IT:BSE
Building Service Engineering

Intermediate evaluation report
prepared by ECAP Research & Development

(Final version, after the presentation in Sofia – IV Transnational Meeting)

1. Introduction

This report is based on the results of the monitoring and evaluation activities, realized by ECAP R&D on behalf of the project coordinator, according to the comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan approved by the partnership during the Kick Off Meeting. The Report refers to monitoring data, provided by the coordinator, and to main deliverables realized by the project (focusing on the Competence Matrix elaborated by the partners during the first phase of the project); in addition project progresses, and issues related to project management and quality of the partnership, have been evaluated through 3 on-line evaluation surveys, realized immediately after transnational meetings, aiming at:

- collecting reactions and remarks of participants, related to the quality and achievements of the meeting (first part of the survey, 10 initial questions, and SWOT remarks)
- identifying more general issues and challenges with which the Consortium is expected to deal during the lifespan of the project.

All the partner countries are represented in the surveys (representatives from Germany, Spain, Bulgaria, France and Finland).

Furthermore, some inputs for project progresses and for the VQTS Matrix are added to this Intermediate report coming from work sessions of the fourth partners meeting, held in Sofia (BG), on 7 and 8 October 2013, where have been discussed and suggested some possible improvements in the Matrix, in the internships planned and in the way to approach the competence areas.

Aims and expected outcomes of the evaluation were clearly defined by the application, as well as methods and tools to be used for collecting and elaborating feed-backs and information given by the partners. *A formative evaluation report will be delivered at each sub-group meeting with a concise written report at six monthly intervals. The formative evaluation will include three distinct areas:*

1) an initial context evaluation to confirm the original specification in terms of needs and direction,

2) a process evaluation throughout the running of the WPs, involving internal reports,

3) a final evaluation of the process input and outcomes in terms of meeting the original aims and assumptions of the project.

Therefore the following report presents briefly and in an anonymous way the overall results of the surveys, providing the project leader, and the whole partnership, with some hints and suggestions finalized at improving project management and detailed planning of activities during the following phase of the project.

The following issues are focused by the Report:

- level of commitment of each partner, cooperation and participation (during the meetings and in the development of work packages)

- general coherence and pertinence of project progresses and outcomes[1] with respect to the objectives defined in the application (respect of deliverables, respect of the work-plan and timetable, perceived quality by the partners and stakeholders of the sector…)

- emerging challenges related to the nature of project aims and results, particularly considering the priorities of the Call and the EU mainstream policies and tools for transparency, transferability and accreditation of competences and learning outcomes.

During the second year a more detailed evaluation will be made considering usefulness and sustainability of final results of the project, valuing the results of the testing phase, considering opinions of the partners, as well as reactions by external stakeholders and relevant actors.

2. Partnership and management evaluation: indicators concerning the Meetings

The first section of the surveys, organized after each meeting, was devoted to monitor and evaluate the level of satisfaction of the partners, considering a number of indicators concerning quality, effectiveness and participatory character of project management and production processes.

Fig.1 – Satisfaction degree of the partners (post-meeting surveys):
average scores for the 10 initial questions (min.1 – max. 4)
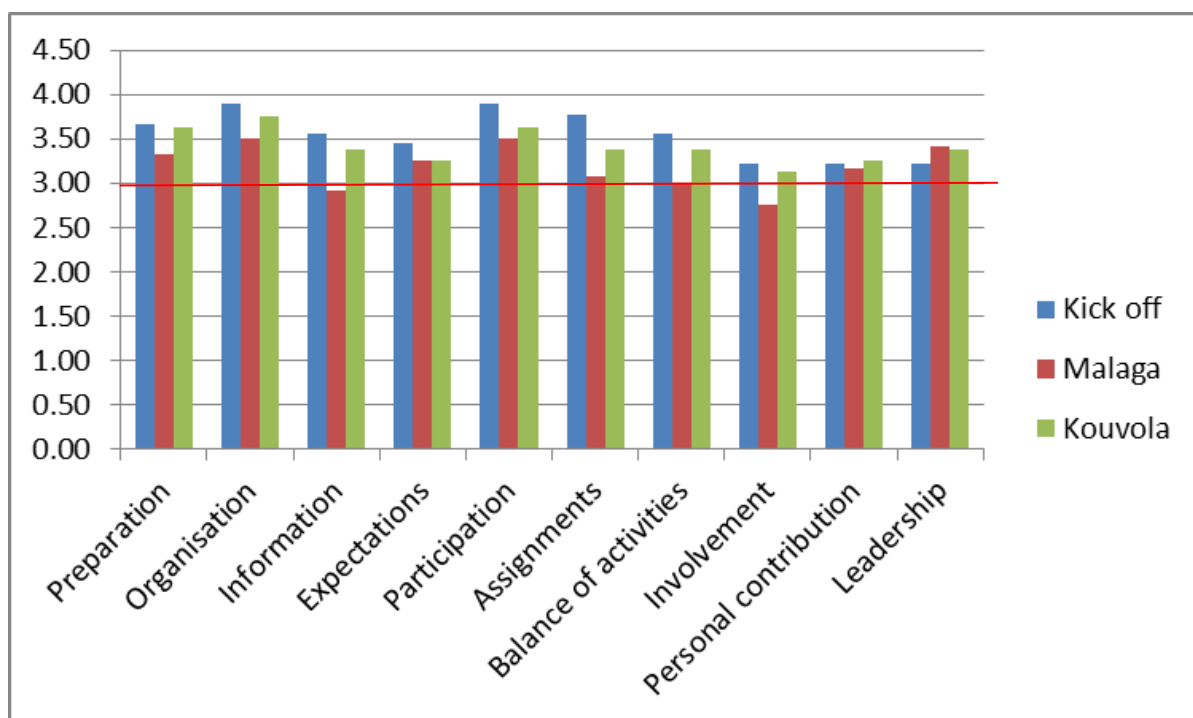
The graph (fig. 1) clearly highlights that - a part for 2 exceptions in Malaga (II Meeting) - practically no items scored - as an average level - less than a satisfactory result ("quite good", corresponding to level 3). **Participation** (cooperative attitudes) of the partners, as well as **preparation and organisation** of the meetings, have been particularly appreciated. Results confirm the sensitivity of the project leader in taking in account preoccupations and

