



ESCO (2013) BOA 008 FINAL

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MINUTES

10th meeting of the ESCO Board

25 November 2013

Berlin

Item 1 **Closed session of the ESCO Board**

The meeting started with a closed session of the ESCO Board without the presence / participation of the ESCO Secretariat. At the end of the closed session, the ESCO Board invited the ESCO Secretariat to join the ESCO Board meeting.

Mr Groombridge informed the ESCO Secretariat on the outcome of the closed session of the ESCO Board:

In the closed session the ESCO Board discussed two main topics: the communication of the ESCO Board with the ESCO Secretariat and the next ESCO Board term.

- As agreed in 3rd ESCO Board meeting of 28 October 2011, the meeting minutes will remain to be written as operational conclusions. At the end of each agenda item, the Chair of the Board will formulate a conclusion for the meeting minutes. After this conclusion by the Chair, ESCO Board members can ask to have additional points or remarks to be included into the minutes.
- The ESCO Board asks the ESCO Secretariat to send the draft ESCO Board agenda six weeks prior to the meeting and to be agreed by all ESCO Board members
- At the latest two weeks prior to the meeting, the ESCO Board wishes to receive all deliverables for the meeting.

Mr Groombridge emphasises that both requests are crucial to allow the ESCO Board to play a more strategic role and add value to the project. Mr Groombridge will discuss the matter further with Mr Peter Thiele, Ms Wallis Goelen and Ms Ana Carla Pereira.



Item 2 Opening of the meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Jeremy Groombridge.

Mr Groombridge opened the ESCO Board meeting with the introduction of a newly appointed member of the ESCO Board: Mr Tormod Skjerve and a new member of the ESCO Secretariat (SEC), Mr Massimiliano Molinari, IT Project Manager.

Mr Groombridge presented the draft agenda of the meeting for adoption to the ESCO Board members. Ms Brigitte Bouquet informed the ESCO Board that the EQF Advisory Group needs to be consulted on the item of learning outcomes before decisions are taken by the ESCO Board. On the request of Ms Bouquet, the ESCO Board accepted to change the nature of this agenda item from a discussion to an informal conversation.

After this alteration, the agenda of the meeting was adopted unanimously.

Mr Groombridge presented the draft minutes of the 9th ESCO Board meeting for adoption to the ESCO Board members. Ms Bouquet requested to include in the minutes that she has been welcomed as newly appointed ESCO Board member. After this request, the draft minutes of the 9th ESCO Board meeting were adopted unanimously.

Follow up actions:

1. The draft minutes of the 9th ESCO Board meeting will be altered reflecting Ms Bouquet's request.

Item 3 Review "ESCO Goes Live" Conference

Ms Cristina Perera Orcastegui shortly informed the ESCO Board on the reactions and feedback to the go live of the ESCO Portal and the "ESCO Goes Live" Conference.

Ms Katrien Vander Kuylen presented the deliverable ESCO (2013) SEC 076 DRAFT "ESCO Goes Live - Q&A" to the Board.

Mr Groombridge noted that the ESCO Board was surprised by the call for new members for the Maintenance Committee and Reference Groups at the end of the Conference. Mr Martin Le Vrang explained the call was needed for several reasons:

- To increase the awareness of the participants of the conference that ESCO is being created with great stakeholder participation
- The Maintenance Committee and several existing Sectoral Reference Groups need additional experts



- To create new Sectoral Reference Groups.

Mr Groombridge asked the ESCO Secretariat how to assess the outcome of the conference and what the parameters for assessing the outcome would be.

Mr Le Vrang explained that the ESCO Secretariat has the impression that the amount of participants was a good indicator as well as the amount of interest shown during and after the conference. It is too early to evaluate the input from the country team discussions on the national implementation of ESCO. A final report of the country team discussions will be prepared and send to the Board.

