



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

Comparing vocational qualifications in 26 countries worldwide

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Cedefop project 2015-2017:

The role of learning outcomes in supporting dialogue between education and training and the labour market

- The aim of the study was to better understand how vocational qualifications are being defined, reviewed and renewed
- The purpose was to develop a methodology for the comparison of and better understanding of vocational qualifications – focussing on what learners are expected to know, be able to do and understand
- Originally covering 10 European countries, but extended to 26 countries worldwide, in cooperation with UNESCO
- The study was made possible by the terminology of skills made available by ESCO v0.1



Covered on a global basis (26 countries)

Bricklayer/mason

Healthcare assistant

Hotel assistant/receptionist

ICT service technician

Covered only in Europe (10 countries)

Dental assistant

Farm management professional

Logistics technician

Machine operator

Plumber (cooling and heating)

Sales assistant

Countries covered

Region	Countries
Africa	Mauritius
	Namibia
	Tunisia
	South Africa
	Zambia
Asia	Korea (KR)
	Philippines (PH)
Caribbean Region and Latin America	Barbados
	Chile
	Costa Rica
Europe	Albania
	Austria
	Bulgaria
	Denmark
	Finland
	France
	Ireland
	Lithuania
	Macedonia
	Netherlands
	Spain
	UK-England
Middle East	United Arab Emirates (UEA)
Pacific Region	New Zealand

A two-step approach to comparison of qualifications

1. An initial comparison of the structure and functions of the qualifications covered

- What level (EQF, ISCED)
- What labour market access is provided by the qualification
- What access to further education and training is provided by the qualification

2. A main comparison of the learning outcomes of the qualifications; what a candidate is expected to know, be able to do and understand

Comparative analysis of learning outcomes

An analysis of the documents underpinning qualifications in the 26 countries
– standards, curricula and programme descriptions

With a reference to

- ESCO multilingual terminology on job and occupational specific skills and competences
- ESCO (cross sectoral reference group) terminology on transversal skills and competences

Until now (with the possible exception of the US O*Net) we have lacked a sufficiently robust and detailed terminological reference point for comparison

- The project made it possible to test whether ESCO can be used as a reference point – and how it can be improved



Why using ESCO as a reference point?

On **the positive side**, ESCO provided us with a skills terminology

- clearly occupationally related
- agreed at international level
- multi-lingual
- sufficient detailed to be used for analysing qualifications

On **the negative side**, ESCO provided us with a skills terminology

- still under development and insufficiently quality assured
- An insufficiently developed approach to transversal and cross-sector skills and competences

ICT service technician – occupational specific skills and competences

[illegible]

ICT Technician – main similarities and differences; occupational skills and competences

Present in all countries

- Maintain ICT system
- Perform ICT trouble shooting
- ICT network cable limitation
- Administer ICT systems
- Perform backups
- Repair ICT systems
- Use repair manuals
- ICT communications protocols

Missing in more than 6-8 cases

- Procurement of ICT network equipment
- Define firewall rules
- ICT encrypton
- Computer programming
- ICT system programming
- Service oriented modelling
- Manage ICT system legacy implications
- Operate private branch exchange

Health care assistant - transversal skills and competences

[illegible]



Healthcare Assistant –transversal skills and competences

Present in all countries

Follow hygienic work practise
Follow safety precautions
Apply quality standards
Interact with others
Report facts
Manage time
Use body language
Work in teams

Missing in more than 6 cases

- Handle quantitative data
- Support gender equality
- Demonstrate intercultural competence
- Use learning strategies
- Think creatively
- Lead others
- Foreign language

The role of transversal skills and competences

Present in more than 90% of cases:

- Interact with others
- Work in teams;
- Follow safety precautions in work practices;
- Apply quality standards;
- Manage time;
- Make decisions;
- Evaluate information;
- Report facts;
- Carry out work-related calculations

Absent in more than 50% of cases

- Foreign language
- Support gender equality

Given the importance of transversal skills and competences, and how these interacts with occupational specific skills, the next version of ESCO needs to give priority to further developing this part of the terminology

Key messages

- It is possible to compare the coverage of learning outcomes in specific qualifications across countries
- Comparison of qualifications is crucial as it directly supports mutual learning between countries; in a situation where international technologies and labour markets influence skills requirements as well as provisions
- The balance between occupational-specific and transversal skills is crucial for future qualifications developments; this aspect must be further addressed
- The digital factor will improve our capacity to compare learning outcomes and ESCO should support this

Key messages

- Cedefop will continue working with ESCO as a reference point for comparison of qualifications
- During the period 2018-2020 Cedefop will carry out work focussing on how to develop our capacity to carry out comparisons by
 - Identifying strengths and weaknesses in the current version of ESCO
 - looking at existing alternative reference points, for example O*Net and World Skills
 - exploring how we digital technologies can support us in increasing our capacity in this area