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[1] For an overall definition of project expected outcomes, planning and specifications see Official submission form; as far as the main deliverable is concerned – the VQTS Matrix for the sector – the external evaluator will consider evaluative remarks and conclusions of prof. M. Becker, who will accomplish the specific task of assessing quality and value of the Matrix

expectations of the partners. In general the reputation of project coordinator, and of his technical staff, in terms of **leadership** grew up along the 3 meetings.

Nevertheless, some items scored, after an initial strong appreciation, less brilliant results: that's the case of _clearness of assignments and tasks_ to be accomplished by the partners during the project lifespan. Particularly the second Meeting (as often occurs in such projects) proved to be a tense and crucial one, with more than 20 answers to single items scoring less than a sufficient level of satisfaction: as usual, beginning to work, misunderstandings come to the fore, providing evidence (in our case) of a certain _lack of information_ and of the _poor involvement_ of some partners. The results of the third Meeting – however – demonstrate that the coordinator has been able to take in account these risks, coping in a positive way with complaints and disease of some partners. An important role has been played by the very effective organization of the III Transnational Meeting held in Finland, with a good mixture of socialization moments and group works, facilitating a cooperative involvement of each partner. In Kouvola only 1 answer scored a non-satisfactory level, providing evidence of how problems should now be overcome, thanks to a very successful management of this event, bringing back satisfaction degree practically at the same level of the very promising origin.

Open answers given by participants about strengths and weaknesses of the Meetings confirm the good satisfaction emerging by quantitative indicators. **Strong points** are to be found considering:

→ **the good preparatory work and the effective management of the meetings**
→ the very positive climate of work, **a good and articulated partnership, ready to work together** (different points of view taken in account, commitment…)
→ the recovery, after some misunderstandings, of a comprehensive and shared vision of aims and work processes, with the **evidence of clear tasks to be developed during the second year of the project**
→ the capacity of the partnership of developing **very complex deliverables:** realizing an original research on professional needs, related to "green building", emerging at the workplace, gaining the participation of the companies, and afterwards setting up a common matrix, despite the limited time devoted to the finalization of these tasks.

Considering at the opposite **risks and warnings,** we should mention some remarks emerging since the beginning: time limits concerning project lifespan and particularly the duration of the meetings, unbalanced experience and commitment of the partners, difficulties which could emerge in perspective to organizing mobilities, the laboratory for testing methods and tools developed by the project.

3. Project progresses

Project progresses can be considered absolutely in line with expectations. Despite the need of replacing one partner, from Belgium, who quit the project since the very beginning, the coordinator has been able to lead the project safeguarding the time line and the work plan. The incoming partner, from France, proved to be immediately operative, and very collaborative. Therefore the core deliverables of the first year of the project – linking the preliminary research phase to the design of a comprehensive competence matrix of work processes related to Building Service Engineering – has been realized according to the initial work plan. The research has been based on the collection – through a structured questionnaire - of updated and articulated data about how and to which extent companies demand new professional competences related to sustainability and savings in construction and energy management of the buildings. The study – based on a funded vision of how sustainability should be pursued considering in a global perspective the life cycle of the building – provided information and hints valued step by step in order to design the professional Matrix, covering interlinked work-processes normally involving in construction different professional profiles (see fig. 2).

