



Education and Culture  
Lifelong learning programme  
LEONARDO DA VINCI



## SQF-CON

“Developing and introducing a Sectoral  
Qualification Framework for the European  
Construction Industry”

# OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE TOOL for TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS



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## INTRODUCTION

The whole „Guidance Tool” should be a supporting document for an effective implementation of successful network projects like the Leonardo da Vinci Lifelong Learning Project “**Developing and introducing a Sectoral Qualification Framework for the European Construction Industry SQF-CON**”.

Transparency is a key word of the European Union and so far of the Leonardo da Vinci programme. Learners and teachers should be able to know about the opportunities offered to them all along their formation and professional experiences. So we decided to subdivide our “Guidance Tool” into four parts to let the reader decide which information he/she is interested in at first. Nevertheless all four parts are synchronized but can be also seen as stand-alone products. We would like to forward some advices and experiences we got and made during our project. This “Guidance Tool” consists of further three parts which can be seen as one “tool box”.

- 1. **OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE TOOL** for **TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS**
- 2. The “**FINAL REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP**” developed under the academic direction of partner 4 (BAQ). This document contains all qualification grids and advises how to use it. The qualification matrices were developed by all international partners of SQF-CON.
- 3. A **questionnaire** for all interested people. The survey focuses on practical experiences with EQF and wants to work out, if people understand and get along with the created SQF-CON model.
- 4. **Power Point Presentation** which shows the background, the network and the methodical approach of SQF-CON

The first chapter of this part of our “Guidance Tool”, deals with the theoretical concept of our project SQF-CON and the outmost idea and the motivation. The following parts are about challenges, rules and necessary aspects of a successful transnational network instalment.

In the further cause of this document one can read something about the SQF-CON beneficiaries and common ways how to organize several ways to get in contact with partnership members and interested persons, because a lifelong learning model in the vocational industrial construction sector shared at a EU-level, implies that the transnational cooperation is clear for every participant, and implemented on a sustainable basis.

This part of our “tool box” should be also an interactive document to which all partners and project observers are invited to submit resources.

During the whole project lifetime, and afterwards, depending on the change within the Network, this document could be enriched or modified with relevant tools and concepts.

To assure quality in the network and thus in providing lifelong learning in graduates or workers in the construction sector, all parts of the guidance tool are accessible in English for the national-oriented direct target groups (trainees, instructors, employers).

To share and define the whole work and tasks during the SQF-CON project we defined 3 work circles:

Circle 1 (C1): GERMAN CORE GROUP

CIRCLE 2 (C2): TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVE PARTNER, FIEC

CIRCLE 3 (C3): DISSEMINATION PARTNERS

Members of the SQF-CON Network (C1 and C2) worked at all parts of the tool box, mentioned above. Indirect participants (C3) were invited to valorise methods and advantages of a transnational network during dissemination activities of C1.

## **SQF-CON**

The project (01.02.2008 – 31.01.2010) which was financed by the EACEA aimed at developing a Sectoral Qualifications Framework for the construction industry in Europe (SQF) and making it work in the entire sector. It was undertaken by the European Partners (C1-C3) in construction together with organisations representative for and experts of vocational education and training (VET) in other participating countries.

SQF-CON was produced as a frame of reference, containing philosophy, structure and content of existing EQF as well as specifications of work on construction sites.

SQF-CON will enable actors in national construction industries and training organisations to relate their national standards, qualifications, networks and certificates to a common framework, in order to improve transparency between national training systems, comparability of VET results by using learning outcome approach and better functioning of the labour market.

To include all European countries and to disseminate SQF-CON two European conferences were organized at the *Fédération Industrielle Européenne de la Construction* (FIEC). All FIEC members and other representatives for VET in construction throughout Europe were invited.

During the first conference SQF draft matrices were presented by the developers. The second conference focused on the presentation of the final version of the SQF-CON model. Furthermore the “guidance tool box” were presented and questions were answered.