The ESCO Board agreed:

- To publish the "ESCO Goes Live" – Q&A on the ESCO Portal, readily available for all stakeholders and notify all participants of the conference on its publication;
- To publish the recruitment procedure for the different ESCO management bodies on the ESCO Portal;
- On the need to develop a national structure to engage national stakeholders to start with the national implementation of ESCO. Mr Groombridge will bring this message to the Heads of Public Employment Services (HOPES) in the December meeting in Vilnius. DG EMPL and DG EAC will officially communicate on the matter to their national stakeholders too;
- To be informed by the ESCO Secretariat on the individual performance of members of the management bodies. Possible criteria for measuring the performance can be attendance rates to meetings, activity in between meetings, provide input via email/SINAPSE;
- That the management and follow up of Reference Groups lies within the responsibility of the Maintenance Committee. An early warning system might assist the Maintenance Committee to respond quickly when a Reference Group faces blocking issues.

Ms Bouquet pointed the attention of the ESCO Board to the qualifications pillar, where EQF levels have been assigned to some international qualifications. This error was already noticed by DG EAC and instructions to correct this in the next release in December have been given.

Follow up actions:

1. The ESCO Secretariat will publish the recruitment procedure for the different management bodies and the "ESCO Goes Live – Q&A" on the ESCO Portal. It will notify participants of the



conference on the publication of the information. Additionally, the ESCO Secretariat will send a copy to Ms Brigitte Bouquet.

2. Jeremy Groombridge will present the ESCO project and the need for national implementation on the HOPES meeting in Vilnius.
3. The ESCO Secretariat will send the final report of the country team discussions on the national implementation of ESCO to the ESCO Board.

Item 4 ESCO Board term 2014-2015

Ms Goelen informed the ESCO Board members on the ending of the ESCO Board term in December 2013. Moreover, she inquired who of the ESCO Board members is willing to take up an additional term. For this new term, the mandate of the ESCO Board will be redesigned. The ESCO Board can be enlarged but will maintain the balance between the world of education and training and the labour market. She also informed the ESCO Board that she will step down from the ESCO Board due to being assigned to the European Social Fund. Ms Goelen announced that her successor in the ESCO Board will be Mr Detlef Eckert, responsible Director for ESCO within DG EMPL.

Follow up actions:

1. The European Commission will redesign the mandate of the ESCO Board
2. All ESCO Board members are invited to send an email to Mr Martin Le Vrang (with Ms Wallis Goelen and Ms Ana Carla Pereira in copy) to inform the European Commission on their wish to continue or discontinue as a member of the ESCO Board.
3. ESCO Board members are welcome to highlight missing expertise or representation within the current ESCO Board.
4. On behalf of the European Commission, the ESCO Secretariat will publish the call for new BOA members

Item 5 Learning outcomes in ESCO

Mr Martin Le Vrang and Mr Jens Bjornavold presented the deliverable ESCO (2013) SEC 078 FINAL "Learning outcomes as part of the ESCO project" to the ESCO Board. After the presentation, Mr Groombridge opened the conversation and invited all board members to a round of table. All members kindly accepted the invitation and shared their point of view on the matter. Not the entire conversation was logged in these minutes, only some of the main remarks.



Ms Bouquet informed the ESCO Board that this item needs to be presented and discussed at the next EQF Advisory Group. Only then it should be discussed by the ESCO Board and a subsequent decision can be taken.

As Mr Thiele had to leave the meeting, he opened the conversation with his feedback on the proposal. Mr Thiele agreed with the proposal on the table, but expressed his reservations regarding the proposal of tagging qualifications with learning outcomes. He expressed the need to know how learning outcome descriptions can be included into the skills/competences pillar and wondered how to establish an equal footing of education and employment within the skills and competences pillar.

On the request of Mr Thiele, Mr Le Vrang explained to the ESCO Board that tagging is one of the solutions the Secretariat investigated. The two other options are 1) to develop a rich vocabulary that can be used to create full learning outcome descriptions and replace existing learning outcome descriptions; 2) to create more formal links between skills, competences and knowledge and qualifications.

Mr Le Vrang added that it is crucial to develop ESCO as a vocabulary which can be accessed and used from both the occupation and qualification side. Additionally, he informed the ESCO Board that delaying a decision on this topic has implications for project implementation, in particular on the timeline for the release of ESCO v0.1.