Fig.2 – Work processes in Building Service Engineering
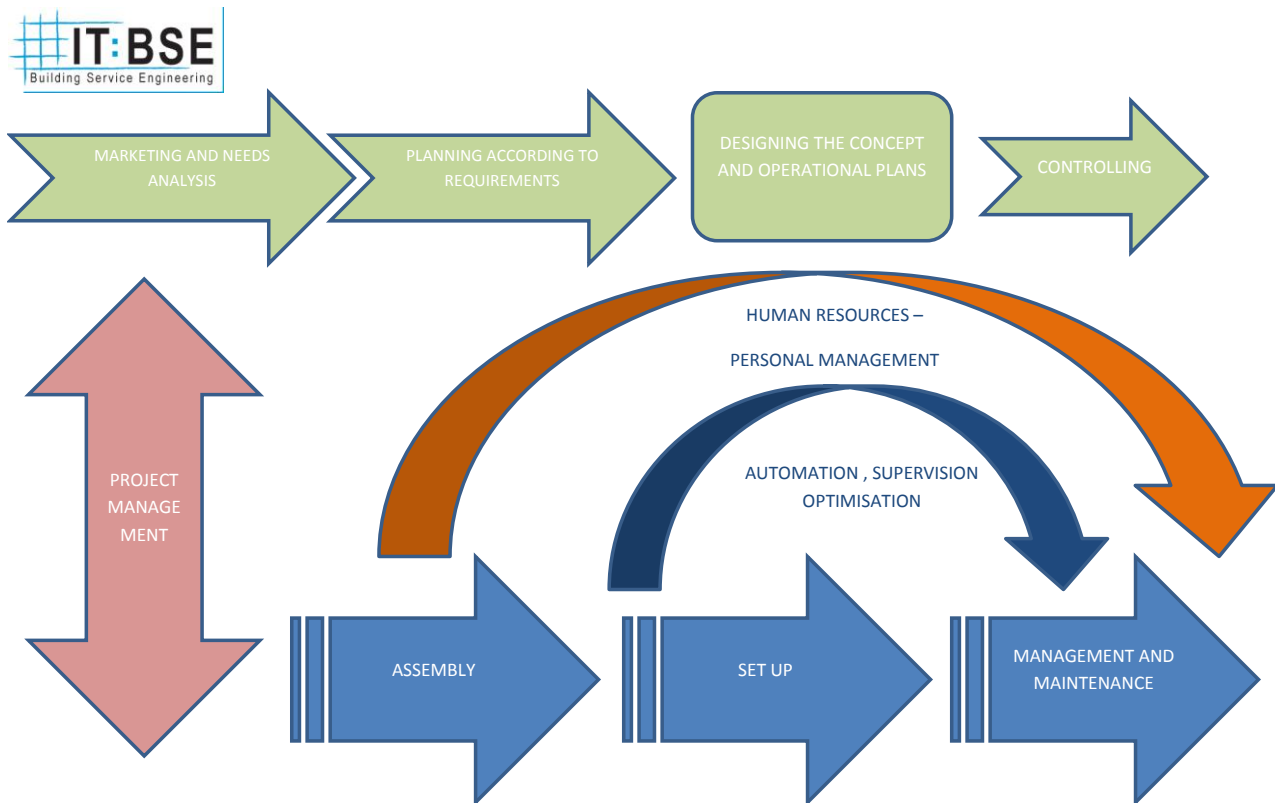
The scheme shows the complexity of Building Service Engineering, involving at least 5 work processes, normally managed by specific profiles:
- the strategic and operational planning of service installations (energy and water supply, heating and conditioning, etc.)
- the project management functions (linking planning to execution / management of installations)
- the realization, set up and maintenance of technical services
- 2 fundamental complementary processes, related to the strategic management of ICT driven plants and to human resources management

The Matrix tries to overcome the risks of a fragmented vision of Building Service Engineering, fostering the development of an integrated approach, coherent with the concept of "life cycle" of the building, to competence building pathways and organizational settings of the sector. It provides training actors with hints and basic information for elaborating training modules and flexible learning pathways, both considering initial and further training. At the same time the Matrix aims at providing a good framework for ensuring transparency and transferability of qualifications related to Building Service Engineering at the European Level, correlating the analysis of work processes, to coherent learning outcomes, valuable according to ECVET philosophy and tools.

Therefore, during the second year of the project the Matrix is expected to be piloted and tested in the specific framework of mobility projects organized by the partner institutions, representing a potential ideal testing laboratory for evaluating the effectiveness of the Matrix with respect to the 2 main goals remembered above.

This represents of course the open challenge faced now by the project, as far as mobilities are not at all easy to be planned, organized and actually developed in a so complex framework.