SQF-CON was a partnership of 10 (8 partners plus 2 silent parties) training institutions with following aims:

The aims and objectives were linked to the objectives of the Lifelong Learning Program decided by the Council as to

(a) improve possibilities of mobility throughout Europe of people involved in initial and further vocational education and training in construction,

(b) improve possibilities of cooperation between training organisations, enterprises, social partners and other relevant bodies throughout European construction;

(c) facilitate the development and transfer of innovative practices in the field of vocational education and training in construction

(d) improve the transparency and recognition of qualifications and competences, including those acquired through non-formal and informal learning. Aims and objectives of the project furthermore are linked to specific objectives of the Lifelong Learning Program as to contribute to innovation and a European dimension in systems and practices in the field of VET in construction and to support the realisation of a European area for lifelong learning.

Work will be continued after the project in the frame of the Social Dialogue in construction at European level as well as on national levels in participating member states.

It should be possible for each vocational training organisation, vocational school, training centre or interested person– wherever they are located – to easily inform about SQF-CON by reaching national contact points:

### Partners at a glance

Cc No.	Country	Name of organisation/institution	Contact person		Street and No. Town/City Postcode	Telephone
			Name	M/F		Fax
						E-mail
P1	DE	Berufsförderungswerk der Bauindustrie NRW e.V.	Dr.-Ing. Bernd Garstka	M	Uhlandstr. 56 DE-40237 Düsseldorf	Tel: + 49-211-6703-230 Fax:+ 49-211-6703-111 <a href="http://www.abz-kerpen.de">www.abz-kerpen.de</a>
P2	DE	BIW	Dipl.-Ing. Ralf Hanemann	M	Blosenburgstr.4 DE-99096 Erfurt	Tel: + 49-361-644950
P3	DE	BZB Krefeld	Dipl.-Ing. Frank Pawlik	M	Bökendonk 15-17, DE-47809 Krefeld	Tel: ++49-2151-515510
P4	DE	BAQ	Prof. Dr. G. Syben	M	Wachmannstr. 34, DE 28209 Bremen	Tel: +49-421-344763
P7	IT	FORMEDIL	Dr. Rosella Martino	F	Via Alessandria, 215, 00198 Rome	Tel: +39-06-85261702
P8	NL	GOA Infra Groep	Harm Korporaal	M	Leonard Springerlaan 5 <sup>a</sup> , 9727 Groningen	Tel: +31-50-5258622
P9	RO	Casa de Meserii a Constr.	Angela Cristescu	F	11a Justinian St. Sector 2, 020101 Bucharest	Tel: +40-2121-23762
P10	EU	FIEC	Ulrich Paetzold	M	Av. Louise 225, 1050 Bruxelles	Tel: +32-2-5145535

## THE TRANSNATIONAL SQF-CON NETWORK PARTNERS IN DETAIL:

### Germany:

#### **Federation of Construction Industry in North Rhine Westphalia (C1)**

[garstka@bauindustrie-nrw.de](mailto:garstka@bauindustrie-nrw.de)

The Federation of Construction Industry in NRW is a non profit organization. It supports construction firms regarding to vocational education. The Federation maintains three Vocational Training Centres in Kerpen, Essen and Hamm. The employees of these three Centres are responsible for the vocational training as well as the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Environment. Target group: apprentices, adults and would-be masters and craftsmen.

#### **BAQ – Research Institute on Employment Labour Qualification (C1)**

[institut@baq-bremen.de](mailto:institut@baq-bremen.de)

Founded in 1995, BAQ Institute is executing research work on the relation between employment and vocational education and training (VET) on systems and organisations (enterprises, training organisations) as well as personal and action levels. It is specialised on construction industry, occupations and VET systems. It has undertaken research work on job profiles and qualifications needs on regional, national and European levels as well as analysis of vocational education and training systems and policies and their impact on enterprises, training organisations and individuals. It worked out two studies on “Prospective needs on skills and competencies” and on “Comparison of VET-Systems” in European construction in 1995 respective 2000. Not at least has it has theoretical and empirical knowledge and experience in methodologies of transnational comparison in research on VET.

