



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Europe 2020: Employment Policies  
**Skills and qualifications**

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## MEMBER STATES WORKING GROUP ON ESCO (MSWG)

# **Webinar on the consultation results of the linguistic versions of the ESCO Occupations pillar (v1 pre-release)**

**4 April 2017**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

As agreed with the MSWG last December, the Commission launched recently an on-line consultation on the linguistic versions of the ESCO Occupations pillar (v1 pre-release). The consultation took place between 3 February and 10 March 2017 and was addressed to national authorities. Its aim was to allow Member States to assess the adequacy and linguistic accuracy of the different ESCO Occupation linguistic versions so that it can serve as European classification under the new EURES Regulation<sup>1</sup> and allow mapping national classifications to it. The different ESCO linguistic versions were prepared by the Commission's Directorate General for Translation (DGT).

This was the second round of consultations to Member States on the ESCO classification. The first consultation focused on ESCO final draft in the reference language (English) and took place between 1 July and 9 September 2016. The linguistic versions of the ESCO Skills pillar are currently being prepared by DGT. Once ready a third round of consultations of Member States on this ESCO pillar will be launched, probably in May 2017.

The purpose of the current document is twofold: to inform the MSWG on the results of the consultation on the language versions of the ESCO Occupations and to prepare a webinar with the members of the group to present and discuss these results.

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<sup>1</sup> For further information on this consultation's background please consult the working document "ESCO v1 pre-release Member States consultation on ESCO's language versions for Occupations" sent on 3 February 2017 together with the message inviting the MSWG to participate in the consultation.

The webinar will take place on **25 April 2017 from 10.00 to 12.00 am Brussels time**. The link to access the webinar will be sent to the group soon. The current document will serve as working document for the webinar.

Members of the group not able to participate in the webinar will have access to its recording once available.

## **2. THE CONSULTATION**

As indicated to the MSWG in the meeting of 12 December 2016 the goal of this consultation was to assess the adequacy of the different linguistic versions (terms) of the ESCO Occupations pillar to map national classifications to ESCO according to article 19 of the new EURES Regulation<sup>2</sup>. Therefore the consultation focused exclusively on the linguistic terms highlighted in the ESCO pre-release site. Its aim was not to review in detail ESCO content or its structure.

MSWG members could associate other national experts and interested parties to the consultation. Prior to the consultation the Commission recommended to Member States to designate national experts to liaise with DGT during the translation process.

A total of **21** Member States participated in the consultation: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

### **2.1 The results**

The linguistic versions of the ESCO Occupations<sup>3</sup> were overall well received and praised. The general opinion was that the quality of the ESCO Occupations linguistic versions is good, notwithstanding the improvements proposed (see below), and it would allow for a positive mapping process. Latvia was the only participant indicating that their current linguistic version would need important changes before enabling an appropriate mapping of their national classification to ESCO.

A vast majority of Member States sent specific feedback on concrete linguistic terms (for instance suggesting a new preferred term to an occupation, adding new non-preferred terms or suggesting deleting a non-preferred term).

Some participants called the Commission's attention for other ESCO features that should also be taken into account during the mapping process (e.g. comments on ISCO mappings). The Commission reviewed all this feedback and address it on point 3 below.

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<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) 2016/589

<sup>3</sup> There are currently 2.950 preferred terms in the ESCO Occupations pillar.

The table below summarises the main comments on linguistic issues (terms) by country:

<b>Results on the consultation on ESCO Occupations translations</b>	
<b>Country</b>	<b>Comments provided on linguistic terms</b>
Belgium (BE)	Suggestions for 170 specific occupations
Denmark (DK)	Suggestions for 270 specific occupations
Germany (DE)	Translation is technically correct
Estonia (EE)	Suggestions for 170 specific occupations
Ireland (IE)	Positive reaction on the translation
Spain (ES)	Suggestions for 460 specific occupations
Croatia (HR)	Suggestions for 21 specific occupations
Italy (IT)	Feedback in May <sup>4</sup> , planning to use ESCO in their classification
Cyprus (CY)	Suggestions for 50 specific occupations
Latvia (LV)	Translation needs to be revised in further cooperation with national authorities
Lithuania (LT)	Suggestions for 50 specific occupations
Hungary (HU)	Suggestions for 65 specific occupations
Malta (MT)	Suggestions for 700 specific occupations
Austria (AT)	Suggestions for 7 specific occupations
Poland (PL)	Suggestions for 200 specific occupations
Portugal (PT)	Suggestions for 200 specific occupations
Romania (RO)	Positive reaction to the translation
Slovenia (SI)	Suggestions for 230 specific occupations
Slovakia (SK)	Suggestions for 8 specific occupations
Finland (FI)	Overall positive reaction. Intend to comment once ESCOv1 is published
Sweden (SE)	Suggestions for 150 specific occupations

All linguistic feedback from Member States was sent to DGT that will review and update/improve the language versions accordingly. DGT may wish to contact national contact point(s) on the implementation of these new terms if any questions arise from their side. We aim to integrate these updates in the ESCO visualisation tool before the final round of consultation on the Skills pillar.