As it appears in the "draft" version validated by the partners, to be piloted and finally adjusted and improved, the Matrix is however a powerful tool, coherent with expected results, as by the following synthetic evaluation.

| ISSUES (VQTS Model)	GENERAL REMARK / APPRECIATION	COHERENCE WITH THE VQTS MODEL	WARNINGS
Competence areas	10 domains have been identified; according to the overview they define 4 distinct macro-areas, in a professional field (1. strategic conceptualization and planning, 2. set up, assembly and maintenance, 3. project management, 4. HR management). Descriptors are holistic and well defined, quite well contextualized	Good coherence with respect to holistic approach, way of describing and max. number of units / areas The competence areas are organised more considering the technical issues, however allowing some competences transfer among the macro-areas.	The 4th dimensions (macro- areas) define a complex professional field. We could consider strategic planning tasks, project management and operational tasks 3 distinct domains. Responsibilities in HR management could be instead considered also a step of development of competences in any specific field
Steps of development	The Matrix identifies a range between 3 to 5 steps for each area of competence; it fits holistic descriptions, and clearly establish a taxonomy based on clear cuts, dealing with criteria defined by the VQTS Model	Good coherence with respect to holistic approach, way of identifying and describing steps and number of steps per area Dimensions of the Matrix fit also well the suggestions of the original Model (2 pages) Granularity of descriptors seems also to fit these indications	Maybe we could consider in a better way the influence of key and soft skills in defining each step of development (from elementary work situations and tasks to the management of complex situations and variables, implying a certain degree of autonomy, initiative, analytical thinking and creativity). To be defined: to which extent taking care of groups and supervise / lead collaborators could be defined as a step of development (related to responsibility and planning?) The use of examples could be improved, in order to better contextualize work tasks and steps of development

Coverage and positioning of the Matrix (EQF levels)	Normally a Matrix could or should cover a range of qualifications in a professional domain; the IT-BSE Matrix seems to cover a very large range of qualifications, from levels 3 or 4 to HE levels (6 to 7) of a EQF hierarchy.	Generally speaking this approach is coherent; it should be tested in a reasonable way, trying to define professional profiles based on the different dimensions of the Matrix (sometimes it seems to be difficult to imagine that such a wide and articulated Matrix could define a continuum of units of LO, which could be combined originating different profiles) The Matrix is coherent from the point of view of the approach to levels: it's not based on Knowledge, Skills and competences, but on holistic descriptors.	To which extent a so large variety of units can be integrated in one Matrix (see above)? Does it possible to embed in the same Matrix competences belonging to IVET qualifications and to HE levels? To be further discussed… During the piloting: take care of analyzing to which extent the Matrix is a realistic representation of organizational contexts, and at the same time to which extent it helps bridge educational and workplace logics, creating in addition interlinks between VET and HE profiles. In addition the relationship between descriptors and key indicators of responsibility, autonomy and complexity of the tasks should be probably improved.
Added value and use of the Matrix	According to the VQTS Model, the use of the Matrix should be valuable for enhancing mobility, transparency and permeability of LO (non-formal, informal and formal), identification of professional, organizational and individual profiles based on a combination of competences and steps of development. The existing IT-BSE Matrix seems to be a good step towards this perspective, with some critical points.	The Matrix aims at being useful in all the perspectives defined by the VQTS Model, since the scope of the project relates both to build up transparent profiles and learning paths in different countries and to enhance mobility as a mean to learn. Some doubts emerge considering the extension and critical articulation of the professional field taken in account.	The usability of the Matrix depends on a sufficient coherence between work processes included in the analysis and basic profiles / requirements of the operators. Steps of development provide an interesting frame for improving design, planning and assessment of LO deriving from mobilities: as far as they are defined in a holistic and comprehensive way – however – they hardly fit to the reality of short term mobilities (the great majority).

4. IT:BSE and the EU mainstream tools

More general remarks concern the extent to which IT:BSE Project addresses in a coherent way the priority of the LLP Call to which it refers (2012). The project is expected to focus on the ***EQF and ECVET tools as means to fostering transparency and transferability of qualifications*** acquired in a European context to another one. On the other hand, as a Transfer of Innovation project, IT:BSE is based on a ***previous innovation (the VQTS Model) to be valued and transferred*** to reach the above mentioned aim. In addition, the partners joined the Consortium on the basis of their ***specific expectations***, for sure correlated to the possibility of ***strengthening an existing and well-tuned cooperative network*** between them, already active ***in the field of exchange and mobility***. The success of a project like this largely depends on the balance that will be reached, since the beginning, between these different goals. Therefore we devoted a part of our on-line surveys – and observations made during the Meetings - to understand how and to which extent the balance between different expectations embedded in project aims could be ensured: should IT:BSE deliverables be strictly related to the adoption of a common glossary and a philosophy coherent with EQF and ECVET descriptors (learning outcomes, units, credits allocated to units…)? Could the VQTS Model be considered as a transferable and valuable solution? Furthermore, are the expectations of the partners respected by the project outline, and are they in line with the priorities selected by the project?

Project progresses so far show that basically the partners share common points of view about potentialities and limits of EU mainstream tools. As far as they interested to develop common qualification pathways, aiming at enhancing mobility between countries and organizations as a mean to learn, they are mainly ***looking for tools facilitating the recognition and transfer of learning outcomes***. ECVET should represent the right solution for improving the effectiveness of training pathways based on mobility, but responses collected during the ex-ante evaluation underscore that only 50% of respondents (fig. 3) totally agree on that. Half of them still have clear doubts: 37.5% don't consider ECVET a mandatory fundamental solution, and one respondent doesn't establish at all a link between the recognition and accreditation of learning outcomes and ECVET.