## **Federation of Construction Industry in Hessen-Thuringia – BIW (C1)**

[m.welsch@biw-bau.de](mailto:m.welsch@biw-bau.de)

The BiW BAU founded in 1991. The BiW BAU is non profit organization. The BiW BAU maintains eight Vocational Training Centres for the building industry in Hesse-Thuringia:

Erfurt, Frankfurt am Main, Gera, Jena, Kassel, Nordhausen, Walldorf, Weimar and one continuing education institute “Bauhausakademie Schloss Ettersburg”. The Vocational Training Centres train the apprentices from construction firms in 15 occupations of construction and realize the continuing training for adults and higher professionals (for example: craftsmen, engineers and so on).

## **Vocational Training Centre for Construction (BZB) (C1)**

[frank.pawlik@bzb.de](mailto:frank.pawlik@bzb.de)

The BZB, founded in 1979, are multifunctional facilities for the 48 building trade guilds in the administrative district of Düsseldorf/Germany. Members are about 2.500 construction firms. The tasks are the initial vocational training for their apprentices in the 15 occupations of construction as well as continuing training for higher professionals. Further BZB co-operate with the German Labour Agency in the field of demand driven retraining of people. It runs four branches and participates in numerous projects. These projects range from regional over national up to European and international level. On the European level BZB realizes a lot of exchange programmes for apprentices, trainers and VET-experts, mostly with the partners in the European network RE.FORM.E. BZB is certified by DIN ISO EN 9001 and runs a Technology Transfer Office. As it is co-operation partner of the first row in VET-issues of the construction sector in Germany it executed various pilot-projects with innovative and trend-setting impact. Therefore, as well as based on the European activities, it is strongly interested in the current proposal. BZB is able to provide a lot of experience because it is actively working in the EU for over ten years.

**Netherlands:****GOA Infra Foundation (C2)**

[hkorporal@goa-infra.nl](mailto:hkorporal@goa-infra.nl)

GOA Infra Group is the collective noun for several initiatives the carrer planning policy in Civil Engineering in the North of Holland. The Group consits of Foundations, Organisations and Associations that each have a subtask regarding quality, employment, schooling, training and carrer development. GOA INFRA Group is beeing supported by companies in civil engineering in the region. These companies are partners amd buyers of the products and services.

**Romania:****Casa de Meserii a Constructorilor – CMC (C2)**

[angela.cristescu@cmc.org.ro](mailto:angela.cristescu@cmc.org.ro)

Casa de Meserii a Constructorilor is a foundation setup by the social partners' organizations (employers and trade unions) to promote and act for the development of human resources in building and construction industry. The organization represents the social partners from building and construction industry in relationship with National Authority for Qualifications. From the beginning the organization was involved in different projects financed from different EU funds (Phare, LdV Programme), Flemish Government Fund, Romanian Government, own contribution of social partners. Casa de Meserii a Constructorilor has 6 permanent staff and 15 collaborators on part-time basis (trainers, local consultants in HR)

**Italy:**  
**Notional Organization for Vocational and profess. Training in the Construction Industry FORMEDIL (C2)**

[condirettore@formedil.it](mailto:condirettore@formedil.it)

The vocational training system for the construction sector is based on a central organization, the National FORMEDIL, articulated in its regional branches Regional FORMEDIL and connecting a network of «Scuole Edili» situated in the various provinces. The vocational training measures are carried out by the territorial building schools according to the needs of the local job market. The building schools, although characterized by organizational and financial autonomy, are coordinated on a national level by the FORMEDIL. Having its own financial resources allowed the construction sector to develop territorial vocational training structures of high quality. These organizations, always active in the field of initial vocational training, in recent years enlarged their range to training measures for the apprenticeship, to continuous training in the field of work safety, to traditional techniques for maintenance and restoration of architectural heritage, to technology innovation and to higher vocational training. Through the coordination of Formedil, the building schools could participate in European Community initiatives such as Leonardo da Vinci, Force, Petra, Adapt, Youthstart, Equal, in multiregional programmes of European Social Fund, in experimental projects of the Italian Ministry of Work.

