

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Europe 2020: Policy development and country analysis Skills and qualifications strategies; Multilingualism policy

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DRAFT CONCLUSIONS 3RD JOINT EQF/PLOTEUS STEERING GROUP MEETING 10TH JULY 2013

The joint EQF/PLOTEUS steering group held its third meeting on the 10th of July 2013¹. The meeting addressed the following topics:²

- 1. Information on the European Area of Skills and Qualifications and ESCO
- 2. Presentation and discussion on the users' survey
- 3. The use of thematic areas on EQF and Ploteus portals
- 4. The data structure of the EQF portal
- 5. The data structure and quality assurance of Ploteus
- 6. Next steps

AD 1 THE EUROPEAN AREA OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS (EASQ) AND ESCO

Koen Nomden shortly updated the participants of the meeting on the latest developments in the European Area of skills and Qualifications and in ESCO, the multilingual European classification of Skills/Competences, qualifications and Occupations.

Regarding the EASQ BE welcomed the principle of the learner at the centre, with the reflection that the learner is not yet a worker. The need for good background documents was stressed.

For ESCO more specifically the three pillar approach was explained with its relation to the EQF portal. It was agreed that the next joint meeting ESCO would be explained more in detail.

AD 2 THE USERS' SURVEY

Petra Ziegler (3s) presented the results of the users' survey. The participants of the meeting had received the full report on the survey before the meeting.

The Commission explained that the static text on the portals will be translated in all EU languages. In addition the Commission will create a service for "on the fly" (Google like) translation of the search results.

LV commented that the results of the consultation reinforced what was already known. LV pointed out to the relatively low numbers of participants, suggesting that, for Ploteus, many of them might have been members of the Ploteus and Euroguidance networks. LV stressed the need for moderating focus groups before publishing the improved portal to the public.

BE also mentioned the low response and that more non users than users have filled in the surveys. BE also suggested on the need for moderating focus groups, as did the other participants of the meeting.

¹ List of participants in annex III

² The power point presentations used during the meeting are sent together with the meeting conclusions.

BE in addition mentioned the need for a portal that, in response to questions, would lead the user to a specific website to find his/her answers. BE stressed the need to find a balance between detailed information and more generic information, more specifically in relation to the translation of the website. Generic information is easier to translate. More specific information should be presented through links with national databases in the national languages. In case of desire of cross border mobility one should be capable of understanding the national language of the target country.

BE stressed also the necessity of active promotion of the websites by the Commission, enhanced with passive promotion through creating links to different websites.

AD 3 THEMATIC AREAS

The EQF/Portal steering group and the EQF advisory group agreed in 2013 on a testing of using ISCED FoET 2013 for structuring the databases. This approach had been tested in spring 2013 and its results were discussed during this meeting.

Further to the discussion the meeting participants agreed on the following proposal:

- ➤ The EQF/Ploteus databases will at this moment be structured based on ISCED 97 and will display the search criteria based on the draft ISCED 2013.
- ➤ Once the final version of ISCED FoET 2013 is available the Commission will structure the EQF/Ploteus databases accordingly;
- ➤ The Commission will develop more user friendly search criteria by November 2013
- ➤ The Commission will develop a mapping proposal from the ISCED 97 structure to the final FoET 2013;
- ➤ The mapping from ISCED 97 to newer 2013 versions will be done through the EQF/Ploteus portal software;
- All national thematic areas have to be mapped to one of the content related thematic areas. The category "Not known or unspecified" will be deleted in Ploteus. The database managers will be requested to improve the mapping to avoid loss of information

AD 4 THE EQF DATA MODEL

The Commission presented a proposal for the description of the learning outcomes for the purposes of searching information on the EQF portal. The participants in general agreed on the proposed approach with two important remarks:

- the concepts used have to be explained in detail to avoid misunderstanding by database managers and as such assuring the comparability of information provided
- the concept "Competences" used to describe learning outcomes in "Knowledge, Skills and Competences" is not correct, as in the EQF Recommendation the descriptors for "Competences" are formulated in degrees of autonomy and responsibility. An alternative concept should be proposed.