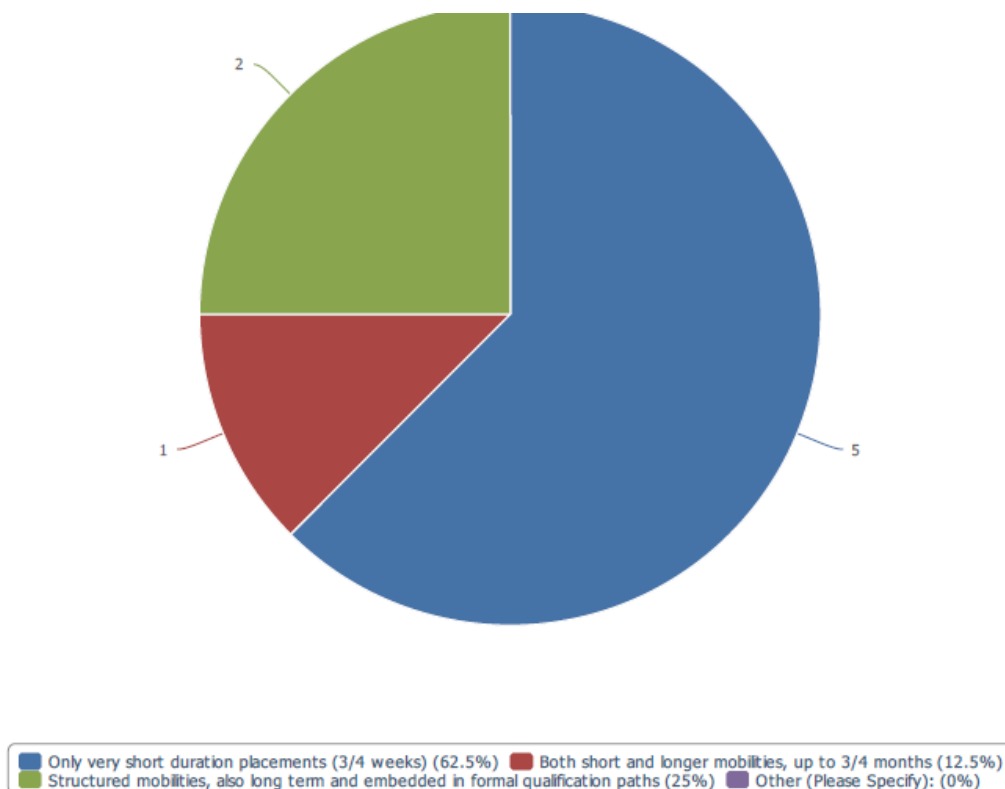Fig. 3 – ECVET as a means for facilitating transfer and recognition of learning outcomes of mobilities
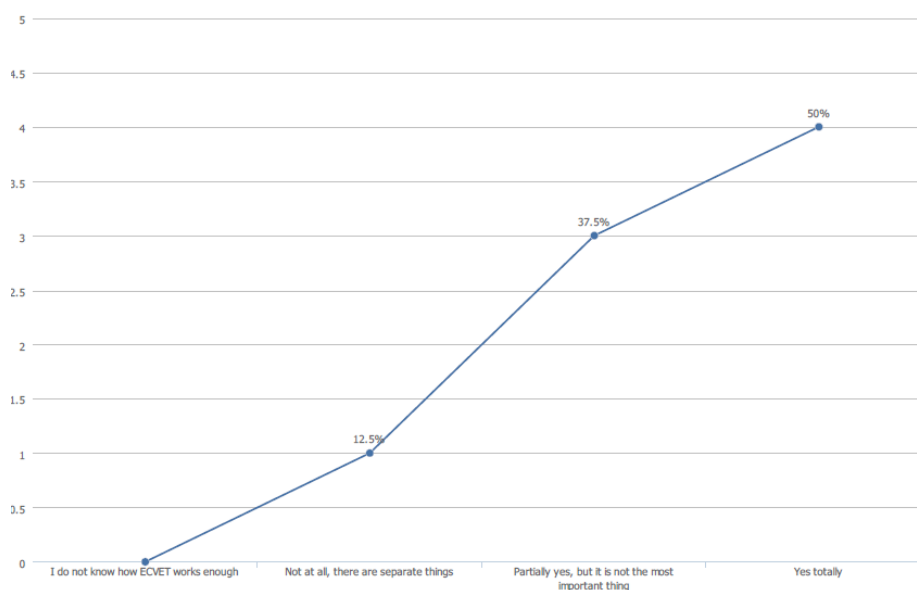
Importance assigned to mobility as a mean to learn is growing, but features and solutions provided by ECVET for valuing learning outcomes are not always convincing. More in general consensus on Credit Systems seems to be very differentiated between partners and countries (fig. 4)

