

EXPLORING THE CHALLENGES OF PERMEABILITY: EQF-5 AND HIGHER LEVELS

A PARTNER'S CONFERENCE

PAVING THE WAY FOR FLEXIBLE LEARNING PATHWAYS AND THE ROLE OF THE LABOUR MARKET

9-10 DECEMBER 2019, MCAST, MALTA



FOREWORD

In this newsletter, you will find an update about the conference being organised in December in Malta. Registration details and the final programme will be circulated towards the end of August. Further information will also be available on how one can contribute to this event.

This interactive conference will focus on constructing flexible learning pathways through Levels 5 and higher of the EQF. To fulfil this objective, there will be an analysis of different contributions from multiple education sectors that can lead to creating bridges between them, possibly with the use of agreements between institutions, shaping progression routes and through better use of 'recognition of prior learning'.

If you would like to develop further this aspect within your institution, the stakeholders present at the conference will value your contribution.



SOME PRACTICAL MATTERS

In addition to the information already circulated in the previous newsletter (see below), please note some additional logistical details:

- No arrangements will be made by the organization with specific hotels in Malta. In the MCAST area (Paola, Malta) there are mainly apartments and B&Bs. These can be reserved via reservations websites.
- Car rentals in Malta are available at the airport for a small fee. If you chose accommodation options outside Valletta, for example in Kalkara, there is usually enough space to park your car in public spaces. Parking is also possible at the MCAST campus.
- **Conference registration fees €150** (excluding VAT). Catering and lunches on both days are included.
- If you want to participate in the dinner on Monday evening, (9 December), the costs for this (including the drinks) are 45 euro.
- A 'social dinner' may be organized on Sunday evening (8 December). **More information will be provided in forthcoming newsletters.**
- A guided city tour will take place on Tuesday afternoon (December 10).
- Registrations will be opened at the end of August.
- Flights and accommodation details will be requested at the beginning of November.
- Transport to and from MCAST will be arranged.



WHO WILL BE THERE...

- Representatives from a government (Ministry), involved in the developments related to the Bologna Process, so the European Higher Education Area
- Likewise, but then involved in qualifications at levels 5 and higher (of the EQF), building on the VET sector (also called Vocational-Professional Education)
- Being involved in the implementation of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
- Working for an accreditation body, responsible for HE, VET/VPE and/or all other combinations
- Employed by an organization that provides a range of non-formal education (personal-business training), from the professional field, a professional body, a branch association
- Member of a European organization for Higher Education, VET, Higher VET and so on (public-funded / private / not-for-profit)
- Staff members of an institution that offers training programmes and qualifications at level 5 and higher
- Manager of a so-called Level 5 College (mainly offering level 5 programmes)
- Consultants, experts, involved in designing flexible learning pathways by using qualifications from various sectors (HE, VET / VPE, Business Training)

If you are are interested in the overall theme and the related topics and developments, you are welcome to contribute to this conference, to initiate a 'Malta Process' for the entire area in which qualifications can be positioned at the tertiary level.



THEME

Flexibility, permeability and relevance remain the core principles driving the developments of higher education in a dynamic and fluid labour market. This international conference aims at exploring good practices as well as concrete and realistic possibilities for flexible learning pathways, integrating qualifications within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) with qualifications from the Vocational-Professional Education and Training (VPET) sector.

The EHEA promotes a 4-tier structure - short cycle, 1st cycle, 2nd cycle and 3rd cycle qualifications. On the other hand, the VPET sector is more commonly reflected informal programmes, offered at Levels 5 and higher of the European Qualifications Framework.

The conference also intends to explore the centrality of the short cycle/EQF Level 5 for the promotion and possibility of more national education systems having support structures and provisions for permeability, progression routes, flexible bridging programmes. High-quality work-based learning could contribute to the relevance of both the EHEA and the VPET qualifications. This is also a good opportunity for countries to share their experiences and good practices on clear strategies already in place.

At the end of the conference, some decisions will be taken on further cooperation between the stakeholders involved (organizations and associations), to initiate a process with a view on shaping flexible learning pathways at a national level. In this context, consideration will also be given to how this can be supported at European level, involving experts and European networks.

●●● ISSUES

It will be the first time that this important topic will be discussed at such a conference, with the input of our partners and other organizations that will be asked to contribute to the programme.

In view of the discussion that will be held about the possible learning pathways combining qualifications from both systems, the following correlated topics can be considered:

- Use of a structure with **parallel systems**, aligned and linked to the EQF levels 5 and higher – and the role of the EQF in ‘the center’ of the sectors for tertiary education (HE, VET/VPE and Personal and Business Training)
- Access to those sectors, looking at the possibilities for shaping **flexible learning pathways** with ‘no dead ends’
- **Role of the institutions**, offering those qualifications, in this all
- **Role of the labour market, professional bodies**, (national) **branches** and (regional) **employers’ organisations** in providing non-formal education and the use of them for completing a formal programme.
- **Instruments** that can be helpful for facilitating flexible learning pathways
- **Permeability** and transfer, using credits and recognition of prior learning
- **Quality** of flexible learning pathways
- **Integration** of work-based learning within qualifications offered by both sectors
- Possibilities for **international cooperation**, at all levels
- Use and application of **National Qualification Frameworks** referenced to the EQF and the EHEA.