Further to the discussion the meeting participants agreed on the following proposal:

- ➤ The data model as proposed by the Commission can be implemented in principle. (See Annex I)
- ➤ The Commission will provide a definition of each concept in the proposed data model.
- The Commission will reflect on how to deal with the concept Competences

AD 5 DATA MODEL OF PLOTEUS

Learning Opportunities

The participants discussed the data model for Learning Opportunities as it was presented in the meeting documents.

Further to the discussion the meeting participants agreed on the following proposal:

- ➤ The data model as presented in Annex II will be discussed and if needed adapted and finalised in a meeting of the Ploteus Coordination Group with representatives of the Euroguidance network on 16 September 2013.
- > The Commission will provide a definition of each concept in the proposed data model

Education and Training, Exchange and Grants, Moving to another Country

The participants discussed the Commission Proposals for these topics. The Commission has adapted its proposals accordingly.

Further to the discussion the meeting participants agreed on the following proposal:

- ➤ The data model as here presented will be discussed and finalised in a meeting of the Ploteus Coordination Group with representatives of the Euroguidance network on 16 September 2013.
- For the topic of **Education and Training systems** Euroguidance centres shall provide the link to the relevant page for their country in "Eurypedia" and "Your life in the EU". These links will appear first in the search results.
- ➤ In addition the Euroguidance centres shall provide links to the relevant pages on websites of competent bodies in their country explaining **Education and Training systems**. These competent bodies might be the Ministries responsible for education and training, but also competent bodies for one or more subsectors or addressing specific target groups.
- For the topic of Recognition of foreign diplomas and qualifications a button will be created on the home page of Ploteus. Euroguidance centres shall provide links to relevant pages of i) the website on the free movement of professionals, ii) ENIC-NARIC centres, iii) "Eurypedia" and iv)"Your life in the EU". The topic will be taken out of the Education and Training Systems page.

- The information on **Exchange and Grants** needs to be complete, up to date and easily accessible.
- For the topic of **Moving to another Country** the discussion was inconclusive. The Commission will come with a proposal for the 16 September meeting with the Ploteus Coordination Group and representatives of Euroguidance centres
- ➤ The Commission will provide a protocol for Euroguidance and NDS's for each of the discussed topics.

STATE OF INTERCONNECTION

Boguslaw Gotkowski presented the current state of interconnection of databases with the EQF and Ploteus Portals. The information was checked with the participants leading to the following conclusions:

Ploteus

- 7 countries are connected based on the former way of interconnection (AT, BE, FR, GR, HU, LV, SE)
- 2 countries are connected through the more efficient use of XML (IE, LT)
- 2 countries are "in development" of interconnecting through XML (DK and NO)
- 6 countries have indicated to be interested in interconnection (HR, IT, NL, PT, RO, TR)
- 1 country has indicated not having plans to interconnect (EE)

EQF / Qualifications

- 0 countries are interconnected
- 2 countries have indicated to be interested to start with interconnection (UK and EE)
- 13 countries have indicated to be interested in interconnection, but not before November 2013 (AT,BE, CZ, FR, HR, GR, IT, LT, LV, NL, PT, RO, SI)

AD 6 NEXT STEPS

Member States are requested to connect databases of qualifications and learning opportunities to the EQF/Ploteus portal.

THE COMMISSION WILL:

- discuss the conclusions of this meeting in the Ploteus/Euroguidance meeting of 16 September and in the EQF AG meeting of 25/26 September after which the conclusions will be adapted if necessary and the data models will be finalised.
- send the latest version of the interconnection guidelines together with these conclusions. Connecting databases of learning opportunities to the Ploteus database AND connecting qualifications databases to the EQF portal can be done based on the steps explained in the EQF/Ploteus interconnection guidelines, provided by DG EAC's IT Unit.

