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In the spotlight

ComProComProject Progress

ComProCom is running according to the agreed schedule.

Each partner completed a report on the use of professional competence frameworks in their country, i.e. the United Kingdom, Poland, Ireland, Austria, Germany and Greece, in December 2015. A Cross-Partner Synthesis Report titled *Models and uses of 'competence' in six EU countries' VET systems* was completed in February 2016.

The second partners' meeting was held on 2-4 February 2016, in Dresden (DE) and the third meeting on 8-9 June 2016, in Clane (IR). The first multiplier event took place in London (UK) on 6 May 2016, coordinated by the UK partner, SLD.

The partnership has developed draft competence frameworks in five areas (see page 2). These follow an innovative methodology, explained in the draft methodological manual that was produced in January. All frameworks will be validated through a wide consultation and trialling process that will run from July to December 2016. Following feedback from the development process, the methodological manual will be finalised and an associated training course will be developed.

News/Progress

Cross-Partner Report *Models and uses of 'competence' in six EU countries' VET systems*



Jola Religa (right) presenting the report at the 2nd Partners' Meeting

The “Cross-PartnerReport” synthesises the six partners’ national reports and presents similarities and differences in the six countries in areas that include:

- a. how competence is conceptualised and described;
- b. whether there are separate occupational standards or whether these are articulated only in qualification specifications or VET curricula;
- c. the degree of standardization of official descriptions (in terms of the methodology and format of the framework/specification);
- d. whether separate professional or industry standards are used;
- e. involvement of the different stakeholders in the development process; and
- f. relationship between descriptions of competence and national qualifications frameworks.

The report also discusses the different models in the context of European VET systems and labour markets. The report can be found on the [project web site](#). An associated article, “‘Competence’ and occupational standards: observations from six European countries”, has been accepted for publication in the refereed journal *Education + Training*.

Development of Competence Frameworks

The partnership has developed drafts of five competence frameworks, as follows:

- ∞ Business administration: Die Berater(AT);
- ∞ Chemical engineering (Meister level): SBG-Dresden (DE);
- ∞ Management of a social enterprise: EETAA(EL);



EETAA presents their competence framework to the Greek Support Group

- ∞ Training and development: Irish Institute of Training and Development(IR);
- ∞ Management of innovation: ITEE-PIB (PL).

These frameworks will be available shortly on the project web site. Following consultation with the relevant professions and industries they will undergo a smaller-scale but more in-depth trialling process that will be agreed with each partner, before being finalised early in 2017.

SLD (UK) is responsible for the methodological part of the framework development and trialling, providing advice and support to the other partners. A draft of the methodological manual was completed in January for presentation at the Dresden meeting, and a public version has also been produced pending the final version of the manual in 2017.

Second Meeting of the ComProComPartnership



2nd Partners' Meeting, Dresden(DE)

The second partners' meeting was held on 2-4 February 2016, in Dresden (DE). It was a challenging meeting since we had the chance to review our work in the context of the Cross-Partner Report presented by ITEE-PIB (PL), and launch our work on competence framework development on the basis of the methodological guidelines provided by SLD (UK). The knowledge-transfer element was dominant in the meeting.



Presentation of the methodological guidance by Stan Lester

During a two-day participative knowledge-transfer session, Dr Stan Lester(SLD – UK) presented a brief overview of concepts and development methodology, recapping from the first project meeting and highlighting approaches that had been agreed within ComProCom. Stan presented the methodological guidance on different aspects of developing the competence framework, with each input followed by an exercise or discussion.

ComProCom Multiplier Event in the UK

A UK Multiplier Event for ComProCom took place on 6th May 2016 in London, organized by SLD. The participants were presented with the work done under the "Review of the Current Situation" intellectual output, the ComProCom methodological approach and the rationale of the theoretical paper to be produced in the context of the project. Three participants also made short presentations on developments in the UK that were relevant to the project. A copy of Stan Lester's presentations can be found here: <http://devmts.org.uk/sl.pdf>.



Multiplier Event in London

Third Meeting of the ComProCom Partnership

The third partners' meeting was held on 8–9 June 2016, in Clane, Ireland. There, we had the chance to discuss the first results of competence framework development in each country and plan our next steps. Our host, IITD, invited Dr Angela O'Donovan to participate as an external party in the second day of the meeting. She made a valuable contribution in the methodological discussion in view of both the methodology and the training programme to be developed.



ComProCom Partnership Meeting in Clane (IR)

Dissemination Event in Poland



The Polish partner (ITeE-PIB) organised a seminar titled *Ewolucja standardów kompetencji zawodowych* (*Evolution of the professional competence standards*), presenting the ComProCom project on 23 June at the Łódź University – one of the biggest and most famous Polish universities.

The event covered the Cross-Partner Report, the new approach to the process of development of competence descriptions (the methodology manual), as well as the first draft of the competence framework for innovation management, developed according to the



new methodology by the Polish project team. The discussion forum comprised theoreticians and practitioners of vocational education (especially non-formal education) involved in creating the trends for the Polish qualification system. Dr Jolanta Religa and Dr Dorota Koprowska, making the presentations and moderating the discussion, collected many interesting comments, including doubts about the future of professional competence standards in Poland (till today) as independent documents.

Conference presentation in the UK

On 24 June, Dr Stan Lester (SLD) gave a presentation at the University for the Arts in London for the Universities' Association for Lifelong Learning's Work and Learning conference. Entitled 'Competence, capability and context', it explained the model being used in ComProCom and put it into the context of increasing complexity in professional work.

News from the field of occupational research and practice

Funding for UK National Occupational Standards withdrawn in England

National Occupational Standards (NOS) were introduced in the UK in the late 1980s, underpinning National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and forming a major policy tool for aligning vocational education and training (VET) with industry needs. Over the last decade, NOS have become less central to VET and no longer play a mandatory role in the design of qualifications or apprenticeships; a separate system has recently been introduced that enables groups of employers to develop apprenticeship specifications directly. The Government has now withdrawn funding from NOS in England, and the body responsible for overseeing them, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, is being wound up. NOS or similar standards are likely to remain where the relevant industries are prepared to fund them, and they will also continue to be supported in other parts of the UK. The standards-setting function of professional bodies, which is generally not supported by public funding, will be unaffected by the move.

What's next?

Next Partnership Meeting, in Poland

The next partners' meeting will take place in 8-9 February 2017, in Radom (PL).



Partners



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