



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training



The changing roles of qualifications in governing the labour market

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Setting the scene

Cedefop's work on governance – introduction to the workshops

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Cedefop's work on governance

In recent years, Cedefop has increasingly focussed its activities on

- the **changing role of qualifications** and
- **how VET systems are governed and interact with other parts of the education and training system and the labour market.**

Using the insights gained through these activities Cedefop intends to launch a debate on VET governance in Europe.



Cedefop's work on governance

Studies on the

- **role of qualifications in governing occupations and professions.** It builds on comparative data from a number of countries and occupational sectors and provides an overview over the different forms of regulation,





Cedefop's work on governance

Studies on the

- **cooperation between education and training in renewing VET and the labour market**, delivers insights on how VET standards are defined and renewed focusing on the conditions for improving the relevance of VET qualifications.
- **partnerships for lifelong learning in Europe: Towards greater permeability of education and training providers** The focus is on national, regional and local level - and on how they can facilitate access and progression in VET and between VET and HE.





Setting the scene

Qualifications can be **important instruments of governance** as carriers of information and value (currencies) and influencing the way the occupations and professions are defined and regulated.

Qualifications as **regulatory instruments**:

- health and safety reasons
- quality of products and services, frequently presented as being in the interest of consumers and customers





Qualifications and the labour market

Qualifications:

- **instruments of communication**, signing a person's knowledge, skills and competences in a particular field and with regard to a specific occupation.
- **regulatory instruments**; entry requirements are set to determine that only people who have acquired the specific qualification (including diplomas, certificates, and licenses) may work in this occupation
- role of ensuring the **continued relevance of the skills** present in the work force

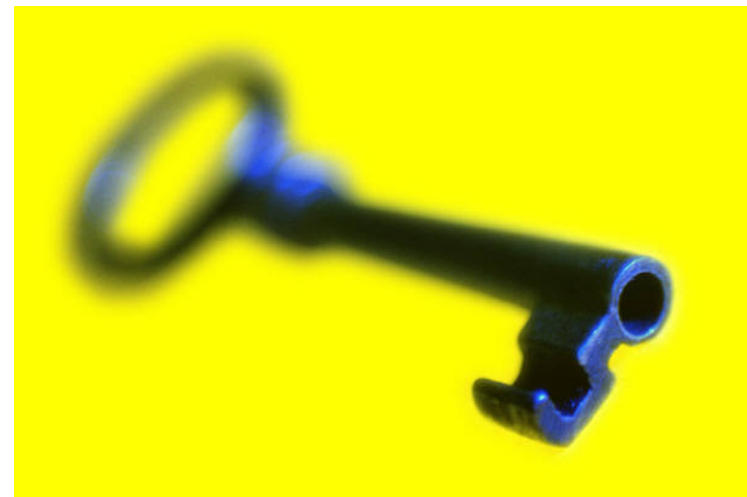




Qualifications and the labour market

Still qualifications can be **monopoly of some public sector professions** to regulate and control access to and conduct of particular tasks.

Qualifications **gate-keeping function** has traditionally been upheld by national governments strictly regulating the award of qualifications through delegation to designated institutions and systems.





Qualifications and the labour market

Although qualifications have a strong role in **translating occupational activities into learning outcomes** two reservations exist.

- the role of qualifications as instruments of governance be of practical relevance when it is embedded in **trusted institutional structures** and used in conjunction with other instruments such as occupational profiles, learning outcomes and qualifications frameworks
- Their **role** as crucial practical linking pins between the different actors can be quite **invisible**.



Working group 1

Questions

- How important are qualifications in linking labour market and education, both as an **instrument of governance** and as **actual currency on the ground**?
- How will the constant **redefinition** of occupational and professional content and requirements **influence** the use of qualifications by countries and sectors for **regulation and governance**?
- Which **models of governance of professions and occupations** can be identified in the different countries and sectors and how can these be described in terms of **principles and practical applications**?



International qualifications

Many qualifications are awarded at international level, **outside national authorities' jurisdiction**. These **'non-State' qualifications** have been developed and awarded by a wide range of bodies, organisations and companies addressing various purposes. This trend goes **against our traditional understanding of qualifications**, as 'papers of value' guaranteed by national authorities and can be seen as a direct reflection of globalisation of economies and labour markets





International qualifications

International qualifications can be issued in the framework of an **international, national, regional or sectoral qualification system**. There is **big diversity** in the companies, organisations and other bodies involved in developing and awarding international qualifications.

Flexibility and tailor-made solutions offered to the labour market is in many cases **counterbalanced by complications** created due to the many international certifications on offer.





International qualifications

The issue of **transparency**. The use of national qualifications is improving (national qualifications frameworks) but what about the international?

Quality also is of fundamental importance as in international qualifications is far more difficult to comprehend fully.

Future work lies at the crossroads of transparency and quality.



Working group 2

Questions

- Which are the necessary data-categories when developing an overview of what exists and emerges in the area of international qualifications?
- Which are the quality issues related to the accountability and openness of the processes leading to international qualifications?
- There is a strong relation between the type of international qualification and the sector, occupation or profession it relates to. Which can be the role of sectors in promoting the required trust and the labour market value?