The Commission also sent individual feedback on particular language related points to Member States that asked for it.

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<sup>4</sup> Our services will do our utmost to integrate in ESCO v1 the feedback on Occupations terms received after 10 March but for planning and logistic issues this result cannot be guaranteed.

### 3. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Several participants to the consultation provided to the Commission additional comments on ESCO subjects not directly linked to linguistic terms. These extra topics were:

a) Belgium asked how to map when there is no direct correspondence between a national occupation and an ESCO occupation or when national occupations are not represented in ESCO. Similarly Austria raised the question on how to map when there are different hierarchical layers between the national classification and ESCO, in particular since ESCO contains a hierarchy of occupations with varying number of levels.

Usually in these cases ESCO contains at least broader or similar occupations to those found in the national classifications. Therefore, during the mapping process these occupations should be related to the corresponding broader ESCO occupations. This makes it possible to map national classifications, no matter if they are more, equally or less detailed than ESCO. Should an occupation really not exist in ESCO, mapping it using a broader/narrower relation to an ISCO unit group can always be a last resort.

The Commission welcomes further feedback on particular occupations missing or deserving to be described in more detail in order to accommodate the needs of the labour market. This feedback will be integrated in the future work on the continuous updating/improving of ESCO.

b) Germany recalled that, notwithstanding the good technical linguistic translations, other ESCO aspects such as its structure, content and completeness should also be assessed as they are also relevant for the mapping process.

The Commission agrees that a check of structure, content and completeness is also part of the quality assurance of ESCO, next to the check of translations. This stage already took place during a three-step process that lasted several years:

- Consultation of hundreds of experts, who had the opportunity to work on occupational profiles or to review and comment on them (2011 - 2016);
- Comparison of the completeness of 8 national classifications with ESCO, including the German classification of occupations (Apr 2016 – Jun 2016);
- Consultation of Member States on the reference version of ESCO (first MSWG consultation from Jul 2016 – Sep 2016).

c) Austria, Croatia, Estonia and Sweden raised several questions related to the matching links between ESCO and ISCO unit groups and the ISCO translations used in ESCO.

Since national classifications and ESCO are mapped to ISCO, this can facilitate the mapping process. The Commission reiterates that the ISCO mappings in ESCO

have been reviewed and validated by International Labour Organization (ILO)<sup>5</sup> senior experts. For the development of ESCO our services used the ISCO 08 translations available at EUROSTAT and published in the Official Journal<sup>6</sup> and followed the guidelines of the 2009 Commission Recommendation on the use of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08)<sup>7</sup>.

The Commission has sent these Member States further information on specific points related to the links between ISCO groups and ESCO.

d) Several Member States indicated that due to extensiveness of the database and their limited national capacities they would have liked to have a larger period of time to assess the linguistic versions.

The Commission will take this point into account when setting the deadline for the consultations on the ESCO Skills pillar.

#### **4. NEXT STEPS**

As indicated in point 1 of the document, DG EMPL will organise a webinar to further discuss with the MSWG the results of the current consultation. At the next meeting of the group (probably in May) the Commission will report on the consultation and its follow-up, as well as on other outstanding ESCO topics.

The Commission considers the results of this second ESCO consultation to be promising and positive. Reports from Member States did not point out to major blocking issues preventing ESCO to perform the mapping exercise as described in Article 19 of the updated EURES Regulation. We believe that the implementation of the linguistic and other comments and suggestions provided by the participants would allow improving further the general quality of ESCO, which was already seen as high by the vast majority of countries.

Furthermore the Commission recalls that the EURES Regulation clearly indicates that technical and, where possible, financial support will be provided by the Commission to Member States for their mapping exercises or to the Member States which choose to replace national classifications with ESCO. We are looking forward to planning and coordinating with Member States, when appropriate, the technical assistance needed to facilitate this mapping exercise.

As mentioned, the third and last phase of the consultation-on the linguistic version of the ESCO Skills pillar-is currently planned for May 2017. Once this second phase is concluded the Commission will report to the MSWG its final conclusions on the preparation for the mapping process.

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<sup>5</sup> ISCO was developed by the ILO.

<sup>6</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/>

<sup>7</sup> Recommendation 2009/824/EC

The launch of ESCO version 1 is currently scheduled for mid-July 2017. A conference on ESCO is currently being planned and should take place in Q4 2017.