

ESCO – A TOOL TO CONNECT EDUCATION WITH EMPLOYMENT

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ABSTRACT

The European Commission's interest in connecting education with the labor market has materialized through the development of a tool that uses terminology common to both areas. Thus, the European Skills / Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) has been developed to help transparency and the recognition of competencies and qualifications. At the same time, the aim is to make the labor market more integrated and efficient. Many times, high school graduates, when they choose to continue their studies at a higher level, do not know what skills and competencies they will acquire after graduating from university specialization. For this reason, the article aims to describe European Skills / Competences, Qualifications and Occupations. Also, taking into account this European classification, as well as the importance that the population with higher education may have on a community, an analysis is made of the current situation of the population with tertiary education level in the member countries of the European Union. The areas in which students are trained can influence the development of new jobs. The article examines, at European level, the areas of education for which tertiary education graduates have been trained.

KEYWORDS: *education, labor market, European Union*

1. INTRODUCTION

At the level of the European Commission, the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion has led, and carried out, an important project both for the labor market and for European education and training systems. It is about European Skills / Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO). The existing information in the ESCO can be consulted free of charge, through a specific portal. In 2013, the first version of this classification was published.

Using common labor market terminology and vocational education and training terminology, ESCO allows for improvement, integration and communication between the two systems.

Through ESCO are connected different classifications: International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), International Standard Classification of Education: Fields of Education and Training (ISCED), European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

ESCO also supports the implementation of two important European documents: Europe 2020 and Skills agenda for Europe (EC, 2020b).

By the way it has been developed, in Europe, ESCO supports job mobility. Thus, the labor market becomes more integrated and efficient.

ESCO helps at the transparency and the recognition of competencies and qualifications.

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In the field of arts and humanities, Italy and Estonia have the most graduates. The highest values for the social sciences, journalism and information are registered in: Italy, Greece, Netherlands and Bulgaria. For business, administration and law, high values are in: Luxembourg, Cyprus, France, Bulgaria, Malta. Also, Greece, Germany, France and Italy have the most graduates in the natural sciences, mathematics and statistics. In the field of information and communication technologies, Ireland, Malta, Finland and Estonia have the highest values. At the same time, Germany, Austria, Portugal, Lithuania have the most graduates in the field of engineering, manufacturing and construction. Out of the total number of graduates from Romania, Hungary, Croatia, Czechia, graduates in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary are more numerous than those from other countries. Belgium, Sweden and Finland also have the most graduates in the field of Health and welfare, and Croatia, Bulgaria and Latvia, in the field of Services.

At the same time, it is observed that in 24 countries most graduates are in the field of business, administration and law. The 3 countries in which the field of health and welfare is predominant are: Belgium, Sweden and Finland.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Through the ESCO, the European Commission contributes to the implementation of labor market policies (EC, 2020d). Thus, in Europe, transparency and comparability of skills and occupations can be applied. At the same time, by reducing the gap between the labor market and vocational education and training systems, the mobility of people within the Member States of the European Union is increasing. The advantages of using the ESCO are also evident in the correlation between the supply of skills in the workforce, on the one hand, and the demand for skills of employers. The skills required by the labor market can be mentioned in training programs, so that education and training systems can meet these needs. Following the analysis, it was found that in 2019 compared to 2004, the population from 15 to 64 years with tertiary education (levels 5-8) increased in all member states of the European Union. Also, in 2018, compared to 2013, the number of bachelor's or equivalent level graduates did not increase in all countries. In 2018, most bachelor's or equivalent level graduates came from: Germany, Poland, France, Italy, Spain, Netherlands. At European level, it was observed that, in 2018, most graduates are in the field of business, administration and law, followed by engineering, manufacturing and construction. The Fourth Industrial Revolution calls for the development of European tertiary education skills to take into account basic generic skills, cognitive skills, and employment skills (Garcia-Esteban & Jahnke, 2020). The use of information from the ESCO classification, as well as the involvement of as many organizations and institutions as possible in updating this information, can help to increase the recognition of competences and qualifications at European level. The article draws attention to the importance of high school graduates' knowledge of the skills offered by different university specializations.

The limitations of this article refer to the information uploaded to the ESCO portal. To the extent that most EU Member States enter information into the ESCO portal, it is considered to be more relevant to the European labor market.

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