PARTNERS

The conference will be organised by:

- **EfVET**, as European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, being an association for VET providers and other institutions involved in VET (see: www.efvet.org).
- **CHAIN5**, as European Community of Practice for level 5 of the EQF (see: www.chain5.net).
- The conference will be hosted by the **Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology** (see: <https://www.mcast.edu.mt/>).
- The organization of the conference is made possible by having the strong support of the **Ministry of Education and Employment (MEDE)** in Malta (see: <https://education.gov.mt/en>)



DATES

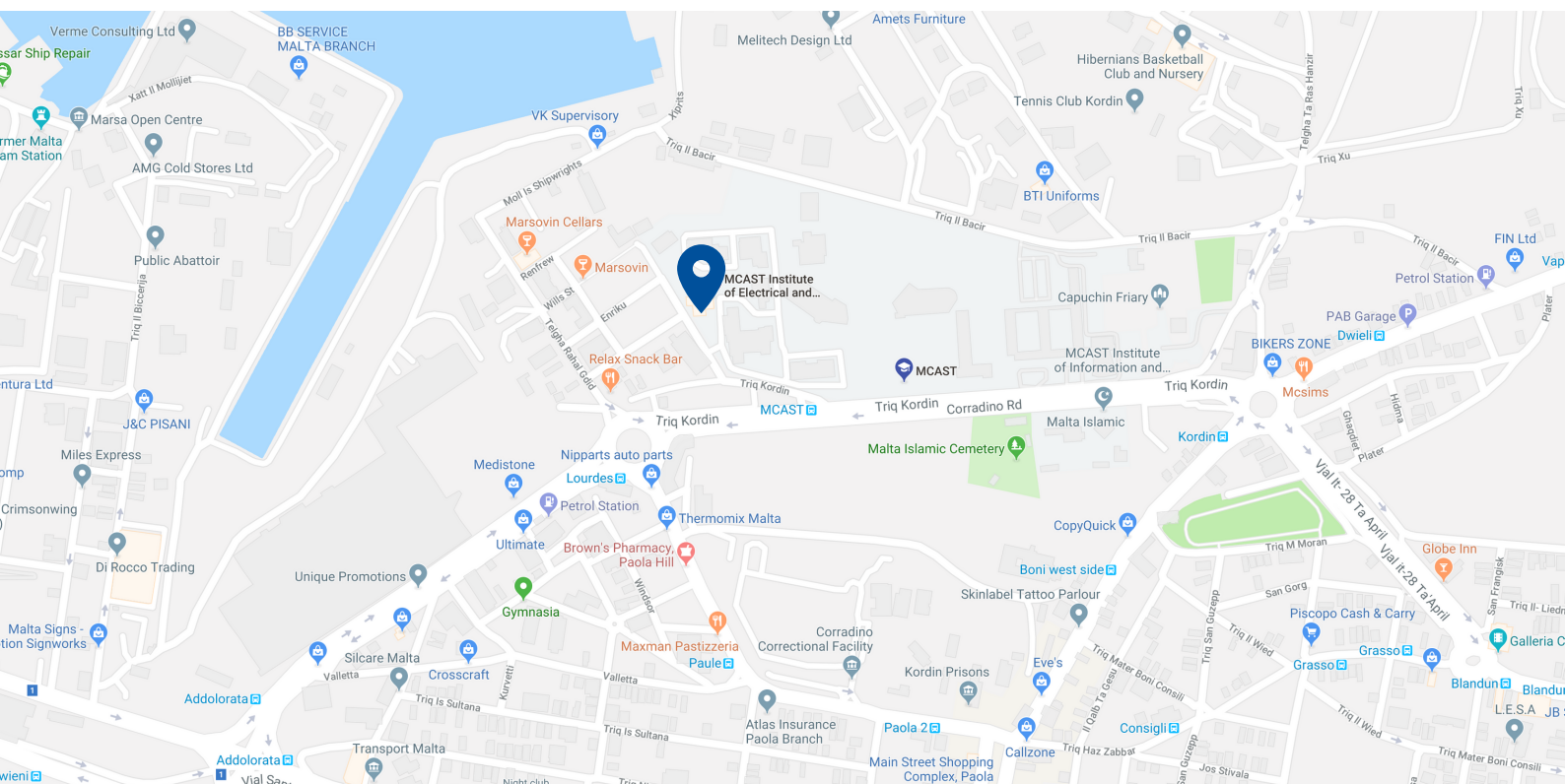
The conference will be held on:

- **Monday 9 December**, from 9:30 till 17:30 (and dinner from 19:30 till 22:00)
- **Tuesday 10 December**, from 9.00 till 13:00



VENUE

The conference is being held on the **MCAST campus** in Malta.



If you have already questions about the conference and the theme, or if you want to make a contribution, you can send them to: info@chain5.net.