**EU:**  
**European Federation of the Construction Industry – FIEC (C2)**

[info@fiec.eu](mailto:info@fiec.eu)

Created in 1905, FIEC is the European Construction Industry Federation, representing via its 33 national Member Federations in 28 countries (26 EU & EFTA, Croatia and Turkey) construction enterprises of all sizes, i.e. small and medium-sized enterprises as well as “global players”, carrying out all forms of building and civil engineering activities.

## PREPARING FOR TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

High-quality transnational partnership depends on a good preparation and planning. It is essential to match the work programme to common objectives. Remember to set specific, realistic and achievable targets in order to enable a successful transnational cooperation as done within the SQF-CON project!

Building a real transnational partnership requires time, energy and your belief in the cause you are working for. The Human Resources element is therefore essential, alike having trustable collaborators among each partner, and who interact as a team. The following key points assure the success of a transnational partnership:

- ∨ **Permanent contact person(s)** who can ensure continuity
- ∨ Personal interest and **commitment to work across borders and cultures**
- ∨ Knowing every **partner's own expectations and objectives**
- ∨ **Good management skills** and previous transnational experience
- ∨ **Public Relations** Networking, alike accessing experts and practitioners
- ∨ **Length and Determination:** to develop a transnational partnership, it requires time, organisation and commitment to the requested tasks
- ∨ **Negotiating the work plan:** common transnational activities need to be agreed after consultation and contribution of every partner
- ∨ **Flexibility and compromise-orientation:** proper methods for work, documentation and monitoring are necessary to achieve a team work within such a partnership, as well as well-trained and sociable human resources
- ∨ **Interculturalism:** transnational work requires new skills and the ability to work with different cultures and in various languages
- ∨ **Permanent staff:** from design to dissemination, everything should be done to ensure that the staff commits to the length of the project or at least can be available as "reference people"

- ∇ **Transparency and Assessment:** successful transnational partnerships require continuous monitoring and ongoing evaluation
- ∇ **Intellectual property rights:** if creative and innovative results are to be achieved during the lifetime of the project, the transnational partnership might face some risks related to different laws regarding property rights
- ∇ **Partnership stability:** there are obvious difficulties with changing partners in the course of co-operation, as a new comer would have participated to the elaboration of the project neither to its first achievements
- ∇ **Financial commitment:** every partner contributes with its own budget to the success of the partnership and the project itself, while spending its budget part in transparency under the coordination of the project promoter

One of the successful techniques used of SQF-CON to help running a transnational partnership is the concept of “mutual learning”:

The approach ensures that learning from others’ experience actually takes place. It enables saving time and cost of research and study, as the flow of information enriches each partner in different country, with its successful or innovative methods, techniques and knowledge.

**The main philosophy of working in a network!**

## **DEFINING THE TARGET GROUPS AND BENEFICIARIES**

It takes time and organisation to reach potential target groups and beneficiaries and to agree on a programme of work with them. While SQF-CON partners were finalizing their national work plans, they had to take into account and reflect that issue in the preparation of the schedule.

At first it should be defined which kind of target group will be addressed:

- Teaching organisations
- Trainees
- Workers
- Managers
- SMEs
- Big Enterprises
- The network itself

Having found “your” beneficiaries terms of aims should be defined:

