishing by a period of mobility adapted to a particular context within the automobile service sector in Europe.

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## 2. Approach

ASSET was, in the beginning, designed to test the feasibility of ECVET in the automobile service sector. For that, the most pragmatic method seemed to be to try implementing ECVET during a mobility period for learners on a professional training course in one of the project's partner countries.

As a consequence, the second objective for ASSET was to confirm an idea that was shared by all of the partners involved in the project. It was believed that ECVET could be an opportunity and leverage to modify the way in which mobility was done by training providers.

As indicated in the previous chapter, the first part of the project consisted essentially of identifying and building the units of learning outcomes. This followed by a period where the units and all of the other tools and procedures that had been built were tested during periods of mobility. This mobility concerned a total of around 50 learners.

In order to characterise the approach chosen to do this, several points must be highlighted:

1. **An approach** that is both **“TOP-DOWN”** and **“BOTTOM-UP”**. Even if that may seem contradictory, the ASSET project found itself at the crossroads of two convergent approaches: a strong institutional desire to test the feasibility of ECVET on training done within the Automobile Service Sector as well as an equally strong desire by the training providers to use ECVET to improve mobility. This double impulsion is without a doubt one of the key elements to the ASSET project, highlighting the necessary relationship which must be established between training providers and competent authorities in order to ensure the success of ECVET.

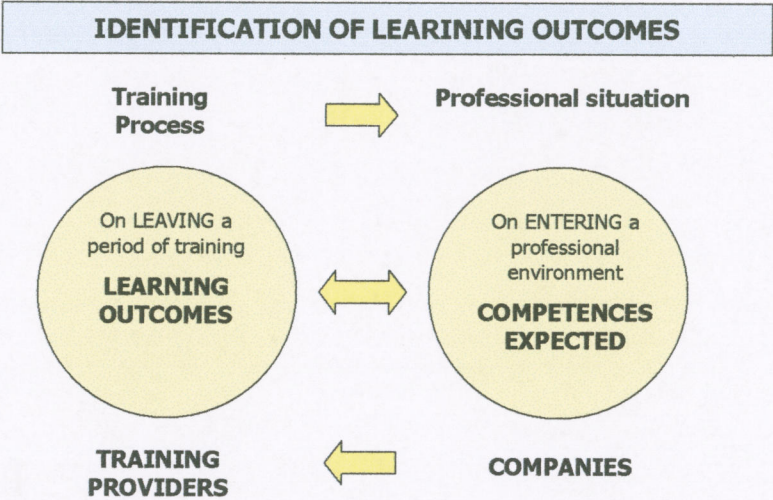
2. A **“Work”** based approach where the entry chosen for starting was based on points of convergence and on what we had in common rather than working from what we saw to be different.

It was therefore identified that the automobile service sector had characteristics that were more favourable to an ECVET test than in many other sectors :

- ◆ A limited number of automobile manufacturers with a distribution network running throughout Europe and having standard organisation procedures.
- ◆ Workshops using identical equipment.
- ◆ Vehicles which, regardless of the manufacturer, integrate identical technology and offer similar levels of equipment.
- ◆ Similar job profiles requiring similar competences.

Following these conclusions, the first step of our work together was to define precisely which job profile would be used for this test (electro – mechanic). The characteristics of the sector described previously led us to think that a job of this type using homogenous competences, would allow us to identify sufficient points of convergence to write common units.

3. An approach which involves, other than the training centres and competent institutions, partners representing the professionals. The definition of learning outcomes must take into consideration the opinions of the representatives of the companies. The following diagram shows a summary of the identification and validation processes of the units of learning outcomes implemented in the ASSET project.



