

## POSITION PAPER. SPAIN

We, as Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain, feel obliged to make a series of reflections after the launching of the survey on “Towards a European Area of Skills and Qualifications” addressed to all stakeholders.

The survey sets out three big issues:

1. The transparency and recognition of people's skills and qualifications.
2. The adequacy of the related European policies and instruments.
3. The potential benefits of developing a European Area of skills and qualifications.

In general terms, we would like to point out that such a survey offers two drawbacks so as to feel that it really cannot serve the purpose it has been meant. Ideally, everybody is expected to be able to respond to each of the questions posed, but in practice it is easy to randomize the questionnaire, as we have done, in order to conclude that very few people understand the questions, very few understand the content and most of those who were able to understand the questions and knew how they could reply wondered it was their role and function to respond to a technical political matter.

We are in the position of saying that the European Key Competences Framework has been and is being used at all levels. The key competences have served to modify curricula, to design new ways of dealing with the key competences and to make teachers aware of their importance and need to change the pedagogical guidelines so as to ensure that all students achieve the eight key competences and all the aspects included in each of them. Nonetheless, launching an initiative does not mean that it roots immediately and blooms magically. The key competences, like everything else, need time, reforms, awareness and compromise before they reach the ordinary citizen so as to promote them within education and training or within their jobs or as an instrument to access the labour market more easily.

We really wonder about the efficiency of European policies on career guidance and if citizens are well informed. European instruments in general are very well valued and have helped countries modernize their systems, understand how other countries are working and gain enthusiasm to improve things.

As regards recognition of citizen's qualifications in order to break mobility barriers, in our opinion, before that becomes a reality it would be necessary to start by creating a common language, something which was tried through the EQF but we sense we have missed a clear opportunity of making one clear definition which might serve all,. EQF should be an umbrella of trust, confidence and quality

assurance under which all qualifications might find their right place and description of the competence level they belong to.

ECVET is another instrument meant to help break mobility barriers and gain recognition of the training done abroad and of the credit associated. However, again a multicoloured number of projects have been generated bottom up, in such a way that administrations have been left aside in the conviction that each training centre can do what it wishes and convincing students that the credit granted will be fully supported by the Ministry of Education, responsible for issues their diplomas. Since this is not the case and since the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport has not participated in these projects, not established the necessary quality assurance, ECVET is posing us in a very difficult situation.

To summarize and prevent this paper from being too long, we propose that the Commission organizes a working group in charge of gathering all the instruments created so far to see the purpose of all of them, and up to what extent, each instrument is serving the citizen, how it could be improved and what is the link with the other instruments. It does not seem to be the right time to establish more instruments, but rather to rationalize their management and further development.

The European Commission is making a big effort to help the member States improve the systems they have, bring them close to their European partners and change education and training into a modern tool for everybody. Now the Commission could move forward by compiling the different instruments in one recommendation, relating one to the others, explaining how they should be used and after that, disseminate the outcomes.

Let us not waste what has been done, but choose the right people to do this part and let us give it to the citizen clear as crystal so that the information is fully digested and beneficial for all.

We would be willing to help if such a procedure were approved.