

Quick results with framework, implementation details are challenging

## **EQWine: ECVET in wine education**

8 wine nations, each represented by one wine school, work in a bottom-up process for finding common basics in the education of winegrowers and oenologists and for creating mutual training units.

### **What was the starting point for the EQWine project?**

Over decades, contact among European wine schools has been excellent: every second year a meeting of the network of European wine schools is held, trainees are exchanged and excursions are standards in the education. Much experience has been made with teachers exchanges and with students' or degustation competitions. Educational standards, EQF and ECVET are red-hot issues in educational policy – why not use contacts and experiences and dare the step to exchange and recognise learning and training contents?

### **Which project results are to be achieved?**

- Proposal for an European curriculum framework
- Knowledge and skills catalogues for viticulture and oenology
- Standardised theoretical and practical tasks for assessment
- Training units for mixed students groups in Europe

All results refer to the EQF level 4. The first three results are agreed upon by all project partners together. For creating training units, subgroups of two or three partner schools were formed. It would have been negligently optimistic to assume that in these first attempts of ECVET in the wine industry eight nations could agree on one training topic with all learning contents in detail, including assessment and a common date, plus solving the problem of the language barrier...

### **What is the status quo of the project?**

Work progresses from general facts to details – and on this way the process is getting slower and the occurring individual differences are getting more complex. Rough descriptions, what winegrowers and oenologists should be able to do according to EQF level 4, were agreed upon quickly. More discussions were necessary for detailed lists of knowledge and skills, and, despite the formation of subgroups, for matching test papers the discussion process became even more intense.

At the core product of EQWine, the international training units, the same is true: rough frameworks were drawn up easily; the little things cause all the problems. Especially because the assessment of students must be standardized and each country must rely on the other ones.

### **How can EQWine contribute to the educational future?**

The partnership project includes no money for the real students' exchanges. Despite efforts for implementing at least one training unit during the project duration, the first one will be carried out only in autumn 2013: Hungary and Slovenia organise a two-weeks mixed class in the field of wine sensory.

For example, Austria, Germany and Spain partners are creating a training week for wine filtration and bottling:

- Class with 20 students, 10 of them domestic and 5 from each partner country
- Accommodation in boarding house or with host families
- Teaching language is English: the practical topic with little complicated technical terms reduces the language problem; during the test period a English teacher can support the technical lessons.
- 3 learning goals: selection of the appropriate filter system (out of five), handling of five filter systems, handling of one bottling and labelling device.
- 27 lessons for training, 9 for assessment and 12 for technical excursions – of course a stay abroad should bring more impressions than the technical hard facts.

### **Everything fine and easy?**

Of course not.... Immediately after the project start-up meeting, one partner quit its participation – since then 8 partners work together. A slim project structure (one school per nation who is responsible for integrating and informing other schools and institutions) means that very few VET institutions should reach many others. The project finances only the project mobility but wages for the work: the work as done more or less privately and voluntarily by the international experts. The project leaders have the grateful task of keeping work and communication between the project meetings (3 – 8 months in between) alive, demanding papers and reports. What seemed easy during meetings, comes to a standstill two weeks later: every person involved has more than a fulltime job and has been caught in his usual daily work. Once again, the EQWine project proves: in innovative projects you will find very committed people, therefore persons who have more than enough work beforehand.

### **Future dreams 2020**

A pool of training topics of educational institutions all over Europe exists. Some schools offer more units, others fewer. Each training unit is defined in details: duration, learning outcomes (including necessary technical descriptions, teaching methods, assessment, number of lessons), required pre-conditions, EQF-level, date of training.

Out of this pool, schools make individual learning agreements, where different combinations can be imagined: a whole school class goes abroad, while on the other hand no class travels, or a class comes to the same topic or for a different training unit during the same time.

Or only a part of a school class goes abroad: three nations hold the same training unit at the same time with internationally mixed classes. Or single students from abroad are included in training units.

In any case, the basic idea of ECVET is realised: mobility in vocational education is increased, flexibility is guaranteed and mutual recognition is ensured.