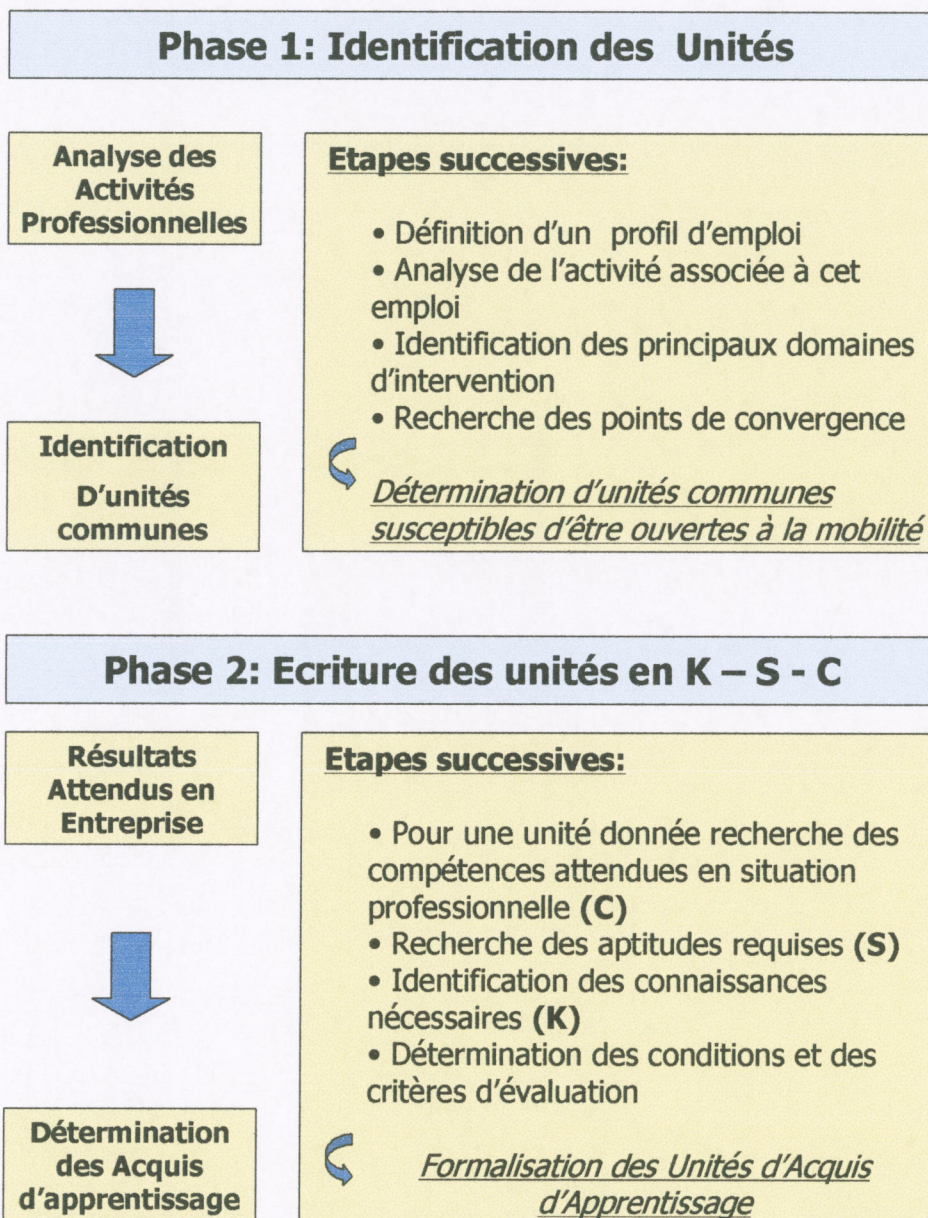


### 3. Products and Results of Project

#### RESULT n°1 : UNITS

The title of the project – Automobile Service Sector ECVET Testing – clearly shows that the aim of this project is that of an ECVET test. The priority for the first half of this project has been centred on the production of units of learning outcomes which could be used during a period of mobility of two to three weeks.

