ESCO and the envisaged role of the European Taxonomy of Occupations, Qualifications, Skills and Competences for (Vocational) Education and Training

DISCO Final Conference
Rome 18 October 2012
Koen Nomden, DG EAC, European Commission
Presentation Overview

- Europe 2020 Strategy
- ESCO Qualifications Pillar
- ESCO-Cross Sector Reference Group
- EQF (+ other European tools and instruments)
Policy Context: Europe 2020 Strategy

- Youth on the Move
- Agenda for New Skills and Jobs
- Europe 2020 Benchmarks for employment and education:
  - 75 % Employment rate
  - 40 % of 25-34 years old should have a tertiary education degree
  - Early school leavers reduced to < 10 per cent
ESCO in the Europe 2020 Strategy

• Agenda for New Skills and Jobs:
• “By 2012, complete in all European languages the European Skills, Competences and Occupations classification (ESCO), as a shared interface between the worlds of employment, education and training”

NB: ESCO is a terminology, not a standard
Developing the Qualifications pillar of ESCO

- *National qualifications* will be addressed via the [EQF-portal](http://eqf-portal.eu) (allowing for the comparison between qualifications and in the future linked to national qualifications databases) and will be *indirectly included* in ESCO.

- *Qualifications* awarded/recognised at *European and/or international* level will be *directly included* in ESCO.
Direct inclusion of European and international qualifications – data requirements

- The qualifications pillar must be able operate on its own and provide information on relevant European and international certificates and diplomas

- The qualification pillar must be able to relate to and interact with the skills and competence as well as occupations pillars

|-------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------|

Relationship between Q and O

- In ESCO v0 a simplified approach will be used (IATA pilot license - is related to - Airline Pilot)
- In ESCO v1 we need to indicate the strength of the relationship to particular occupations, for example:
  - Q...is a legal requirement....O
  - Q...is likely to be required....O
  - Q...can be required............O
  - Q...is s associated with........O
Skills / Competences

• Central in ESCO

• Challenge: bridging the worlds of education/training and employment:
  • S/C required by employers and related to occupational profiles
  • S/C acquired through education and training (EQF Process: qualifications should focus on describing learning outcomes)
Cross sector reference group: mandate

- Define issues and challenges on structuring, use of terminology and coherence between sectors
- Propose a structure for the transversal skills and competences of the S/C pillar based on the analysis of existing sources (DISCO, national or sectoral taxonomies, existing research)
- Identify a list of transversal skills and competence terms to be included in ESCO and to serve as a basis for future developments and improvements
- Advice the maintenance committee and the sectoral reference groups on the development and structuring of the Q and S/C pillar
- Interact with, and give advice to the sectoral reference groups to improve consistency in structure and approach
- Give input to the work of the Q pillar based on experiences with the transversal skills and competences
Cross Sector Reference Group: methodology

- Sources for draft structure of cross sectoral skills and competences:
  - Analysis of thesauri from AT (AMS), CZ (Centrální database kompetencí), DE (Psychische Merkmale), IT, US (O*Net), UK + DISCO
  - Vocational education programmes in DK, FI, HU, IE, SI, ES, SE, literacy framework in NO, PIAAC
  - Input from CSRG members
Cross Sector Reference Group: state of play

- Draft proposal for an ESCO structure for cross sectoral skills and competences
- To be endorsed by the ESCO Maintenance Committee for inclusion in ESCO v0
- Basis for dialogue with Sector Reference Groups on contextualisation of cross sectoral skills
The European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF)

• To increase the transparency and comparability of qualifications throughout Europe in order to:
  o promote mobility for learning and work
  o make lifelong learning a reality for all citizens

• To promote easier transfer and progression between education and training sub-systems (in particular VET and HE)

• To facilitate communication on skills and qualifications between the world of education and training and the labour market
EQF: 8 qualification levels based on LO

EQF is based on 8 qualifications levels defined and agreed on the basis of learning outcomes and specified through

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Competence – (defined as autonomy and responsibility)

Qualifications must describe what a learner is expected to know, be able to do and understand – not only the duration and place of learning
The impact of the EQF – the emergence of national qualifications frameworks

- The EQF is being implemented through the introduction of national qualifications frameworks
- Prior to 2005 national qualifications frameworks only existed in France, Ireland and the UK – today close to 30
- The new generation of NQFs cover all types and levels of qualifications and insist on the use of learning outcomes to define and describe qualifications
Qualifications frameworks - a response to national and European challenges

• The rapid development of frameworks reflects acute pressures and challenges at national and international level:
  • The lack of transparency of qualifications and qualifications systems
  • The inflexibility and partial fragmentation of national systems
  • The need to adapt education and training to lifelong learning and the need to support access, progression and transfer
  • The need to link education and work and strengthen the relevance of qualifications
Implementing the EQF – state of play in relating NQFs to the EQF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15</th>
<th>Countries referenced by Q1 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BE-vl, CZ, DK, EE, FR, HR, IE, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, AT, PT, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Countries referencing by Q4 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Countries referencing by 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EQF and ESCO is about creating a common language and a common platform for dialogue and cooperation between E&T and the labour market.
The opportunity offered by EQF and ESCO

- Both initiatives stress the need for a common language bridging education and training and the labour market.
- Both share the focus on learning outcomes and skills and competences as the basis of this common language.
- Both initiatives require involvement and commitment from both education and labour market stakeholders.....
Common European tools and principles

- EQF
- ECVET/ECTS
- Europass
- EQAVET
- Validation of non-formal and informal learning

Shared purpose: increase transparency and comparability of qualifications, support for mobility, help citizens to validate and document their knowledge, skills and competences.