



Terms of reference: Task Force Clusters of Knowledge

Note: Original ToR has been updated after the TFBHC' Regional Workshop on Cooperation around Clusters of Knowledge, 14-15 December 2010. Further adjustments envisaged in terms of defining precise dates for the joint activities and increase in participating countries and organizations.

Name of the cluster: Development of National Qualifications Frameworks
Lead country: Croatia
Contact person Ms Biljana Birač, Directorate for International Cooperation and European Integration, MSES tel: +385 (1) 4594 413; fax: +385 (1) 4594 316; e-mail: biljana.birac@mzos.hr
Composition: Countries: Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania (5); Int'l org's/institutions: support offered either through eligible funding sources or available expertise by EC (DG ENL), ETF, OECD.
Purpose and/or outcome International cooperation focused at several specific segments of national qualifications frameworks development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cooperation on self-certification process (quality assurance assessment) - comparability of qualifications: reaching agreement on mutual recognition of old qualifications/diplomas in the region - recognition of prior learning - RPL (validation of informal and nonformal learning). The outcome is heightened understanding, enhanced expertise and identified partnerships that will contribute to better design and implementation of several segments of the above outlined EQF-NQF process.
Reference to Task Force Action Plan (2009-2010) and Task Force related documents <u>Zagreb Plan of Action 2009-2010: Action line 3S – Regional Cooperation and Common Areas of Interest –</u> Assisting in the organisation of clusters of knowledge (CoKs) fostering the creation of mechanisms for sustainable cooperation and dialogue. These clusters should sustain cooperation based on shared common topics of interest. <u>Minutes and Conclusions of the Meeting of Senior Officials from the Istanbul MoU Region:</u> it has been announced that the meeting “The Western Balkans: Overcoming the Economic Crisis” (Brussels, December 2009) will stress importance of regional cooperation in building human capital, noting that “lifelong learning strategies need to be put into practice” and that “an important aspect of lifelong learning is the development of qualification frameworks”. <u>Conclusions, International Conference on Fostering and Building Human Capital for Sustainable Knowledge Societies in SEE:</u> It has been concluded that the “TF should consider organizing knowledge clusters to sustain cooperation based on shared common topics of interest” and the Bucharest Conference stressed the importance of and provided an overview “regarding efforts on creating possibilities for future oriented knowledge management, supporting lifelong learning, the development of competencies and qualifications frameworks.”
Specific tasks To enhance expertise and quality in the implementation of specific segments of EQF-NQF activities through a set of regional meetings and workshops, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expanding understanding and expertise related to the requirements and implementation of self-certification process - removing obstacles regional mobility through reaching an agreement on mutual recognition of old qualifications in the Western Balkans (this strand of activity is focused mostly on WB countries with the same legacy of old diplomas, whereas other strands are envisaged for

<p>other interested SEE countries).</p> <p>- expanding expertise and forging partnerships in the process of developing national RPL models.</p>
<p>Reporting</p> <p>Minutes of cluster activities shall be made available by the lead country and forwarded to the Task Force Secretariat. The Task Force Secretariat should also receive regular reports and updates.</p>
<p>Meeting schedule</p> <p>The date for the first cluster activity has been set up. The dates for posterior activities will be determined in consultation with CoK participants. It is envisaged that by the 1st cluster activity the number of participating countries will increase and a relatively definite configuration of cluster will be determined. On the occasion of the 1st event the schedule of other events will be discussed and the activity list expanded, if needed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>International Conference on Croatian referencing and self-certification process</u> October 27/28, Split, Croatia The conference will gather over 100 participants and will serve as a platform for presentation and discussion about the Croatian referencing process; as well as a peer learning event for participants coming from countries where the process will still be underway at that point. Eminent experts from CoE, ETF, Austria, Poland and Slovenia, who form the international expert group aiding Croatia in the referencing process, will be participating. Back to back with the conference the CoK meeting will take place in order to determine more precisely the content and schedule of CoK activities. 2. <u>Seminar/workshop on comparability of qualifications: reaching agreement on mutual recognition of old qualifications/diplomas in the region</u> (in cooperation with CoE SEE QF network) – date TBC (in 2011) 3. <u>Workshop on Recognition on prior learning</u> – RPL – date TBC (in 2012) <p>It is envisaged that the cluster activities will span over 2 years. Desired outcome is a joint NQF project.</p>
<p>Liaison with other action lines</p> <p><u>RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013: Building Human Capital – ERI SEE:</u> “Thematic areas of ERI SEE’s work currently focus on areas of relevance for the increased role of education and training in the development of SEE countries, objectives of the Work Programme <i>Education and Training 2010</i> and education objectives of the Millennium Development Goals, such as Lifelong learning; European Qualification Framework and national qualification frameworks in SEE.</p> <p><u>Annex 1 of RCC WP:</u> (Support to education reform, with emphasis on higher education): “Improved cooperation within the region in creation of National Qualification Frameworks).</p> <p><u>ERI SEE 2010 Work Programme 2010: Establishment of Clusters of Knowledge in two thematic areas relevant for SEE cooperation in education and training, point b):</u> <i>Qualifications Frameworks</i>, with the following topics: NQF development with attention to non-formal and informal learning, NQF development and references to the EQF, recognition of diplomas and cooperation among the ENIC/NARIC centres, Europass, links between higher education and VET.</p>
<p>Additional remarks</p> <p>The interest and need for strengthened regional cooperation dealing with specific segments of the EQF and NQF processes has been reaffirmed at the 3rd meeting of the CoE Regional Network on Qualifications Frameworks for SEE (September 9th&10th 2010, Zagreb).</p> <p><u>Note on the implementation of activities:</u> Cluster activities are to take place in any of the cluster countries. Croatia is open to organize and host most/all of them, but also welcomes the interest and initiative of other CoK members. The contents of any event are to reflect joint interests and proposals of all CoK members.</p> <p>Note on financing: ERISSEE offered to co-finance cluster activities. Croatia proposes that co-financing encompasses primarily travel and accommodation costs, as well as the organization costs (costs of premises, catering, local transportation). - March 2011-</p>