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Fig. 4 – Consensus about the possibility of accreditation of learning outcomes of mobilities through a Credit System
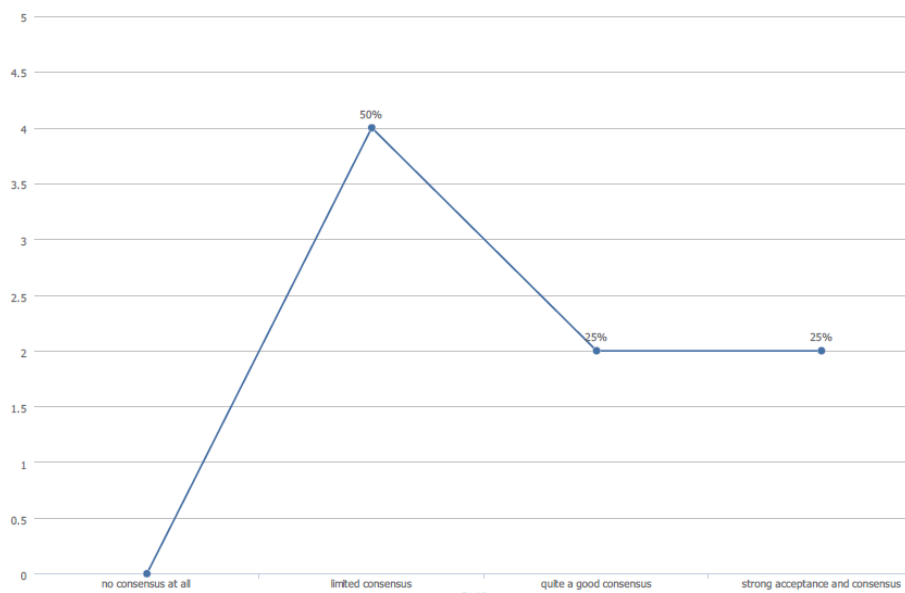
The great majority admits that a certain consensus exists in each country, but 50% of respondents judge it still limited, and only a quarter speaks of a strong acceptance. Systems based on accreditation of learning outcomes acquired during mobility projects seem to be more accepted by training centers and sometimes by companies, than by other relevant stakeholders, such as in Germany the Chambers of Commerce, in charge of delivering qualifications.

Fig. 5 – Which kind of mobilities are sustainable and realistic to be organized?

Only very short duration placements (3/4 weeks) (62.5%)   Both short and longer mobilities, up to 3/4 months (12.5%)
Structured mobilities, also long term and embedded in formal qualification paths (25%)   Other (Please Specify): (0%)

Opinions are rather divergent also considering the possibility of exploiting and valuing the results of a Mobility project. Respondents think that the value of these learning outcomes have to be spent both considering the job market and the VET system. For half of them, however, achievements of mobilities should be considered more important for improving "employability" of mobile learners, than for letting them gain a qualification. At the opposite another half consider mobility more a good mean for reaching a recognized / official qualification than for improving individual chances of occupation. Although in general the feeling about mobility as a mean for learning is rather positive (not only something "nice to have", but a powerful learning driver), the issue of valuing mobility seems to be a bit controversial and open, probably as a consequence of difficulties still encountered in order to develop mobility beyond the limits of short term work experiences. Still the great majority of the partners (fig. 5) hardly imagine the possibility of organizing structured mobilities, as a key component of a qualification pathway. In any case all respondents think that learning outcomes achieved through mobility, both formal and informal ones, should be valued and for this purpose should be assessed in an affordable and reliable way.

Valuation and when possible accreditation of learning outcomes of a Mobility project should be realized assuring a summative assessment by a third party, in order to let certification gain an adequate value; this evaluation should be prepared and integrated by a self-evaluation, developed for formative purposes by the learners, accompanied by the trainers. 8 on 9 respondents share this opinion.

5. The VQTS Matrix as a Model, and the expectations of the partners

IT:BSE Project is based on a previous innovation, and particularly aims at exploiting the VQTS Model for reaching its purposes. We asked participants to evaluate in general the usability and the added value provided by the VQTS Matrix, for reaching the general goals of the project and more specifically to ensure results coherent with the operative objectives corresponding to interests and expectations of the members of the Consortium.

Fig. 6 – Added value provided by the VQTS Model in order to reach project goals

	I don't know the Model enough	Poor	Limited	Quite good	Very good, with a full added value	Average Score
Value of the Matrix for defining a learning outcomes oriented profile	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	**6 (75.00%)**	2 (25.00%)	4.25 / 5 (85.00%)
Definition of units of learning corresponding to steps of development of single competences	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	**6 (75.00%)**	2 (25.00%)	4.25 / 5 (85.00%)
Usefulness in order to compare VET paths	1 (12.50%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (12.50%)	**6 (75.00%)**	0 (0.00%)	3.50 / 5 (70.00%)
Usefulness in order to plan effective mobilities	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	2 (25.00%)	2 (25.00%)	**4 (50.00%)**	4.25 / 5 (85.00%)
Usefulness in order to assess learning outcomes	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	**5 (62.50%)**	3 (37.50%)	4.38 / 5 (87.60%)

