



## CEDEFOP EXPERT WORKSHOP ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT EQF LEVELS 6 TO 8

Thessaloniki, 12 - 13 July 2010

### OUTLINE AND AGENDA <sup>(1)</sup>

#### Background to the workshop

The latest European policy documents on Education and Training <sup>(2)</sup> and on the New Skills for New Jobs Initiative <sup>(3)</sup> call for flexibility of education and training programmes to match the needs of the labour market in emerging and established sectors. The proposed target on educational attainment includes "increasing the share of the population aged 30-34 having completed tertiary education from 31% to at least 40% in 2020" and mentions thus this level of education might be reached by different paths.

Education and training in Europe is expected to undergo further changes including:

- The further increased involvement of employers into CVET provision;
- The development of flexible "à la carte" CVET concepts for heterogeneous groups of learners;
- The provision of CVET at higher qualifications levels, HE institutions offering customer-oriented training;
- The development of partnerships between education and training institutions and public and private employers;
- The promotion of vocational training in companies and high-quality apprenticeships.

Those selected elements from the European policy agenda link to the Cedefop study on vocationally oriented education and training in Europe at qualifications levels equivalent to levels 6 to 8 of the European Qualifications Framework <sup>(4)</sup>. The study is analysing the understanding of vocationally oriented education and training qualifications, answering the main questions of the rationales, characteristics and future development of vocational education and training at higher qualifications levels. It concentrates on vocational/professional qualifications or programmes, irrespective of where and how the

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<sup>(1)</sup> as of 24 June 2010 / Isabelle Le Mouillour

<sup>(2)</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/vocational-education/doc/com296\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/vocational-education/doc/com296_en.pdf)

<sup>(3)</sup> 3019th Employment, social policy, health and consumer affairs Council meeting (2010): <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/App/Search/searchMeta.aspx?id=1&lang=en&searchterm=3019th>

<sup>(4)</sup> Cedefop contract No 2009-0126/AO/ECVL/ILEMO/TSK/VET-levels-6to8/001/09 with Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação-Consultadoria Empresarial e Fomento da Inovação; S.A.

learning takes place in 13 countries<sup>(5)</sup>. It is an innovative research endeavour as it does not follow an institutional perspective (looking at the qualifications offers from a VET or a HE perspective or from a public education and training sector perspective, etc.) but rather focuses on the content of qualifications and their provisions.

Within this study, the development of qualifications frameworks is set as a dimension enabling to identify qualifications at a given level (6 to 8). The new style qualifications frameworks in Higher Education and the EQF following a learning outcomes approach and fostering progression are urging authorities and stakeholders to reconsider the relationship between their frameworks and their educational offers for Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher Education (HE). Available research activities enable to identify among the factors of change: the increasing questioning of the dichotomy between VET and HE (vocational vs. academic orientation), the loosening of ties between institutions and specific qualifications types thus resulting in a growing number of mixed participants and mixed programmes and the diversity of institutions offering VET at levels 6 to 8, emerging beyond the sphere of public education and training policies and regulations.

### The workshop

The workshop is dedicated in the first session to understanding and discussing the rationales, characteristics and developments of vocationally oriented education and training at higher levels of qualifications (levels 6 to 8 of EQF) in the selected countries. The second session of the workshop will deal with concrete case studies relying on comparative analysis of qualifications offered at higher level in the field of agro-food, nursing, ICT, distance learning in the finance sector, training for teachers of people with special needs and technology management. The third session will concentrate on the labour market perspective and open up the discussion to results from enterprise survey on the views of enterprises on higher vocational education and training. Keynote speeches will introduce the changing European landscape for higher vocational education and training, the reform of higher education and training in Norway and the employers' views on higher VET qualifications in Germany, Switzerland and England.

The workshop will close with a discussion on the key issues of relevance to future policy and research developments, linking to permeability and transition within education and training systems and to the labour market. This workshop is integrated in Cedefop current and future activities on permeability in education and training systems, the relationships between VET and HE, as well as on the development of national qualifications frameworks.

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(5) Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania and The Netherlands.

## AGENDA

## Monday 12 July 2010

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| 14:00 - 14:30 | <i>Registration</i>   |
| 14:30 - 15:30 | <p><b>Opening session</b><br/>Welcome by Cedefop</p> <p><b>European policy developments</b><br/>Jan Varchola, European Commission</p> <p><b>Keynote: Evolution or revolution? Setting the scene</b><br/>Isabelle Le Mouillour/Loukas Zahilas/Torsten Dunkel, Cedefop</p>  |
| 15:30 - 16:00 | <i>Tea/coffee break</i>   |
| 16:00 - 17:30 | <p><b>1<sup>st</sup> session on the study findings: Understandings of vocationally oriented education and training at higher levels of qualifications</b><br/>Peter Maassen, Hedda, Norway</p> <p><b>Main questions:</b> Which are the characteristics of VET at higher levels of qualifications? Which are the drivers for changes? Which are the institutional features linked to those qualifications?</p> |

## Tuesday 13 July 2010

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|---------------|--|
| 09:00 - 09:30 | <p><b>Keynote: Developing VET at higher levels in Norway</b><br/>Tormod Skjerve, HSH, Norway</p>   |
| 09:30- 10:30  | <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> session on the study findings: lessons from the case studies</b><br/>Douglas Thompson/Dora Fazekas, SPI, Portugal</p> <p><b>Main focus:</b> the characteristics of the practice of vocationally oriented education and training. The participants will split in small groups to concentrate on case studies from agro-food, nursing, and ICT sectors.</p> |
| 10:30 - 11:00 | <i>Tea/coffee break</i>  |
| 11:00 - 11:45 | <p><b>Keynote: Recruitment practices at middle-management level, looking at BA and VET graduates - A comparative analysis</b><br/>Ute Hippach-Schneider/Tanja Weigel, BIBB, Germany</p>  |
| 11:45 - 12:45 | <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> session: the labour market perspective</b><br/>Klaus Müller, WSF, Germany</p> <p><b>Main questions:</b> Competition between VET and HE? How do enterprises and employers view the development of qualifications at higher level? selected results from the employers survey carried out within the Cedefop study</p>                                      |
| 12:45 - 13:30 | <p><b>Closing session: Way ahead</b><br/>Cedefop</p>   |
| 13:30         | <i>Possibility for lunch at Cedefop</i>  |

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