

# Minutes of the expert groups

Brussels, 30/10/2019

## Minutes

31st ESCO MAI

20 September 2019, Brussels

### **1. Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of previous meeting**

The Agenda of the meeting was approved with one further point for discussion under AOB: the MAI requested information on the state of play of the evaluation of the applications submitted by Member States for receiving financial support to map national classifications to ESCO.

The minutes of the 30<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved without further changes.

### **2. Nature of the meeting**

The meeting was non-public. The Commission (COM) opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the MAI. COM introduced Koen Polley, new member of the ESCO support team since August, who brings experience in the area of skills from VDAB, and Felix Pozo, who will support the ESCO team until November 2019. Finally, COM welcomed Mr Zoltan Patkai from the EURES team, who joined the meeting as guest.

### **3. List of points discussed**

#### **3.1 Information on recent developments**

COM invited any comments on the note on recent ESCO developments (MAI 31-02). The MAI requested more information on the composition of the new expert group on transversal skills. COM clarified that four experts had been appointed:

- Jens Bjornavold, from Cedefop;
- Martin Noack, senior expert in the fields of lifelong learning and validation;
- Claudia Plaimauer, from 3s (research institution in the fields of education and labour market), and also member of the expert group defining a skills hierarchy for ESCO;
- John Hart, independent consultant on transversal skills with experience in the UNESCO framework.

Members asked to participate to the webinar of the pilot project on linking qualifications to ESCO skills that will take place next 14<sup>th</sup> of October.

COM informed the MAI on recent political developments, in particular regarding the new Commission. Topics related to skills and qualifications will fall under the umbrella of the Commissioner for Jobs (Nicolas Schmit) while education and training will be the responsibility of the Commissioner for Innovation and Youth (Mariya Gabriel). Vice-Presidents Vladis Dombrovskis and Margaritis Schinas will also have responsibilities in that area, as they will hold the portfolios “An Economy that Works for People” and “Protecting our European Way of Life” (including education related topics) respectively.

Follow up action: COM to invite MAI members to attend the webinar on 14<sup>th</sup> of October.

## **3.2 Thematic Block 1: Structuring the ESCO skills pillar**

### 3.2.1 Defining a structure for the ESCO skills pillar

Mr David Hunter, as member of the expert group drafting a hierarchy for the ESCO skills pillar, presented the progress of the work. The hierarchy is a single all-embracing framework, including four different concept types: knowledge, skills, attitudes and values and languages. Since the last MAI, the expert group completed the work on the third level of the hierarchy. Mr Hunter acknowledged that the work had been more complex than expected.

The ESCO Team updated the MAI on the exercise of allocating 2837 knowledge concepts ISCED-F.

Main points during the subsequent discussion were as follows:

- Some adjustments in ISCED-F might be needed as there were some concepts that could not be properly allocated;
- COM believes that the hierarchy needs to be further improved before the ESCO team could start allocating the ESCO skills concepts to it. The logic order of the 1<sup>st</sup> level categories requires further reflection.
- Members mentioned that the relationships between broader and narrower concepts are not correctly used in some cases, which may lead to misallocations;
- Members pointed out the importance to update the occupations with new skills that become important in the market;
- Members underlined that additional categories next to “attitudes and values” could be needed;
- Members asked if an update of ISCED-F is foreseen, as there are continuous changes in the economy and new domains might be needed;
- Members underlined the lack of a dedicated category for skills related to childcare.

Mr Hunter acknowledged that some relations need to be reviewed and further categories can be added. Regarding the revision of ISCED-F, Mr Hunter stated that to his knowledge a revision is not currently foreseen.

COM thanked the experts for their work on the hierarchy and informed Members that the allocation exercise of the remaining 10 000 skills will start as soon as the hierarchy is mature enough for this exercise.

### 3.2.2 Workshop 1: Discussion in parallel groups on creating a usability testing plan for the skills hierarchy

COM presented the objectives of the workshop:

- To brainstorm about the different needs of ESCO implementers and the problems they might overcome by using a skills hierarchy;
- To learn from Members’ own experience how the hierarchy should meet those needs;
- To co-create a usability testing plan for the skills hierarchy (including actors to be involved, phase of testing/iterations, collecting metrics, etc).

