Concept and agenda

Peer Learning Activity, 16-17 JUNE 2015, Sofia (Bulgaria)

Referencing International Sectoral Qualifications to EQF

A description of the planned PLA

The Peer Learning Activity for EQF AG members and representatives of Member States will be held on 16-17 June 2015 in Sofia, Bulgaria, at the Technical University of Sofia, 10th block (address: 8 Kliment Ohridski blvd., 1756 Sofia)

It is organised by Bulgaria with the support of France and the members of the ISQ sub-group and financially supported by the European Commission.

1. Rationale for the selection of the PLA topic.

The referencing of International Sectoral Qualifications (ISQ) is embedded in the EQF Recommendation (paragraph 12), but no conclusions are shared by the Member States on how this referencing could be done. Some international organisations decided to reference the levels of their qualifications to the EQF.

The diversity of the definitions used on EU and national level is hindering a shared understanding of ISQ. The different orientations of NQFs have for consequence a variety of national approaches for the indirect levelling of some ISQ or sectoral frameworks to the EQF through NQFS. In the same time, some sectors need to improve the mobility of their workers and some sectoral qualifications are used all over the world.

The objective of the PLA is to expose different perspectives of national, international and sectoral stakeholders and through dialogue, to try to draw common conclusions or recommendations.

The PLA will be based on the following inputs:

- The report made by the ISQ sub-group of the EQF AG and its conclusions and recommendations (presented by the chairman of the sub group)
- The Latvian report on ISQ, as an example of national stakeholders’ view on the added value of linking ISQ to the NQF
- Experiences of countries with ISQ
- Analysis of sectoral frameworks or sectoral qualifications

The PLA will be divided into plenary sessions and three parallel sessions.

The objective is to discuss and hear the point of view of stakeholders: Member states, representatives of the sectors, social partners on the main conclusions of the reports, and the presentations.

The following main themes will be addressed:
• Which ISQ are relevant for being referenced to NQFs or EQF and why
• How can ISQ be linked to NQFs
• What is the impact on NQFs of a direct linking of ISQ to the EQF
• How can we share information on ISQ on EU level
• How can International Sectoral Qualifications Frameworks be developed and linked to the EQF

The discussions of the PLA will be important for identifying shared conclusions and for promoting future international cooperation. The PLA could also identify the main principles for the building of ISQ and for referencing them to EQF levels.

2. Draft agenda

16 June 2015

12.00 -13.00 h Registration and buffet

Plenary session:

Chair: Mrs. Susanne Lonscher-Räcke, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, the European Commission

13.00-13.25 Welcome and general introduction
Mrs. Vladima Popova-Natova, Director for International and European Cooperation, Ministry of Education and Science, Bulgaria
Prof. Valery Mladenov, Vice-Rector, Technical University of Sofia, Bulgaria
Mrs. Susanne Lonscher-Räcke, European Commission, DG Employment, social affairs and inclusion

13.25-13.40 Presentation of the background note
Speaker: Mrs. Brigitte Veronique-Bouquet, CNCP, France

13.40-15.00 Three approaches

a) The sectoral approach: the case of Cisco (15 minutes presentation + 10 for questions)
Speaker: Prof. PhD Irina Topalova, CISCO Academy of the Technical University of Sofia

b) A national approach: the Latvian report (15 minutes + 10)
Speaker: Mrs. Ramina Baiba, Director of the Academic Information Centre, Latvia
c) The EU approach: conclusions of the ISQ sub-group (15 minutes +10)

**Speaker:** Mr. Wilfried Boomgaert, Chairman of ISQ sub-group

15.00-15.30 Coffee break

15.30 – 17.30 3 parallel sessions of workshops (will be repeated)

**Parallel Sessions**

**Session 1:** Which differences in the construction of national qualifications and international sectoral qualifications and the linking of ISQ to frameworks (sectoral, national or the EQF)

| Differences between International Sectoral Qualifications and national qualifications: |
| Presentations by Austria and Poland |

**Speakers:**
- Mrs. Sigrid Nindl, 3s Unternehmensberatung GmbH, Austria
- Mr. Andrzej Żurawski, Educational Research Institute, Poland

**Facilitator:**
- Mrs. Maria Kargl, 3s research laboratory

**Rapporteur:**
- Ms. Ivana Radonova, Ministry of Education and Science, Bulgaria

**Session 2:** ISQ and non-regulated qualifications/professions: risks and benefits

The case of the ICT sector: 2 country cases (Ireland and Latvia)

**Speakers:**
- Mr. John O’Connor, Quality and Qualifications, Ireland
- Mrs. Gunta Kinta, Academic Information Centre, Latvia

**Facilitator:**
- Mrs. Monika Auzinger, 3s research laboratory

**Rapporteur:**
- Mr. Kostadin Tonev, National Information and Documentation centre, Bulgaria

**Session 3:** ISQ and regulated qualifications/professions: risks and benefits

The case of the maritime sector: 2 country cases (FR, BG)
Speakers:
Mrs. Brigitte Veronique-Bouquet, CNCP, France
Mrs. Spaska Georgieva, Maritime Administration Executive Agency, Bulgaria

Facilitator:
Mrs. Stephanie Mayer, Federal Ministry for Education and Women’s Affairs, Austria

Rapporteur:
Dr. Mimi Daneva, Ministry of Education and Science, Bulgaria

19.00 Official Dinner

17 June 2015

9.00-11.00  3 sessions repeated
11.00-11.30  Coffee break
11.30 –12.00  Point of view of EU social partners (with discussion)
12.00-13.00  Outcomes of the workshops
13.00- 14.30  Lunch
14.30-15.30  General discussion
15.30-16.00  Conclusions and closing
16.00  Farewell coffee/tea