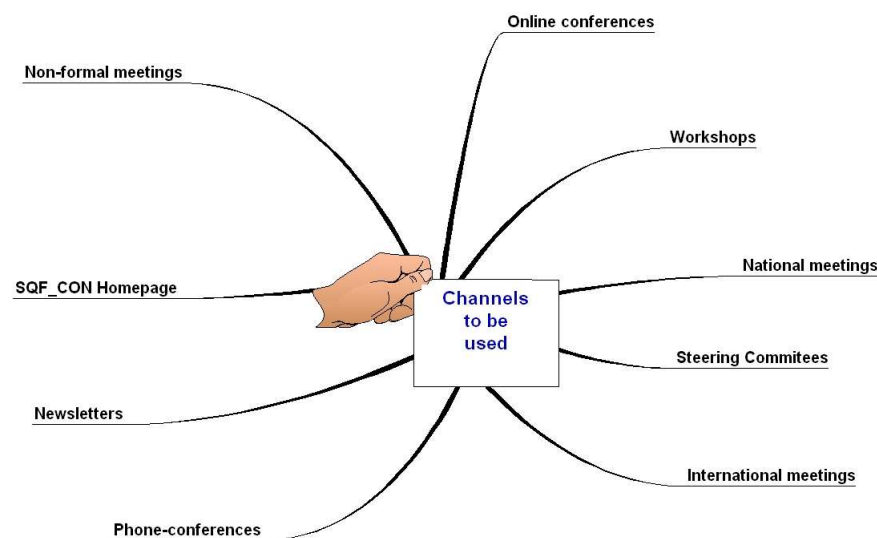
- Short term aim
- Middle term aim
- Long term aim

Next it is important to combine aims and beneficiaries in order to show who will benefits when, why and what for.

Within SQF-CON we combined the above topics as follows:

*Long-term beneficiaries in principal do not differ from short-term ones but there will be short-term and long-term benefits to individual beneficiaries. In the short run learners and workers but also enterprises will benefit from improved training possibilities, not at least, because SQF will foster the achievement of quality assurance, transparency and coordination between VET systems of participating counties. A medium-term-effect will be greater transparency of qualification, knowledge, skills and competencies as well as of certificates and, based on that, increased possibilities of mobility. In the long run enterprises as well as the entire sector will benefit from improved image as a learning industry, which requires qualification, knowledge, skills and competencies and offers interesting work, learning possibilities and professional as well as personal development. This will strengthen construction industry in coming years when qualified personal will be less and competition of industries and enterprises to gain the best people will increased in order to improve its competitiveness and power to contribute to the Lisbon goals.*

To disseminate the project's results and objectives, it is important to use several channels to inform and stay informed and to stay in contact to each active or silent partner and interested persons. The following picture shows some possible channels, which could be used:



## THE IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKING

Networking basically means forming connections and contacts often through informal meetings. It has been defined as exploiting contacts ruthlessly. In the framework of EU, networking is a fundamental methodology for transnational co-operation, offering a valid opportunity for sharing/acquiring methodologies and tools on the basis of a mutual exchange among peers.

Networks may be thematic or territorially based and nowadays strongly benefit of cheap and powerful communication means offered by ICT. In both cases the creation of networks as active physical or virtual environments - at local, national and transnational levels - appears as an important step in order to commit all relevant performers in the definition and implementation of a specific action.

This is why training and learning activities, since their definition phase, have proven to result more efficient when implemented with all actors potentially interested. The commitment of transectoral actors gives, as an immediate added value, the opportunity to include different perspectives in the definition and implementation of projects, offering at the same time the opportunity to improve the availability of resources. This is even truer when talking about organisations with limited resources.

In this sense, being sustainable members of a European Network, be it informal and not structured - beneficiates to organisations working in the field of learning and training activities. Belonging to a Network offers a high “return on investment”, in terms of:

- ∇ Accessing and sharing specific and relevant knowledge
- ∇ Starting up and implementing efficient partnerships
- ∇ Cooperative work
- ∇ Information and Opportunity selection

Networking entails a certain level of interaction between partners, which is made feasible via the website and its e-forum. Networking sessions bring together people who are interested in specific topics in order to discuss project ideas, research activities and business partnership. There are less formal discussion groups than the official conferences, but encourage active multilateral participation.