To Mr Wilfried Boomgaert's opinion, three issues popped up in the conversation: 1) the learning outcomes, 2) tagging qualifications with learning outcomes, 3) translations. These three issues need to be treated differently. Mr Le Vrang stressed that all three issues are closely related and impact one another.

Mr Boomgaert remarked that the footnote referring to the use of non-hierarchical key-words for tagging might be misinterpreted since all ESCO concepts would still be organised in hierarchical taxonomies within their respective pillars.

Mr Groombridge stated that the conversation leads to two fundamental questions: First, to which extent does the ESCO Board desire to and believe in the enrichment of the skills, competences pillar with learning outcomes? Second, is the ESCO Board committed to deepen the skills, competences pillar with learning outcomes and therefore fortify the tripod structure of ESCO?

Ms Bouquet confirmed that the use of learning outcomes in the skills, competences pillar of ESCO is not at stake.

Mr Bjornavold pointed out that, as also described in the note, the skills and competences pillar is currently exclusively based on terminology derived from the labour market. He stated that this



bias can be balanced by taking into account the learning outcomes descriptions, which are applied increasingly in education and training. Mr Bjornavold continued by saying that strengthening the skills and competences pillar through the inclusion of the knowledge, skills and competence terms applied in qualifications and education programmes can serve the following main purposes: 1) facilitate dialogue between the labour market and education and training, 2) facilitate terminological developments within education and training, 3) can, in view of its multilingual character, strengthen European transparency and comparability of qualifications and education programmes.

Mr Mike Campbell stated that the ESCO Board should indeed go back to the starting point of ESCO: the Agenda for new skills and jobs, which formulated the need to build a bridge between the world of education and training and the labour market.

Conclusion:

The ESCO Board unanimously agreed:

- That ESCO will continue to follow a tripod structure consisting of 1) occupations, 2) skills, competences and knowledge and 3) qualifications;
- That strengthening and enriching the skills and competences pillar with learning outcomes would be beneficial and in line with the core objectives of ESCO;
- That learning outcomes need to fit in one or more of these ESCO pillars;
- On the need to interrelate the three ESCO pillars in order to bridge the world of education and training and the labour market;
- That the ESCO Secretariat will investigate how the existing Cedefop glossary and action verbs can be used to enrich the skills and competences pillar.

The ESCO Board expressed concerns about the practical consequences of the semantic and conceptual enrichment and of the tagging of learning outcome descriptions. It invited the ESCO Secretariat to evaluate these conceptual adjustments in case studies and report on the outcomes at the next ESCO Board meeting.

Follow up actions:

The following approach was agreed by the ESCO Board:



1. The EQF Advisory Group will be consulted on the approach for learning outcomes in ESCO, as described in the deliverable ESCO (2013) SEC 078 FINAL "Learning outcomes as part of the ESCO project".
2. The ESCO Secretariat investigates how the existing Cedefop glossary and action verbs can be used to enrich the skills and competences pillar.
3. The ESCO Secretariat will work with preliminary work results from the "Agriculture, forestry and fishery"- and "Hospitality and tourism" sector.

The Secretariat will discuss the cases with at least two panels involving the following groups:

- experts from the Reference Groups "Agriculture, forestry and fishery"- and "Hospitality and tourism";
- experts from the labour market and world of education and training.

Based on the outcomes of the discussion with the panels, the ESCO Secretariat reports back to the ESCO Board with:

- the underlying cases;
- proposals for dealing with learning outcomes in ESCO;
- an outline on possible solutions for linking the skills/competence and qualifications pillar;
- an analysis of the proposed approaches reflecting pro's and contra's, including their implications on time scale, Reference Groups and costs.

Item 6 ESCO communication strategy

Mr Massimiliano Molinari presented the deliverable ESCO (2013) SEC 070 DRAFT "Updated ESCO Communication strategy" to the ESCO Board.

The ESCO Board agreed that the deliverable gives a keen overview of the current status of the communication strategy and the numerous milestones ahead. In order to proceed with the numerous milestones, they need to be prioritised based on purpose and type of stakeholder. Initially, the communication strategy should focus on the aspects related to the mapping of ESCO to national classifications and the internal/European and national communication. The tips and ideas raised by the ESCO Board members during the discussion on the ESCO Communication Strategy will be taken into account for its next version.



