



Thessaloniki, 30 October 2009

2ND WORKSHOP: TESTING THE EQF

Parallel Session 1: Sectoral approaches

The sectoral dimension is substantial in the various test and pilot projects (funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme) that systematically experiment and explore the EQF implementation. This tendency reflects the fact that qualifications are not exclusively awarded by public, national authorities, but also by industry sectors, multi-national companies, single enterprises and professions. This diversity of qualifications represents a challenge and also opportunities for individual citizens, for employers and for education and training authorities.

Increasing diversity of qualifications – for example triggered by internationalisation of markets and technology - may lead to a lack of transparency which threatens their role as trusted currencies in the labour market and education and training systems. The question is thus whether - and how - the EQF, as a common European reference point for qualifications, can help to increase the transparency of all qualifications, irrespective of their institutional or geographic origin? While we can observe a broad agreement that the EQF can be helpful in this respect, opinions vary considerably in terms of how to achieve this.

Projects have been initiated by a range of stakeholders, including sector organisations, social partners, national authorities and education and training institutions. While several of these projects are still at an early stage, success seems to be closely linked to the degree of involvement of all relevant stakeholders and the feeling of ownership to an initiative achieved.

Purpose of the sectoral session is to give the opportunity to project promoters and experts, based on their initial or advanced findings to exchange information and experiences and contribute to the discussion on the following issues:

How can sectoral qualifications frameworks relate to the EQF or to a national qualifications system or framework? Which are the requirements, procedures and obstacles in such a process from a political and a technical point of view?

Which are the problems if a sectoral framework/qualifications were to be part of more than one national systems/ frameworks, how should it be included in the referencing of all relevant national frameworks?

For sectoral frameworks, not belonging to national systems/ frameworks, which should be the referencing procedure? Is there a credible and functional body that can play the same role for sectoral frameworks of this type that the competent public authorities play in the case of national frameworks? Which is the role of quality assurance in the sectoral approaches? Who can finally speak on behalf of the sectors and which are the prerequisites for establishing a sectoral zone of quality assurance, trust and transparency?

Project promoters are welcome to contribute to the discussions around the above mentioned issues focusing on products, methods, experiences, and policy lessons drawn from the LdV project(s) they represent. To ensure there is enough time for discussion in this workshop, only three project promoters will be asked to present a power point but all project promoters should be prepared to contribute to the debate.

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