

# Short Cycle HE and Higher VET- and the EL5A

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# In short...

- ▶ We have the European Higher Education Area...
- ▶ And 'they like it'...
- ▶ Streamlining instruments... networking, standards, guidelines... status
  
- ▶ Can we do that also for the European Level 5 Area?
- ▶ Can we have agreements for qualifications in this Area?
- ▶ Can we deal with the overlap between the EHEA and the EL5A: Short Cycle Higher Education (Short Cycle Qualification) - a degree within the EHEA?

# Why?

- ▶ First of all as a disclaimer: My ideas... suggestions... daydreams...
- ▶ There are a lot of discussions going on about level 5 (of the EQF) and how to use it.
- ▶ In formal education there are two types (in the international context):
  - Short Cycle HE
  - Higher VET
- ▶ But the question is:

**Do we exactly know what the right definitions are for HVET and SCHE?**

# And also...

- ▶ There is lot of research going on, looking at HVET - related to the status of the VET sector
- ▶ Plans for renewing the position of SCHE in the EHEA
- ▶ And what can be seen also:
  - there are big fights for 'status' by institutions (German Universities offering VET, VET providers involved in HE...)
  - And some stakeholders in this kind of processes have interest in blurring situations... and uncertainty about 'what is what'
  - Governments have to deal with a lot of parties, having their own ideas

# So: what to do (first)?

- ▶ Keep it simple: Start with the level (national, but linked to the EQF - knowing that member states are still struggling with the implementation) of a NQF.
- ▶ In our situation: It is a 5 !!
- ▶ And in one country we can have a broad spectrum of qualifications at this level of the EQF, within the national context, linked to the NQF
- ▶ So, they have the same level... and that is a good start
- ▶ Of course: Level 5 is higher than level 4 and lower than level 6 - but not 'less' or 'being less important' or 'having less status'...

# OK. Let's take a look at the EHEA

- ▶ Level 5 and the EHEA
- ▶ The EHEA is a protected area - with clear borders...
  - Using cycles for the levels
  - Having 'degree' as type for the qualification
  - Having common names in an international setting for those cycles
  - Using ECTS
  - European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance and Accreditation
- ▶ International associations are involved (the E4)
- ▶ Universities - in a unitary system  
Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences in a binary system
- ▶ And of course: national names for degrees and institutions

# Looking back...

- ▶ It started with the so-called 'Bologna Process' in the nineties...
- ▶ The focus was on 'Universities' and the Academic World
- ▶ The Ministers involved, in that time, were also thinking of promoting academic cooperation and internationalisation - like in the Middle Ages....
- ▶ Using for their ideas the Anglo-Saxon system as a reference: Bachelor/Master/Doctorate

# But... 'what if'...

- ▶ If the professional HE world had been involved...
- ▶ It was decided to have 4 degrees: Associate, Bachelor, Master, Doctorate
- ▶ And also the possibility for having two parallel learning pathways to get a Bachelor:
  - Directly (180-240 ects)
  - Using the Associate as the first step (90-120 ects)
- ▶ And for related studies, the length of the programme to get a Bachelor's degree can be the same
- ▶ But keep in mind that in countries having a binary system it can be decided how to structure this. Having a Professional A doesn't mean directly access to a Academic B, and so on.

# On the move... SCHE...

- ▶ Growing attention for SCHE - because the European Level 5 Area is BIG
- ▶ The Ministers for HE will meet in May, in Paris, to take the next steps
- ▶ Proposal for the SCHE:
  - SCHE as a stand-alone cycle in the EHEA
  - Not obligatory for a country (member of the EHEA)
  - SCHE is level 5 of the EQF, offered by institutions being recognised as HE providers
  - Dublin Descriptors
  - ESG for QA, and so on...

# To be clear...

- ▶ If we are talking about systems, sectors, definitions...
  - We have also tertiary education... knowing that there is secondary education (VET, General...)... having post-secondary education
  - We can have a qualification at level 5 - not a SCHE
  - And that can have its own name
- ▶ Idea: No post-secondary, but only tertiary - next to HE (academic and professional)
- ▶ Not yet in the recommendations:  
Common name: Associate - international
- ▶ Till then: a national name, title, degree...