As far as the value of the VQTS Model is concerned items and results are summarized by fig. 6. Results are quite satisfactory, and have been confirmed by the effective use of the Model made during the elaboration of the BSE Matrix. Partners declared since the beginning a good knowledge and understanding of the Model (some partners were already familiar with the same approach). Results are satisfactory also considering the expectations of the partners towards the most important features of the Model; in general these expectations are positive, even if some question marks arise, and they will deserve a careful monitoring during the next steps of the project. Partners mainly focuses on the Model as a mean for:

- defining profiles in a more flexible and articulated way, suitable for organizing mobilities, using learning outcomes descriptors, designing steps of "incremental development" of competences, usable for better planning mobilities (but 2 of respondents don't really trust that VQTS could provide a real added value at this scope)
- preparing a good assessment of learning outcomes.

Regarding evaluation and assessment, seems that the project IT:BSE have established an effective set of tool to measure the progress in learning and in the areas of competence through in particular: a) Learning agreement; b) Evaluation of the internship by the company; c) the frames documents for the professional profiles.

These tools, if well followed by internships' responsibles, can cover continuous evaluation (of programme provision by objectives including learner data) and assessment as achievement of LO at individual levels. It implies, further to the tools, designing evaluation mechanisms according to the context, defining the frequency and scope of evaluations, and providing evidence of the findings of the evaluation to those concerned, including strengths, areas for improvement and recommendations for action. In general, the assessment and evaluation phase consists of two parts, i.e. the collection and processing of data and the discussions on the results which have been achieved. An important challenge regards the collection of useless data. The effectiveness of assessment depends to a large extent on a clear definition of the methodology and frequency of data collection, and on the coherency between data collection and the pre-defined indicators on the one hand and the goals and objectives to be achieved on the other hand. The relevant persons involved, trainees first, and then staff members, employers and trade union representatives should be involved in the discussions arising from evaluation results.

Regarding the methodology, this is an important transversal dimension which is present throughout all the elements of the model. It includes decisions about participation mechanisms, measurement and indicators; design of assessment and evaluation tools; procedures for planning, implementation and feedback; ways of combining all elements in order to create a unified system, with a particular emphasis to self-assessment for the assessment and review of systems, combined with external monitoring.

The partners are less interested, and trustful, when another "pillar" of the Model comes to the fore: the possibility of using the VQTS Matrix to enhance mutual understanding between VET systems, by comparing qualification pathways. This doesn't mean that IT:BSE Consortium members are underestimating the relevance of defining a shared profile. Probably expectations are a bit diverse, moving from more ambitious (building up a new "Euro-compatible" qualification) to more realistic ones, focusing above all on approaches and tools useful to build up common learning pathways, improving and managing short term mobilities (as far as they are actually organizers of such learning experiences).

To match better the different visions of the profiles in the different countries and the differences among different approach towards the 5 macro-areas related to working processes, steps forward have been done by considering in a better way the influence of key and soft skills in defining each step of development; in particular in the last version of the Matrix presented at the Sofia meeting, on 7 and 8 October, a certain increased merging from elementary work situations and tasks to the management of complex situations and variables, implying a certain degree of autonomy, initiative, analytical thinking and creativity, have been performed.

Fig. 7 - which results are you expecting by the project?

	Not interested at all	Not the most relevant issue for us	Interested	Very much interested	Average Score
I'm interested to contribute at the definition of a shared profile based on the VQTS Matrix	0 (0.00%)	1 (12.50%)	3 (37.50%)	**4 (50.00%)**	3.38 / 4 (84.50%)
I would like to build up a common training pathway	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	**4 (50.00%)**	**4 (50.00%)**	3.50 / 4 (87.50%)
I would like to define a common certification (qualification)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	**4 (50.00%)**	**4 (50.00%)**	3.50 / 4 (87.50%)
I would like to consolidate the network with the other partners	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	**4 (50.00%)**	**4 (50.00%)**	3.50 / 4 (87.50%)
I'm interested to improve mobility projects in this professional area	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	**4 (50.00%)**	**4 (50.00%)**	3.50 / 4 (87.50%)
I would like to define a shared way to assess and mutually recognize the results (learning outcomes) of mobilities	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3 (37.50%)	**5 (62.50%)**	3.63 / 4 (90.75%)

From this point of view, the project is really facing at least two challenges, focused by fig. 7:

- the first one correlated to the design and implementation of a qualification path in line with an emerging "vision" of the life cycle of building activities; characterized by a strong integration between planning, construction, management and demolition / requalification phases (this innovative approach is largely shared and considered coherent by almost all the partners, but levels and possibilities of implementation of such an approach seem to be very differentiated in the partner countries)
- the second one refers to the opportunity of strengthening the network already active linking many of Consortium members, by developing a transnational training path in the same field, including some structured learning experiences (modules) based on mobility projects.

