ESCO 2013 MAI 008 FINAL

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DRAFT MINUTES

10th meeting of the ESCO Maintenance Committee

11-12 December 2013

Thon Hotel EU, Brussels

1. Opening of the meeting

Mr Tony BIRD chaired the meeting.

The minutes of the 9th meeting of the MAI were adopted unanimously.

The agenda for the 10th meeting of the MAI was approved unanimously.

2. Thematic bloc 1: further developing the methodology for ESCO v1

Ms Gerd Goetschalckx asked the SEC to add as an action point the publication of technical documentation on the ESCO data for people wanting to use or map to ESCO. While conceptual data about the concepts and relations is already described in the ESCO Guidelines, technical information will have to be added, e.g. how the RDF files are built and the release notes.

Ms Goetschalckx updated the MAI on the outcome of the last ESCO Board (BOA) meeting.

The MAI members expressed the concern that no private employment services (PRES) are represented in the MAI.

Mr Jens Bjornavold and Mr Martin Le Vrang presented the status of the BOA discussion on the use of learning outcomes in ESCO. Moreover they introduced the BOA conclusion on the topic: the SEC and MAI will develop the methodology to create some test cases. These will be used to ground the definition of alternative approaches for the inclusion of the learning outcomes. The alternative approaches will eventually be presented to the BOA.

Mr Bjornavold explained that the discussion should be focused on the best way to develop concrete cases and that these will help the SREF define their set of terms.

The MAI members discussed about the scope of learning outcomes in the ESCO project and how they fit into the ESCO business cases.

The MAI agreed that the term "learning outcomes" has a strong association with qualifications, in the sense that a learning outcome is a skill, knowledge or competence achieved as a result of a learning process. The MAI believed that the use of this term should be parked and we should use instead the subset of this information so that there is no sensitivity from either the world of work or the world of education. However, through the test cases we will have to check whether the knowledge, skills and competences terminology used by the education and training can add to the terminology taken from the occupational side in the SC pillar.

The SEC proposed tagging as a method for establishing the relationship between the SC and the Q pillar. In the SEC proposal such relationship would be a very loose one that would not interfere with the structure of the ESCO pillars.

Mr Bird summarised: tagging is another information source. It is a pointer to individual learning outcomes. It provides another set of information that an employer could look into as additional information about the learning experience of the jobseeker.

Mr Le Vrang stressed that the SREF could be involved in the tagging or awarding bodies could make a proposal to be fed to the SREF workflow. However, when it comes to the indirect inclusion, the tagging should be built in the EQF process.

The MAI agreed that two different panels will test occupational profiles and qualifications descriptions. Such data should be related to the domain of the first wave of Sectoral Reference Groups ("Agriculture, Forestry, Fishery" and "Hospitality and tourism"), as they are the most advanced in the process:

- A panel of labour market and education and training experts drawn from the SREF;
- A panel of experts drawn from the ESCO management bodies, from ministries, from the PES and from the EQF AG.

The panels will work in the form of workshops and they will analyse outputs of the SREF, occupational profiles and qualifications descriptions. The goal is threefold:

a) comparing the terminologies of the two sides (employment and education and training) to identify similarities and differences;

b) investigating if the terms can be easily categorised as skills, competences and knowledge and discussing the added value of such distinction;

c) testing whether the use of action verbs can help the SREFs to populate the SC pillar.

The MAI identified the following questions to be addressed in the testing phase:

1. How relevant are these vocabulary descriptors in the SC pillar?
2. What is the added value of adding learning outcomes terminology to job matching?
3. What would the impact of this new task be on the current workload of the SREF? What percentage of the current work will the SREF need to change?
4. What additional time/resources does this new task impose to the SREF in terms of the burden to deliver against our timeframe?

Such questions would lead the MAI and the SEC to further investigate where the right place is in the current methodology to add this task.

In a second phase, selected members of the SREF (2nd and 3rd group) will be asked to compare the skills and competences developed by the panel with the ones they have initially identified.

Some MAI members could also join one or all of these groups.

The communication is crucial: the SEC should clarify why these panels are being set up, what they are there to do and what we expect their work will lead to. We need to avoid de-motivating the SREF with the prospect of redoing the work. The SEC will remind them that the Guidelines describe the methodology for the inclusion of learning outcomes as to be further defined: the 4th step will be reviewed and the methodology for step 5 refined.