This part was broken down into two phases:



The implementation of the method described in the previous two diagrams allowed us to build four units respecting three criteria :

- ♦ **Convergence** : points of convergence between the different partners concerned for the choice of units

- ◆ **Size** : the size of the units must be compatible with the duration of mobility (two to three weeks)
- ◆ **Position in programme** : the choice of the units should not be a difficulty for the training centres and should take into account the planned period for the mobility test (first trimester 2011)

The units produced, as well as the tools to go with them,

- ◆ Definition of the entry requirements
- ◆ Conditions for implementation
- ◆ Grid and assessment criteria
- ◆ Assessment guidelines

may be downloaded on the ASSET project website : [www.assetecvet.eu](http://www.assetecvet.eu)

## **RESULT n°2 : CREDIT POINTS**

The second objective for the first half of the project was to determine the number of credit points to be allocated to each of the units by each partner. It was decided that each competent institution should determine their own criteria for allocating credit points. Therefore there was no debate as to the question of credit points. We simply decided that there should be transparency and clarity for the different actors concerned, most importantly the learners concerned by the ECVET test. It is essential that they understand that for a same unit there could be a different number of credit points allocated depending on the country.

It is for this reason that a grid was produced by each country in order to identify the position of each unit within the different national training programmes concerned by the project.

The French partners produced the following table giving a general idea of the position of each unit within the training course concerned and at the bottom of the document, the number of credit points allocated to each of the four units can be found.

**PROPOSITION OF CREDIT POINTS FOR CQP TEEA**

ACTIVITY	TRAINING MODULES	COMPETENCES	VOLUME IN HOURS	Unit1	Unit2	Unit3	Unit4
combustion engines and auxiliary equipment	Petrol Engine Management Level 1	Perform a check-up and maintenance of all ignition and fuel supply by direct and indirect injection	94 H		25 H		7 H
	Petrol Engine Management Level 2	Perform a diagnosis and maintenance of all ignition and fuel supply by direct and indirect injection	83 H		20 H		7 H
	Diesel Engine Management Level 1	Perform a diagnosis and maintenance of mechanical diesel injection systems. Repair the different diesel pollution control systems.	111 H				17 H
	Diesel Engine Management Level 2	Perform a diagnosis and maintenance of electronic diesel injection systems.	52 H				
mechanical assemblies	Diagnosis and intervention on mechanical systems	Perform a diagnosis of the cooling and lubrication circuits. Perform the maintenance on a distribution system. Repairs on the upper part of the engine. Check the internal sealing of the engine. Check and repair a mechanical transmission system. Check and	90 H				
	Diagnosis and intervention on drive trains	Perform a diagnosis and the maintenance of the drive trains	34 H			34 H	
driving, comfort and security	Air Conditioning	Perform a diagnosis and repair the refrigeration system and regulated air conditioning.	27 H				
	Automatic Transmission	Perform a diagnosis and the maintenance of the automatic transmission systems.	47 H				
	Suspension and power-assisted steering	Perform a diagnosis and maintenance of the suspension and power-assisted steering.	39 H				
	Vehicle Stability Management Systems	Perform a diagnosis and the maintenance of the vehicle stability management systems.	42 H	42 H			
Fitting accessories	Fitting of accessories level 2	Fit an accessory on a non pre-equipped vehicle.	10 H				
Management Organisation	Management and organisation of the activity level 1	Organise a work station depending on the job to be done.	42 H				
	Customer service level 1	Give advice on the usage or maintenance	35 H				
	Professional environment	Understand their activity in the company and its professional environment.	21 H				
	Professional Folder	Treat information. Structure a professional folder in relation with the activity in hand.	49 H				
			<b>776</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>CREDIT POINTS</b>			Long Version (2 years - 961 hours) →	<b>120</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
			Short Version (1 year - 597 hours) →	<b>60</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

### **RESULT n°3 : PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS AND LEARNING AGREEMENTS**

One of the important points in the ECVET Recommendation concerns the proof of the commitment to ECVET by the partners involved in the project through partnership agreements between competent institutions and learning agreements between training providers.

During the preparation phase for the ECVET test, the partners on the project had to fulfil this condition. With little difficulty, they succeeded in creating two documents which were completed and validated at different times throughout the mobility phase of the ECVET test.

As these documents were being written, the objective was to describe in sufficient detail the role and responsibilities of each of the different actors involved whilst at the same time ensuring that they did not become too heavy and hinder the implementation of ECVET at a practical level.

The models for both the partnership agreement and learning agreement can be downloaded on the ASSET project website.