Expectations are dramatically high, and they are addressed both to improve the quality and the accountability of mobilities, and to design and implement a common qualification path, in an emerging profile, already piloted in some regions in Germany but brand new in the other countries. On the other hand, beyond the wide range of expectations shared by the partners, the survey confirm that a common set of key aims could be found anchoring the project above all to the definition of a "shared way to assess and mutually recognize the results (learning outcomes) of mobilities". It implies sharing a vision of how work processes and roles can be used for describing and articulating competences and competence development steps.

6. Summing up: strengths, remarks and warnings

Summing up, and considering more in general the characteristics of the project, we would like to conclude our interim evaluative report with some short remarks, including some warnings, related to key points to be carefully considered by managing the project.

IT:BSE is a **well-structured project**, promoted and led by an **experienced** coordinator, counting on an **articulated network** of local VET institutions. The innovation to be transferred (the VQTS Model) is based on a **rigorous and affordable procedure**, already exploited by the coordinator in the framework of another ToI project in a different sector (TRIFT). The Consortium is based on a **core membership**, already experienced and committed in organizing exchanges and mobilities, hosting some new partners (Bulgaria) moving in a transition space from a traditional to a renewed VET landscape, interested to profiting of the solid experience of the coordinating country for designing some innovative VET profiles. The project deals with an **emerging professional role**, well related to the evolution of the construction sector towards sustainability and new quality standards. The project is **deeply anchored and well situated in a specific context**, defined by the German qualification system, moving step by step during the recent years forward, in order to match EU requirements in the field of articulation and structure of the VET pathways. These factors are to be considered as **strengths of the project**, as confirmed by the effective management of the first year, with the achievement of all main expected results, and above all the design and validation of the comprehensive BSE Matrix.

Some **challenges and risks** deserve however to be remembered:

- The project is well contextualized, many expectations are clearly rooted in the German system (and it's an obvious case, in a Transfer of Innovation initiative) but **the European dimension should be at the same time kept in mind**, in order to safeguard involvement and mutual understanding between the partners (and in order to reach coherent results in terms of dissemination and valorization)
- **expectations and levels of commitment of any partner are not always convergent**; some partners assign more relevance to issues related to enhance the solidity of their mobility network, other are more focusing on the development of new qualification pathways deriving from the Model to be piloted

The role of mobility as a mean to learn will be the focus of the next phase of the project. Mobilities will be the Laboratory to test and improve the Matrix. There were some doubts and fears – emerged also during the very positive Meeting held in Kouvola - about the possibility of managing mobilities as expected. In order to overcome possible constraints and disappointing situations, the project should draw on lessons learned in other complementary initiatives, which developed effective ways of managing mobilities. The Sofia meeting found a good balance for the implementation of the internships, dividing substantially the competence areas of the professional profile BSE and concentrating on specific context and experiences of the partners for addressed professions. In this way have been agreed mobilities mainly lasting 3-4 weeks (apart some cases) and for the specific professions (for example plant mechanics in Finland, IT-students in Spain, etc.) that in each country partner can achieve a real added value in term of setting up the whole BSE professional profile, in a real ECVET optic.
This approach follows the indication which it makes no sense to reinvent the wheel, and IT:BSE should count on methods, approaches and tools that proved to be effective in order to improve in a sustainable way mobilities, both planning structured work experiences and valuing informal learning opportunities always produced by a work experience abroad.

These warnings can be translated in some suggestions:

- **The European dimension should be constantly enhanced fostering and facilitating the interaction between the partners in the preparation and validation of deliverables** (assigning tasks and distributing responsibilities between

the partners could be a good solution to avoid the risk of a disengagement of some institutions);

- The presence in the partnership of **solid and experienced organizations belonging to** countries like Finland, France and Spain, characterized by **different learning cultures,** have to be valued, in order to bring sound and dialectic points of view in the Consortium, avoiding an exclusively "German centered" implementation of the project

- A **good balance between the 2 key challenges** (designing the profile and improving mobilities) should be pursued, differentiating aims and operative objectives between areas; actually the **second aim seems to be more important, and sustainable, at least if we look at the European dimension**; the definition of a qualification profile and of a common qualification path could be kept in the background and better reconsidered under the lens of the VQTS approach: focusing on the definition of a **common Matrix**, essential to plan mobilities but easy to be used by all interested bodies for building up "EQF coherent" qualifications, fitting in the meanwhile national qualification frameworks

- **Considering the implementation of high quality mobilities, based on methods and tools for planning and assessing learning outcomes, IT:BSE should finally draw on useful lessons learnt in some recent initiatives,** based on the same innovative Model and facing similar problems, even if in different VET sectors (we could mention once again the TRIFT project, led by the same coordinator, as well as ECMO or other Transfer of Innovation initiatives based on the VQTS Model)

- In the mobility implementation an important element is to find a balance among competence areas. It will be helpful and facilitating the different countries' performance to concentrate internships on specific context and experiences of the partners for professions that can be part of the whole BSE profile, and to use an approach of "building" the profile with a coordinated but flexible "modular" approach, able to include also non formal learning in a ECVET direction.

Furio Bednarz [2], October 2013