- continue technical support with interconnection on demand with the possibility of Skype meetings and on-site visits.
- make funding available to Euroguidance centres for the setting up and development of learning opportunities databases in 2013 and intends to make funding available to both EQF-National Coordination Points for the setting up and development of qualifications databases and to Euroguidance centres for the setting up and development of databases for learning opportunities in 2014 through the Erasmus+ programme.
- develop user friendly search criteria for the thematic areas by November 2013.
- develop a user friendly new interface by November 2013 and will organise a test phase with users before actually going life

ACTIONS FOR MEMBER STATES

- Euroguidance centres are requested to update the information on learning opportunities in Ploteus I according to the dataset of Annex II.
- Euroguidance centres are requested to update the information on Education and training systems (the system, recognition and tuition fees), Exchanges and grants and Moving to a country according to the conclusions of this meeting.
- Euroguidance centres are requested to correct broken links as soon as they appear.
- The Commission will provide a possibility to update the Euroguidance entered data (Learning Opportunities, Country Information) using an excel file in order to easier update the currently obsolete entries.
- NDS's are requested to check if the information can be updated according to the conclusions of the meeting.

ANNEX I EQF DATA MODEL QUALIFICATIONS (JULY 2013)

EQF data model 2013					
Title of the quali	fication	Search field	Required		
Thematic Area ¹⁾		Search field	Required		
Country/Region	(code)	Search field	Required		
EQF Level			Search field	Required	
NQF Level	_		Search field	Required	
		Knowledge			
Description of	Either	Skills			
the		Competences ³⁾		Required	
qualification ²⁾	Or	Open text field describing what the learner is expected to know, understand and able to do		11000	
Awarding body ⁴⁾	1		Required		
Further informati	ion on the		Optional		
Source of inform	ation		Optional		
Link to suppleme	ent		Optional		
URL of the quali	fication		Optional		
Information lang	uage (coc		Optional		
Entry requiremen	nts		Optional		
Expiry date (if re	elevant)		Optional		
Ways to acquire	qualificat		Optional		
Relationship to o	ccupation		Optional		

- Ad 1) The Thematic area is ISCED97 to become ISCED FoET2013 after formal adoption. The Commission will develop more user friendly concepts to be used as search criteria by November 2013.
- Ad 2) The description of the qualification is only required in the native language.
- Ad 3) These labels (knowledge, skills, competences) will adapt to the actual terms used in the EQF level descriptors.
- Ad 4) The minimum required information on the Awarding body should facilitate to find information on the Awarding body. This would be the name of the Awarding body, or if applicable the name of the group of Awarding bodies, completed with an url or contact information.
- Ad 5) The open text field 'Further information on the qualification' provides the possibility for introducing additional information on the qualification

ANNEX II DATA MODEL |LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN PLOTEUS (JULY 2013)

	CATEGORY OF INFORMATION		EXPLANATION	PLOTEUS I	PLOTEUS II	COMMENTS
1	Country code		Country code	Required	Required	
2	Language of learning o	pportunity	Language in which the learning opportunity is provided	Required	Required	Valued by the user (72% current users, 62% potential users)
	Primary Education					
	Sacandary Education	General		Required Required	Required	
	Secondary Education	Vocational				
	E 1	General				
		Vocational	Level of Education Requi			
3	Higher Education	Short cycle				
		Bachelor				
		Master				
		Doctorate				
	Post Graduate Education	n				
	Adult Education					
4	4 Thematic area		All learning opportunities need to be allocated to one of the terms. "Not known or unspecified" is taken out of the list	Required	Required	ISCED 97 narrow and detailed fields will be used for structuring the data are until implementation of the final ISCED FoET 2013
5	5 Full-time; Part-time; On school location, distant learning Blended		Study type: (Multiple choices possible)	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Desired</u>	34% of the current users and 53% of potential users expect information on the

	CATEGORY OF INFORMATION	EXPLANATION	PLOTEUS I	PLOTEUS II	COMMENTS
	learning, Work-based learning, Apprenticeship, Traineeship, Other				study type.
6	Information Language	Language in which information about the learning opportunity is available	Required	Required	The survey shows that this information is valued by the user
	Special needs education				
7	International programmes	Special target group	Desired	Desired	
	Culture/Language courses for foreigners				
	Up to 3 months				
8	Up to 1 semester	Duration: Length of the course or	<u>Desired</u>	Desired	57% of current users and 54% of potential users find this information useful.
0	Up to 1 year	programme			
	Over 1 year				
9	Title of the learning opportunity	Unique title	Required	Required	The formal title of the learning opportunity
10	Description	Further information on the learning opportunity	Required	Required	
11	URL	Local data source URL that provides additional information on LO (must include http:// or https://)	Required	Required	The URL should lead to the information on the LO. If not possible then at least to the relevant page of the institute
12	Qualifications awarded	Unique title of the certificate awarded after completion of the learning	Required	Required	If in the next phase we would like to be able to search what learning opportunity leads to