As soon as the ESCO Communication Strategy is significantly expounded, it will be reflected in a more operational ESCO Communication Plan. Supporting this approach, the ESCO Board highlights the strong need for an outlined communication plan for both national and European communication. A framework to support / steer will be essential to ensure consistency in the information flow.

Conclusion:

The ESCO Board agreed:

- To the gradual development of a strategic communication document that reflects both the vertical (national) and horizontal (EU-International) dimension;
- That the milestones need to be prioritised based on purpose and type of stakeholder;
- That the ESCO Secretariat will keep the ESCO Board and Maintenance Committee informed on the translations of the ESCO Leaflet in all European languages.

Follow up actions:

1. For the next ESCO Board meeting, the ESCO Secretariat will propose a prioritisation of the milestones and provide a more elaborate version of the communication strategy building in the feedback of the ESCO Board;
2. Mr Groombridge shares his input for the next version of the communication strategy with the ESCO Secretariat.

Item 7 Developing future ESCO versions

Mr Aldo Laudi and Ms Katrien Vander Kuylen presented the deliverable ESCO (2013) SEC 079 FINAL "Developing future ESCO versions".

Due to time constraints the ESCO Board did not have the opportunity to discuss the three approaches proposed in detail. The ESCO Board members will think through all three options and take it up again at the next ESCO Board meeting. The ESCO Board agreed that the already active Reference Groups should not be subject to the new approaches, unless they request it themselves.



Follow up actions:

1. The ESCO Secretariat will provide additional information on the three approaches to allow the ESCO Board to take an informed decision. For this purpose the SEC will provide the following:
 - a. Evidence on the cost-effectiveness of all three approaches;
 - b. Clarify how the approaches can accelerate the revision process;
 - c. Investigate the possibility to replace the consensus principle by the principle of an approval rate in the panel model approach and the already established 11 sectoral Reference Groups;
 - d. Clarify the quality assurance process and the impact of the three approaches on the quality control by the Maintenance Committee.

Item 6 AOB

The date for the next BOA meeting still needs to be set.

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Documents adopted on the 10th meeting of the ESCO Board

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| 1) Agenda for the 10 th ESCO Board meeting on
25 November 2013 | ESCO (2013) SEC 075 DRAFT |
| 2) Minutes of 9 th Board meeting | ESCO (2013) SEC 072 DRAFT |
| 3) ESCO Goes Live – Q&A | ESCO (2013) SEC 076 DRAFT |

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Participants

ESCO Board Members

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|----------------------|--|
| – AHMAN Goran | Swedish PES (Arbetsförmedlingen) |
| – BOOMGAERT Wilfried | Flemish Department of Education and Training |
| – BOUQUET Brigitte | EQF Advisory group |
| – CAMPBELL Mike | Skills and Labour Market Expert |
| – GOELEN Wallis | DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion |



- GROOMBRIDGE Jeremy Independent Consultant
- SKJERVE Tormod EUROCHAMBERS
- THIELE Peter Federal Ministry of Education and Research
- WILSON Tom Unionlearn

As a representative of DG Education and Culture to the ESCO Board:

- NOMDEN Koen DG Education and Culture

Observers

- GOETSCHALCKX Gerd ESCO Maintenance Committee
- ZAGOROWICZ Klaudia DG Translation
- HESS, Erik Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung

ESCO Secretariat

- BJORNAVOLD Jens Cedefop
- LAUDI Aldo DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
- LE VRANG Martin DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
- MOLINARI Massimiliano TenForce bvba
- NIEDRA Ginta TenForce bvba
- PERERA Cristina TenForce bvba
- SPINELLI Vito TenForce bvba
- VAN DER SANDEN Karin DG Education and Culture
- VANDER KUYLEN Katrien TenForce bvba

Excused

- ABECASIS Margarida DG Informatics
- DANEV, Bojidar Bulgarian Industrial Association
- HÄGGLUND, Sam European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW)
- LETTMAYR, Christian Cedefop



ESCO - European Skills/Competences, qualifications and Occupations

– PENNEL Denis

Eurociett

– PEREIRA Ana Carla

DG Education and Culture