Members were divided in two parallel groups, one working on the use case of Monster and the other one on discussing the usability of the skills hierarchy in EURES. One rapporteur from

each parallel group summarized the outcome of the parallel discussions to all members. The following points were underlined:

- The exercise was useful to understand the point of view of the two implementers and to learn how they want to apply ESCO and what their requirements to use the skill hierarchy are;
- Both use cases showed the importance of having a hierarchy and its added value compared to the current structure of the ESCO skills pillar;
- Scope notes and clear definitions of the different levels and categories of the skills hierarchy are very important for job matching;
- It was questioned whether “attitudes and values” are relevant for job matching;
- The ESCO team should organise the testing with a diversity of groups from different industries based on similar testing scenarios;
- The goal of the testing should be to compare results in job matching before and after having a hierarchy;
- One of the main purposes of the hierarchy is to group together skills that have a high degree of transferability.

Follow up action: COM invited Members to submit written comments on the hierarchy and to express their interest in testing the hierarchy within two weeks.

### **3.3 Thematic block 2. Towards ESCO v1.1**

#### 3.3.1 Opportunities for collecting input to update ESCO:

A presentation of the new Hungarian national job vacancy portal using ESCO job-specific skills. Tibor Kovács presented the new Hungarian national job vacancy portal, which will go live at the beginning of 2020. For the moment, the system is using ESCO job-specific skills for job matching purposes. Once the portal is live, it will generate feedback for the continuous improvement of ESCO.

Main points during the subsequent discussion were as follows:

- Members asked the position of Hungarian social partners regarding this initiative.
- COM asked about the progress of Hungary regarding the mapping process.

Mr Kovacs explained that the level of support of Hungary’s social partners is not known yet, but the present version of the Hungarian job portal is not used by them. Mr Kovacs clarified that the mapping process falls under the responsibility of the Hungarian Ministry of Finance.

#### 3.3.2 A risk management plan for ESCO v.1.1

COM presented a draft risk management plan, including concrete actions for the practical implementation of the risk mitigation strategy within the project timeline. Risks and mitigation actions were identified in six areas of action: communicating ESCO, implementing ESCO, maintaining and updating ESCO, developing a toolkit, maintaining and enlarging the stakeholder community and translating ESCO.

Main points during the subsequent discussion were as follows:

- Members asked about involvement of experts in the translations;
- Members asked about the expected deadline for translations.

COM replied that it is necessary to organise a workflow for translations allowing for the involvement of national experts. COM mentioned that translations of v.1.1 need to take place in the course of 2021.

### 3.3.3 Workshop 2: Discussion in parallel groups on the risks identified for ESCO v.1.1 and possible remediation.

COM presented the objectives of the workshop:

- Collect Members' input on the initial list of risks and suggested remediation actions;
- Set up a list of priorities;
- Agree on the way forward.

One rapporteur from each parallel group summarized the outcome of the parallel discussions to all members. The following points were underlined:

- Communication could be improved by nominating ESCO ambassadors in Member States or by creating an awareness campaign focusing on the perspective for the end-user;
- Communication materials should be translated into all EU official languages;
- Translations are very important for the quality of ESCO and it is important to set up a process that involves local authorities;
- It is important to identify new occupations and skills and include them in the new version;
- Consistency problems could be fixed by looking at the classification from a horizontal perspective.

## **3.4 AOB**

COM informed that updates on the financial support for the mapping will be provided to the Member States Working Group on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October.

Mr Simone Ravaioli informed members of his participation to the IMS Europe summit 2019 in Barcelona on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of October, where he will present ESCO.

## **4. Next meeting**

The next MAI meeting is scheduled for the 12<sup>th</sup> of November 2019.

## **5. List of participants**

### List of present members and observers

Bakker Marcel  
 Cerk Tina  
 Goetschalckxs Gerd  
 Harold Alison  
 Hunter David  
 Kikute Lelde

Kopyt Marek  
Kovács Tibor  
Kozakova Diana  
Mirski Peter  
Mrsic Leo  
Postavaru Nicolae  
Ramombordes Cecile  
Ravaioli Simone  
Sundin Kenneth  
Triganza Clyde  
Valk Sarah  
Van der Sanden Karin

List of absent members and observers

Bird Tony  
Szebeni Kinga (DG EMPL)  
Franco Ana (Eurostat)  
Flaka Katerina  
Ulovec Martin  
Kvetan Vladimir

List of guests

Zoltan Patkai (EURES)