# But let's be happy...

- ▶ In the recommendations:
  - Respect for other qualifications at level 5
  - Look at them for having access to SCHE and Bachelor
- ▶ This is really important if there is no SCHE in the national higher educational area (unitary system...)
- ▶ In a binary system its is important for HEIs for professional higher education: respect for level 5 qualifications outside HE - or agreements... - especially if there is also in a formal setting 'Higher VET'

# To the other side of the formal spectrum

- ▶ Higher Vocational Education and Training
  - two subsectors: VE (formal...) and T (private...)
- ▶ Strong international focus on HVET... as an instrument for more permeability between VET and HE: research, strategic plans, a lot of projects (Erasmus+)...
- ▶ And looking for an upgrade of the status of VET
  
- ▶ Recommendation: First of all we need a clear definition of HVET, broadly accepted - in an international setting

# Let's give it a try...

- ▶ Plus proposing a first step for having another name for this type...
- ▶ Higher VET is using 'Higher' as a suggestion:
  - looks like Higher Education
  - higher than regular VETBut it is downgrading the VET sector...  
And creating an overlap between two sectors...
- ▶ We are using Vocational and Professional... what is the difference?
- ▶ Professional is used for Higher Education, an orientation
- ▶ We can call it: Professional Higher Education / Higher Professional Education
- ▶ Confusion? PHE is better than HPE...

# Definition (international / common use) of Higher VET

- ▶ Qualifications offered by recognised VET-providers
- ▶ Those qualifications are at level 5 (or perhaps level 6...)
- ▶ They are recognised as part of the VET-sector
- ▶ Regulations for VET and HVET are the same (within the formal approach and if used in other frames)
  
- ▶ The same is the case for SCHE: it only can be offered by formal recognised HEIs
- ▶ HVET can only offered by a provider, recognised for VET...

# Two formal pillars... but there is more to be discovered in the level 5 area...

- ▶ In all other cases:  
Call it level 5 - for all other providers
- ▶ Call everything at 5 in HE: SCHE
- ▶ And at 5 in VET: Higher VET
- ▶ Of course there can be different names for qualifications in a national setting - but the overall type is the same

# A common name for HVET...

- ▶ Now we have a combination of Higher / VE / T
- ▶ That doesn't work - combining too many aspects
- ▶ But we need:
  - Status for VET, offering qualifications at higher levels
  - Parallel learning pathways next HE, professional and academic
  - respect for the vocational approach (close cooperation with the labour market...)
- ▶ Higher suggests something that is not realistic...
- ▶ So: Let's have another common name for HVET.

# Brainstorming

- ▶ No VET...
- ▶ No Higher...
- ▶ Not mentioning 5...
- ▶ Or 6...
  
- ▶ Higher Professional Diploma?
- ▶ Higher National Diploma?
- ▶ Higher Business Diploma?
  
- ▶ Do we need 'names' like we have in the EHEA? They have no meaning at all !

# Two situations

- ▶ 1 HE has a unitary system (just Universities)  
Start a parallel sector, at least having levels 5 and 6  
Use the 'old' name for those institutions: Polytechnic
  
- ▶ 2 HE has a binary system  
If Professional Higher Education is too academic.  
Start a parallel sector, only for level 5  
Use the name: Community College (European Style)

# Community Colleges (European Style)

- ▶ They can have a kind of co-operation with Business Academies
- ▶ They can be a 'department' within a HEI for professional HE (if a country has a binary system for the national higher education area)
- ▶ With a focus on VET students and adult learners

## What to do... and not...

- ▶ In both situations: don't try to be part of the National HEA...!!!
- ▶ Leave it to the government if there is some kind of public funding
- ▶ But use 'dual systems' - working and learning - and have specific funding for those formats
- ▶ Have agreements with the HEIs about progression routes and accumulation of Learning Outcomes

# Oh yes, the name...

- ▶ Within the level 5 area we can use the Swiss name, instead of Higher VET:  
VPET = Vocational and Professional Education and Training
- ▶ Combining both sectors
- ▶ If you don't like the name Community College... we can call such an institution: VPET College (College for VPET)
- ▶ Of course there will be national names and titles for qualifications
- ▶ But an international common name for VPET, a title combined with the degree (like Associate's degree, Bachelors degree...)?????

## Just an idea...

- ▶ 5 VPET-A Associate
- ▶ 6 VPET-B Bachelor
- ▶ 7 VPET-C Master
- ▶ (8 VPET-D Doctorate - Professional...)

# Let's start a Process...

- ▶ The Level 5 Area is the start for this... for looking at what can be done next to SCHE (academic or professional or both)....
- ▶ Using level 5 offered by VET providers for a new type of institutions, departments (of VET institutions), academies (linked to HEIs)...
  
- ▶ We had the Copenhagen Process for VET
- ▶ And the Bologna Process for HE
- ▶ It's time for the (...) Process for VPET
- ▶ Starting time: March 2019

# Let's start...

- ▶ Can we do an inventory? Smooth... quick... effective...
- ▶ We have already some documents available, as CHAIN5
- ▶ Using Cedefop, and the country reports for HE
- ▶ And: we need a small working group