### **RESULT n°4 : ECVET TEST**

First of all, it should not be forgotten that the funding of these mobility tests was not part of the eligible expenditure for the pilot projects. However, from the beginning, all of the partners involved in the ASSET project were clearly committed to finding the funding necessary in order to test ECVET through periods of mobility.

This commitment was respected, the tests were done and around 50 learners from the four countries involved in the project were concerned.

A total of 8 two-week mobility periods allowed all of the tools built during the preparation phase to be used in a real situation.

These tests were organised in two parts:

1. **ECVET Pre test in 2010** aimed to:
  - allow a better knowledge of each of the partners in order to establish the necessary mutual trust to implement an ECVET test.
  - test the units and tools produced (grids and assessment criteria – assessment guidelines) within a real situation and checking the work done in order to make any necessary adjustments.
  - identify the conditions necessary for learners to be correctly prepared for these periods of mobility.
  
2. **ECVET Tests in 2011**, aimed to:
  - implement all of the methods for assessment, validation and recognition of units of learning outcomes.
  - validate the pertinence of the choices made and the tools built but also to identify the limits and eventual difficulties which be an obstacle when trying to implement ECVET.

## **RESULT n°5 : PRESENTATION DOCUMENTS AND THE ASSET PROJECT NEWSLETTER**

Since the beginning of this project, all the partners have also been actively involved in the creation of communication and dissemination tools for ASSET.

Due to this collective effort, several documents have been produced:



- ◆ A logo and a slogan :
- ◆ A brochure produced in the four different languages of the partnership in which there is a brief presentation of the partners involved in the ASSET project as well as the project's objectives.
- ◆ A brochure, also in the languages of the partnership, for the learners who may participate in the mobility and presenting in a way adapted to the learners :
  - The principles of ECVET
  - The ASSET project
  - The host establishment
- ◆ Five NEWSLETTERS distributed, either in paper format or electronically

All of these communication documents (presentation brochure, Newsletter) can be downloaded from the ASSET website.

## **RESULT n°6 : CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES**

At the end of this 3-year project several lessons can be learnt. The first positive point is to be able to say that the implementation of ECVET is possible. The mobility tests which were done, on quite a significant scale, were able to show this despite the relatively unfavourable context as the countries concerned had quite different training systems and in some cases were initially thought to be incompatible or not adapted to the implementation of ECVET.

However behind this positive observation there needs to be a more detailed analysis of the results looking at both the actors involved and the objectives targeted.

- **Training providers** and the objective of **integration** of mobility in a training course: learning outcomes organised in units according to ECVET specifications and the building of a mobility period based on the concept of units of learning outcomes involving methods which in the end were very similar despite the differences of the training systems. Furthermore, the method of integration aiming to give coherence to learning acquired in different environments is the same whether it involves taking into account learning acquired during work placements or that acquired during periods in a different country. The work and tests done show that it is realistic to think that the objective of integration, based on units of learning outcomes, can be done on a relatively short time scale by motivated training providers wishing to implement ECVET.
- **Competent Institutions** and the objective of **recognition**: this objective may encounter difficulties due to the conditions required for certain qualifications which are sometimes incompatible with the implementation of ECVET. While it is undoubtedly necessary for competent institutions to confirm their commitment to ECVET, it is not enough. It may be necessary, in order for ECVET to be feasible, to modify qualifications and particularly the procedures for qualifications. These adjustments require more time than the ASSET project itself which therefore has not allowed for the recognition procedure to be fully completed.

Two comments to conclude:

- It is essential to allow for a specific preparation for the learners involved in the implementation of ECVET. In the case of transnational mobility, it seemed important to inform them of what ECVET is and also to provide an appropriate linguistic preparation. In effect, considering the stakes involved in the procedures for assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes, it is necessary to minimise the difficulties that they will have in their home country due to difficulties in understanding in their host country.

- ECVET depends on the mutual trust between the different actors concerned: competent institutions on one hand and training providers on the other. The level of confidence is certainly a determining factor but mutual trust at a national level, between training providers and their awarding bodies should not be neglected. One of the effects of ECVET implementation has been to modify the “Awarder-Provider” relationship which should provide training providers with a greater autonomy concerning procedures for qualifications.