	CATEGORY OF INFORMATION	EXPLANATION		PLOTEUS I	PLOTEUS II	COMMENTS
		opportunity				a qualification found in the EQF Portal and vice versa we need at least the title of the qualification awarded after completion of the course or programme
13	Awarding body	Name + contact information or URL		<u>Desired</u>	<u>Desired</u>	In case the qualification is not linked to the EQF (see 14)
		Either	Knowledge Skills Competences	ected and able	<u>Desired</u>	For qualifications that are part of an NQF and included in a qualifications database linked to the EQF Portal, a direct link to that qualification should be created in Ploteus. Technical issues and consequences to be resolved
14	Description of the Qualification	Or	Open text field describing what the learner is expected to know, understand and able to do after completion of the course/programme			
15	EQF level	If applicable		<u>Desired</u>	<u>Desired</u>	In case the qualification is linked to the EQF portal
16	NQF level	If applicable		Desired	Desired	
17	Access Requirements	Pre-requisites in order to attend the learning opportunity		Desired	Desired	59% of current users and 60% of potential users find this important information
18	Tuition fees and other costs	Price of the learning opportunity		<u>Desired</u>	<u>Desired</u>	50% of current users and 72% of potential users find this important information
19	Grants/Scholarships	Possible	e grants offered for attending	Desired	Desired	If information is available

	CATEGORY OF INFORMATION	EXPLANATION	PLOTEUS I	PLOTEUS II	COMMENTS
		the learning opportunity			
20	Credits	Number of credits gained when finishing the learning opportunity	Desired	<u>Desired</u>	This is information is relevant for higher education, a large percentage of Ploteus visitors
21	Provider Name		Required	Required	To be shown in Ploteus I and II
22	Provider Type		<u>Desired</u>	<u>Desired</u>	To be shown in Ploteus I and II
23	Provider Address		Required	Required	To be shown in Ploteus I and II
24	Provider Phone		Required	Required	To be shown in Ploteus I and II
25	Provider Email		Required	Required	To be shown in Ploteus I and II
26	Provider Website Url		Required	Required	To be shown in Ploteus I and II
27	Course City	If applicable	Required	Required	To be shown in Ploteus I and II
28	Course Address	If applicable	Required	Required	To be shown in Ploteus I and II
29	Course Postal code	If applicable	Required	Required	To be shown in Ploteus I and II
30	Course information on disabilities	If applicable			e.g. accessible for wheelchairs

ANNEX III LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

	Joint EQF/Ploteus portal steering group, 10 July 2013, Brussels						
MS	Last name	First Name	Organisation				
	EQF						
BE	Boomgaert	Wilfried	Flemish Ministry of Education and Training				
CZ	Berny	Libor	NUOV				
IT	Macrì	Diana	ISFOL				
LV	Baiba	Ramina	Academic Information Centre				
NL	Anneke	Tjalma	Ministry of Education				
PT	Pereira	Anabela	National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education				
SI	Marentic	Urska	СРІ				
UK	Simon	Perks	Ofqual				
		PLOTEUS/	Euroguidance				
AT	Ramírez-Schiller	Carin Dániel	Austrian National Agency for Lifelong Learning / Euroguidance Austria				
CZ	Vaněk	Vlastimil	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports				
IE	Lynch	Hilary	National Centre for Guidance in Education				
LV	Poreiters	Didzis	STATE EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY National Learning Opportunities Database				
RO	Nicolaescu	Marius Dorian	Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI)				

Mr Koen NomdenEuropean CommissionMrs Karin van der SandenEuropean CommissionMr. Boguslaw GotgowskiEuropean CommissionMr. Notis PikrosEuropean Commission

Mrs. Petra Ziegler 3S