Following outcomes and advantages of networking sessions could be expected:

- ∇ Focused dialogue on a concrete subject
- ∇ Personal contacts that support ongoing objectives
- ∇ Regular discussions via web interfaces
- ∇ Exploratory workshops
- ∇ Scheduling of meetings
- ∇ Discuss and share different experiences
- ∇ Discuss and share different know-how
- ∇ Benefit from other's experiences
- ∇ Enlarge perspectives and horizons
- ∇ Increase resources availability
- ∇ Enhance efficient use of resources
- ∇ Improve opportunities to implement appropriately objectives and tasks
- ∇ Improve capabilities to 'read' and act in changing political and social trends
- ∇ Improve access to information / possibility to select relevant information
- ∇ Increase personal/staff motivation to work

On following pages you have the possibility to use the SQF-CON questionnaire (Guidance Tool part 3) to assess our LLP project SQF-CON. To simplify matters, we enclosed this questionnaire direct behind this "Operational Guidance tool for transnational networks" (Guidance Tool part 4).

# QUESTIONNAIRE

## SQF-CON Model

### 1. Country (You will find the countries on the last page)

BE  DE  FR  LV  MT  PT  FI  LI

BG  EE  IE  LT  NL  RO  SE  NO

CZ  EL  IT  LU  AT  SI  UK  TR

DK  ES  CY  HU  PL  SK  IS  EU

### 2. Name (voluntary information)

\_\_\_\_\_

*Name of organization*

### 3. Type of organization

Company  Institute

VET-Centre \_\_\_\_\_

Association \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Branch

Construction

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. Are there any experiences of working with EQF-Standards?

- Yes, we already work with common EQF-Levels
- Yes, we have heard about it

Yes, we already developed a

- sectoral
- national EQF-Model

In case of a sectoral development:

For which branch did you develop such a model? :

\_\_\_\_\_

- No, we haven't any experiences in working with EQF – so we would like to learn more.

E-Mail address for more information: \_\_\_\_\_

If you know the SQF-CON project, we were very pleased when you tried to answer the following questions to the developed SQF-CON Model to find within the "*FINAL REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP*" (Guidance Tool part 2)

If you don't know the SQF-CON project we thank you having answered the questions 1-5

### 6. The "SQF-CON Model"

To avoid, that the partners emanate from different building-sites, the consortium (DE, NL, IT, RO) agreed on following model, which is explained in detail in the SQF-CON POWER POINT PRESENTATION (Guidance Tool part 1):

Residential area with 24 apartments

In cause of the SQF-CON project a Work-Phase-Plan (WPP) was developed, which shows

- a) procedures
- b) tasks
- c) qualification levels and its responsibilities

The whole grid has been attuned to the building model above.

**Question 1:**

Would you agree to the WPP regarding the qualification levels and their responsibilities related to your national VET-System?

- Yes, (because)..\_\_\_\_\_
- Yes, (but)..\_\_\_\_\_
- No, (because)..\_\_\_\_\_
- No, (but)..\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 2:**

Could you imagine to adopt the SQF-CON Model at all?

- Yes, (because)..\_\_\_\_\_
- Yes, (but)..\_\_\_\_\_
- No, (because)..\_\_\_\_\_
- No, (but)..\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 3:**

Do you see any soft spots in the SQF-CON Model?

- Yes, (because)..\_\_\_\_\_
- Yes, (but)..\_\_\_\_\_
- No, (because)..\_\_\_\_\_
- No, (but)..\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 4:**

Where do you see the advantages in SQF-CON-Model?

- I don't see any advantages
- High level of VET transparency in different European countries
- Improvement of comparability regarding the appliance of EQF levels within the construction sector
- Strengthening the mobility within different European countries and VET-Systems

Further advantages: \_\_\_\_\_

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<b>Country</b>	<b>Code</b>
Belgium	BE
Bulgaria	BG
Czech Rep.	CZ
Denmark	DK
Germany	DE
Estonia	EE
Greece	EL
Spain	ES
France	FR
Ireland	IE
Italy	IT
Cyprus	CY
Latvia	LV
Lithuania	LT
Luxembourg	LU
Hungary	HU
Malta	MT
Netherlands	NL
Austria	AT
Poland	PL
Portugal	PT
Romania	RO
Slovenia	SI
Slovakia	SK
Finland	FI
Sweden	SE
United Kingdom	UK
Iceland	IS
Liechtenstein	LI
Norway	NO
Turkey	TR

**Thank you for your collaboration!**

**All data won't be forwarded to third parties.**

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