## 4. Partnerships

The partnership which involves organisations from four different countries (France – Finland – Romania – Hungary) is without a doubt one of the strengths of the ASSET project and a guarantee allowing the objectives of the project to be reached. This partnership was built with two main objectives in mind:

- ◆ First of all, involving all of the actors concerned in implementing ECVET. For this reason this project includes operational partners (training centres), institutional partners (awarding bodies) but also partners from the economic world (representatives of professional organisations).
- ◆ Secondly, to reunite organisations already heavily involved in transnational cooperation projects:
  - Training centres with a large experience in the implementation of mobility projects and thus naturally finding their place within a project whose objective is to test ECVET through mobility.
  - Institutional partners having already acquired a certain expertise related to ECVET thus bringing to the partnership technical clarification and guidance as to the choice of methods and organisation to be implemented by the training centres.

In total, the ASSET project involves the participation of 11 partners:

### Training Providers:

- ◆ EFMA (Espace Formation de Métiers et de l'Artisanat)- FRANCE
- ◆ VANYAI AMBRUS GYMNAZIUM – HUNGARY
- ◆ GEORGE BIBESCU SCHOOL – ROMANIA
- ◆ OMNIA (Training Centre) – FINLAND

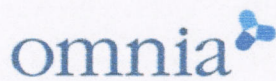
### Competent Institutions :

- ◆ NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION - HUNGARY
- ◆ OMNIA (Competent Institution) – FINLAND
- ◆ NCTVETD – ROMANIA
- ◆ ANFA - FRANCE



## Representatives of the Economic World:

- ◆ CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF SZOLNOK – HUNGARY
  - ◆ AUTOALAN KESKUSLIITTO (AKL) – FINLAND
  - ◆ GNFA – ROMANIA
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## 5. Future Projects

The ASSET project aims to test (in a real situation) the ECVET system by applying it to a sectorial qualification. With regards to the competent authorities concerned (branch, central administration or training centre) the perspectives are different. For the training centres, the ASSET project has allowed them to experience a concrete example of ECVET implementation through periods of mobility.

The stakes identified concern several dimensions; qualification, permeability between systems and qualifications, the relationship between work and training (perspectives, promotion of mobility).

Furthermore, the recommendation may be revised in 2014, the implication of the branch at a European level being also one of the stakes identified.

ECVET gives official recognition to learning acquired thus reducing frustration (non-recognition of learning acquired abroad). In the sector concerned, employment is similar throughout Europe so ECVET would provide clearer understanding of qualifications obtained in other countries which would then facilitate mobility of workers as well as the recognition of competences by companies.

Future projects concern the following dimensions:

- consolidation of a European sectorial network,
- for the representatives of the automobile service sector at a European level, participation in discussions concerning the perspective of the revision of the recommendation in 2014,
- integration of the ECVET dimension in future mobility projects,
- for certain partners, writing of a report for the stakeholders (ex: in France the social partners of the Branch).

Finally, at least three of the actors involved in the project could become "national ECVET experts". This sectorial dimension is to be an integral part of future projects.

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## 6. Contribution from Political Parties

**Contribution to the creation of a European zone for Life Long Learning:** the ASSET project has tested the ECVET system, or as the ECVET Recommendation stipulates (6/6/2009): "ECVET is applicable for all learning outcomes which should in principle be achievable through a variety of education and learning paths at all levels of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning ('EQF')"

The tools developed (Partnership agreements, Learning Agreements, Personal Transcripts) and real tests all contribute to this zone.

Furthermore, the ECVET system has been promoted to numerous stakeholders and at the same time, the creation of a European zone for Life Long Learning has also been promoted.

The partnership agreements signed between the different competent institutions shows the real possibility of recognising learning outcomes obtained in a different context.

**Contribution to the objectives of "key competences in Lisbon"** (recommendation 2006/962/CE). The ASSET project has contributed to the promotion of the key competence "communication in a foreign language". In effect, the learners involved in the mobility projects were prepared so as they could communicate not only in English but also in the language of the host country (Hungarian, Romanian, French and English as the working language for Finland).

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