Background note on a structure for the skills pillar of ESCO

18 June 2018

ESCO (2018) SEC 015 DRAFT
Document Date: 08/05/2018
Last update: 01/06/2018

Purpose of the document

The purpose of this document is to inform the ESCO Member States Working Group on the context and background of the process to improve the structure of the ESCO skills pillar.

Background

The discussion on the need to further structure the ESCO skills pillar kicked off during the 21st ESCO Maintenance Committee meeting on 14-15 September 2016. During the 23rd ESCO Maintenance Committee meeting on 15 -16 March 2017, the Commission presented the use cases that an improved skills structure would serve and suggested various approaches to further structure the ESCO skills pillar.

Following recommendations by the ESCO Maintenance Committee members, in their 24th meeting on 15 June 2017, the Commission tabled a document which presented the methodology to carry out a pilot project. The pilot would test different ways of structuring the skills pillar. It took place from November 2017 to March 2018. During the 25th ESCO Maintenance Committee meeting on 23 April 2018, the Commission presented an overview of the findings.

In the 26th ESCO Maintenance Committee meeting on 5 June 2018, the Commission will present detailed results for each structuring approach together with a high level implementation plan for each one of them. A report on the pilot will be circulated to the ESCO Maintenance Committee members prior to the meeting.

Objective of the pilot

In the context of the skills structuring pilot, the Commission tested various approaches on a sample of the ESCO skills. The skills selected were structured using different classifications and methodologies to assess how well different approaches can support specific user needs.

Structuring approaches

The structuring approaches which were tested are the following:

- **Skills hierarchy:**
  - Applying the hierarchy of **DISCO** (European Dictionary of Skills and Competences) to the ESCO skills[1];

---

[1] DISCO is a structured vocabulary for the description of skills and competences in different contexts. Its development was co-financed by the Commission. The top level of DISCO is

- o Applying the hierarchy of **Kompetenzklassifikation** (the skills classification used by the German PES) to the ESCO skills[2];
- **Grouping skills by using other domains as structure/collections:**
  - o By economic activity, using **NACE** (Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Union)[3];
  - o By fields of education and training, using **ISCED-F** (International Standard Classification of Education - Fields of Education and Training)
  - o By product domain, using **CPA** (Statistical classification of products by activity)
  - o By work context, using the work location ("Arbeitsorte") in the **Kompetenzklassifikation**
- **Contextualisation:** analysis of how transversal skills, competences or knowledge are applied in the specific context of a sector or an occupation. This results in a hierarchy of skills that links the (broader) transversal skills to the (narrower) cross-sectoral, sectoral, and occupation-specific skills in a tree-like structure

---

divided into domain-specific skills and non-domain specific skills. http://disco-tools.eu/disco2_portal/

[2]Kompetenzklassifikation lists occupations and professional activities in various labour market and socio-economic contexts.
https://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufenet/faces/index;BERUFENETJSESSIONID=4EZ16arPZ9VHK8807Z7DihYjl2Uv_swUl5TI619mlkATWaxzAITQ!-132602081?path=null

[3] NACE classifies economic activities in the EU. It is organised in 21 sections and indicates 4-digit codes common to all European countries.
http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Statistical_classification_of_economic_activities_in_the_European_Community_(NACE)