The MAI recommended that the mandate of the groups should prescribe them to take into account national differences in the description of learning outcomes. The terminology described at European level should accommodate any variations at national level.

Actions to be taken:

- The SEC will work with the contractor to develop technical documentation for people interested in using ESCO or in mapping to ESCO
- The SEC will report the key points of the discussion in the meeting minutes
- The SEC will set up the panel of experts for the analysis of the test cases: the process will take the form of a feasibility study
- The SEC will develop a mandate for these groups to be validated by the MAI

3. Thematic bloc 2: planning future activities

Mr Vito Spinelli presented the ESCO work plan for 2014 as an information point.

4. Thematic bloc 3: progress of the SREFs and questions

The SEC members provided the MAI with an overview of the progress of the SREF. They presented the SREF preliminary results and the questions submitted to the MAI.
The results of this discussion will be included in the reports to each individual SREF. They will firstly be submitted to the MAI to be endorsed via written procedure and then delivered to the SREF as an official MAI document.
Ms Karin Vander Sanden updated the MAI on the developments of the last CSREF meeting.
The MAI briefly discussed communication issues towards the SREF.
The MAI agreed that a new Internal Communication meeting should be organised this year and that recognition should be paid to the SREF members on the ESCO Portal.
The MAI confirmed that its members will rotate to visit SREF meetings, giving priority to the ones most in trouble.

Actions to be taken:

- The SEC will provide the MAI with a calendar of the SREF meetings
- The SEC will plan and organise the next Internal Communication meeting

5. Thematic bloc 4: publication of the next ESCO releases

Mr Massimiliano Molinari presented the draft time plan for the release of ESCO v0.1 and ESCO v0.2.
Mr Aldo Laudi presented a SEC proposal for implementing alternative approaches for the development of ESCO v1.
The MAI members appreciated the SEC intention to speed up the process but also stressed the importance of assuring quality of the final output.
The MAI agreed that the 3rd (blended) approach seems to be the more promising by including sectoral experts representatives, professional taxonomists and an online consultation. However, before finalising the methodology, we need to define which expertise we need from the TEG and

which from the reviewers. The MAI members will provide further input in this regard and in term of the process.

The MAI appreciated in particular the idea of using crowdsourcing as a validation tool. Mr Le Vrang added that the SEC will investigate with the contractor how long it would take to adapt the CTC (the Collaborative Taxonomy Creator) for crowdsourcing and the impact of this lead time on the work of the SREF.

For validation purposes, the MAI recommended that the input of the SREF professional network is recorded as evidence.

Mr Le Vrang presented a proposal to enrich the content of ESCO v0 through Natural Language Processing (NLP).

The MAI suggested that when analysing job vacancies via NLP we should be careful to not include company-specific terms.

The MAI stressed the importance of quality assurance: sources should be reliable and the data should be validated by human intervention.

Actions to be taken:

- The MAI will provide input to define the kind of expertise we need (TEG and reviewers) and this information will be embedded in the methodology paper to be presented to the BOA
- The SEC will investigate with the contractor if the CTC can be adapted for crowdsourcing

6. Thematic bloc 5: ESCO Guidelines v1 and way forward

Mr Le Vrang presented the SEC proposal for developing pilot mappings with selected PES. The pilot phase should start in early 2014.

Ms Goetschalckx will investigate if and how the testing can be performed in the VDAB system, which has been working already for about half a year with structured data. However the scenario should be developed further.

The next MAI meeting is scheduled on 19-20 March.

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Participants

ESCO Maintenance Committee Members

Heatwood, Cathy	Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), Principal Officer Qualifications and Skills Accreditation
Goetschalckx, Gerd	VDAB, Co-ordinator R&D
Bird, Tony	Lantra Sector Skills Council, Head of Business Development
Bergenhill, Rita	PES Sweden
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ESCO Secretariat

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Excused

Diekmann, Knut	Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce, Director Principals of Further Vocational Education Policy
O'Connor, John	National Qualifications Authority of Ireland, Development officer
De Ruijter, Judith	AO Consult, Senior researcher/advisor
Wechsler, Dietmar	BW Bildung und Wissen Verlag, Service provider and information expert in the fields of education, training, occupations and careers
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Le Cardinal, Olivier	Pôle emploi
Bouselsal, Sarah	Pôle emploi
Goulet, Valerie	Pôle emploi, Pole ROME Adviser
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