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Education and Culture DG

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## Project Schedule

### Work Package 1: 10/2009 – 11/2009

- Coordination and organisation (website, communication, poster, responsibilities, conferences)
- Presentations of structure of national VET systems and HQ included herein, working definition of HQ

### Work Package 2: 12/2009 – 06/2010

- National literature and policy reviews
- 1st country reports on HQ in the respective national VET systems, modelling of comparative study (interview guidelines, definition of “expert”, comparative criteria)

### Work Package 3: 07/2010 – 03/2011

- Expert interviews and qualitative content analysis
- Discussion of empirical findings, 2nd country reports on empirical findings

### Work Package 4: 04/2011 – 09/2011

- Summing-up and comparison of theoretical and empirical findings
- Identification of “best practices” in the area of HQ
- Development of recommendations for policy and practice

## Project Partners

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LEONARDO Project

## Hybrid qualifications

Increasing the value of Vocational Education and Training in the context of Lifelong Learning

CD: [www.br-promotions.com](http://www.br-promotions.com) | Gestaltung: Universität Konstanz | WWA-Grafik | Foto: [www.fotolia.de](http://www.fotolia.de)

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## Context

Against the background of increasing qualification needs, it becomes more and more important to enable as many persons as possible to develop the relevant competences. In this context, the issue of permeability between vocational and general education has emerged as a major focus of European education and training policies and one of the objectives of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

The specific focus of this study lies on structures and processes which help to combine Vocational Education and Training (VET) with qualifications leading into Higher Education (HE) in the sense of so-called hybrid qualifications. Our comparative study is designed to improve understanding of institutional links between HE, VET and working life across Europe. Besides, its aim also encompasses recommendations to policy-makers to establish attractive transition pathways that help to bridge the divide between VET and HE.

“Hybrid qualifications” have a “hub function” as they should prepare for the qualified entrance into working life (in the sense of vocational education and training) while at the same time opening access to higher education.



## Research Questions

1. What are the motivations for and against the introduction of hybrid qualifications?
2. How specific are the national circumstances influencing their (potential) implementation (i.e. actors, integration in the national VET system, target groups, shares of general education and vocational education contents in the curriculum of courses etc.)?
3. What are the perceptions of learners, employers and lecturers with respect to the nature and value of these qualifications?
4. Is it possible to develop recommendations for policy and practice based on research outcomes with respect to hybrid qualifications?

## Comparative Study with Explorative Approach

National literature and policy reviews and guideline-based expert interviews in four EU countries

- Countries: Austria, Denmark, England, Germany
- Total number of interviews: N=78 (+2 focus groups): N<sub>AT</sub>=19, N<sub>DE</sub>=18, N<sub>DK</sub>=23 and N<sub>UK</sub>=18 (+2 focus groups)
- Experts: Policy makers, social partners, college programme managers, institutions of higher education, “hybrid” teachers, students

## Summary of Results and Outlook

Country	National examples of „Hybrid qualifications“	Rating	Comment
Austria	Berufsbildende Höhere Schulen e.g.: HAK, HLW, HLT, HTL	★★★★	According to the authors of the Austrian Country Report II, “the entire educational track of the vocational colleges can be quoted as an example of best practice. In no other European country hybrid qualifications are that prevalent and have such a good reputation.” Their success is obviously closely linked to a labour market which is widely open for these qualifications.
Denmark	The EUX programme	not yet possible	According to the authors of the Danish Country Report II, “the Danish educational system has not until 2010 offered full hybrid qualifications [...]. This is changing though, as a new legal framework was established in the summer of 2010 [...] the EUX program [...]. The fate of the new hybrid program, EUX, has yet to be seen.”
England	BTEC National Diploma	★★★	According to the authors of the English Country Report II, “the BTEC National can make a realistic claim to be considered as a hybrid qualification.” However, the authors concluded that it “might be seen as fulfilling a weaker definition by, for example, providing access only to some HE institutions and to cognate subjects and courses. As currency to the labour market they appeared to be valued as entry level qualifications by some employers in some sectors.”
Germany	Full-time VET, e.g. the „Berufskolleg“ (vocational college) in Baden-Württemberg	★★	According to the authors of the German Country Report II, full-time VET, rather than the dual system (apprenticeship), provides the framework for hybrid qualifications. However, even “the function of the vocational college is nearly exclusively entry into HE rather than delivering labour market qualifications.” VET in Germany, especially apprenticeship, is still detached from HE.

- You can find detailed information on hybrid qualifications in the four partner countries in the respective Country Reports (see: <http://www.hq-lll.eu>).

- You can also find overview papers on hybrid qualifications in other countries in and outside Europe, as well as a summation of our theoretical and empirical project findings, in a final book publication (Peter Lang, forthcoming in February 2012).