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METHODOLOGY FOR DESCRIBING COMPETENCIES / QUALIFICATIONS ACQUIRED IN WORK

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Introduction

Modern society and the labor market are undergoing significant changes due to technological change. Modernizing jobs require new knowledge and competencies from employees. Labor mobility is forcing the development of common qualifications systems at both European Union and Member State level, which would make it easier for employers in different countries to understand the competencies of a person with a particular qualification. The European Qualifications Framework was developed in 2008 as a tool to increase the transparency, comparability and portability of qualifications, while Lithuania, for example, developed its National Qualifications Framework in 2010, but the description of qualifications for specific economic sectors and the development of professional standards are still ongoing. However, these processes are most responsive to the needs of the formal education system - although knowledge and skills requirements for formal education graduates are set in collaboration with employers, they do not cover work-related knowledge and skills that are relevant to a person's active working life. As a result, there is an initiative in some countries in the European Union and elsewhere to describe knowledge and skills acquired outside the education system. In such cases, so-called informal qualifications of individual economic sectors are developed and described. They enable the employee to plan the improvement of their professional competencies, and employers - to use information about the competencies acquired by employees in their work activities to motivate them, initiate professional development or even differentiate the remuneration for the work performed.

The preparation of the CAPW is an excellent opportunity for employers or their representative companies, business organizations, and institutions to form a clear system of qualifications acquired from professional experience in the labor market. This framework would reflect their priorities for employee competencies: knowledge, skills and attitudes. The CAPW system is also a real opportunity to synergize, describe and validate non-formal qualifications already in place at the level of employers / international organizations. Proven, sought-after, and promising CAPWs can then serve to review qualifications in the formal education system, which are described in professional standards. The aim of this Methodology is not to provide clear and unchanging instructions, but rather to provide only general operational guidelines so that experts in

specific sectors of the economy can freely develop any national standards for CAPW subsystems that best meet their needs.

The information required for the preparation of the Methodology was collected by analyzing the legislation, methodological recommendations, training programs and other relevant content in the partner countries. It is also in line with international and national instruments, regulations and standards governing the competence assessment, and the legal and regulatory framework of the recognition of qualifications.

1. Basic concepts

Competence - a practically tested ability to use the acquired knowledge, skills and values and attitudes in an integrated and purposeful way in various work or study situations, as well as to develop professionally and personally.

Competence - the ability to perform a certain activity based on the totality of acquired knowledge, skills and values.

Competency model - a structure designed to describe the sets of competencies required for the successful performance of work tasks.

Formation of work-related qualifications – a procedure carried out by a company, business organization or body representing employers, which 1) analyzes the development trends and prospects of the company or the entire economic sector, 2) assesses the positions of employees and identifies the competencies available, missing and necessary for successful work, and then 3) prepares a description of work-related qualification.

Knowledge - the totality of facts, principles, theories and practices related to the field of work.

Learning outcomes - a brief description of what a learner needs to know or be able to do after completing all or part of a program.

Level of excellence - a level of high mastery qualification, formed taking into account the level of qualification acquired in the formal education system, which outlines (grades, differentiates) the knowledge and skills acquired in work activities.

Mastery - the perfect way to perform actions based on knowledge, skills and abilities.

Professional development - the systematic and consistent improvement of a person's knowledge and skills, ensuring the successful performance of operational functions.

Professional standard - a description of the qualifications required at all levels of the economic sector or part of it, the competencies that make them up and the requirements for awarding qualifications.

Provision of work-related qualification – the procedure performed by the company, business organization or institution representing the employers, during which, after assessing and / or recognizing the competencies acquired by the employee in the work activity, a document certifying the acquisition of the qualification acquired in the work activity is issued.

Qualification - a set of competencies or professional experience and competencies required for a certain activity, recognized in accordance with the procedure established by legal acts.

Qualification level - a part of a qualifications framework that includes qualifications for activities of similar complexity, autonomy and variability.

Qualifications acquired in the course of work - a set of competencies acquired in the course of work recognized by a company or business organization or institution representing employers.

Qualifications system - a set of activities for the creation and management of qualifications, assessment of acquired competencies and awarding of qualifications.

Skill – the ability of a person to perform certain activities trained to automation.

Social partners - employees 'representatives and employers' representatives and their organizations.

Structure of qualifications - a system of established levels of qualifications based on the competencies required for a person's activities.

2. The concept of CAPW and their place in national qualifications systems

The concept of qualification is usually associated with the formal education system, ie a qualification, as understood in legislation, awarded on completion of a formal education (vocational training or study) program. For example, upon completion of a vocational training program, a vocational training diploma will be issued stating the title of the qualification (for example, chef, bricklayer, hairdresser, etc.). Upon completion of the higher education program, a higher education qualification is awarded (a higher education qualification degree and, in some cases, a professional qualification, such as a doctor). The award of a higher education qualification is evidenced by professional bachelor's, bachelor's, master's and doctoral diplomas or study certificates.

However, an increasing number of European countries (Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden, the United Kingdom (Scotland)) are considering introducing alternatives to formal qualifications or an addition to formal qualifications. They do not have a uniform term and are variously referred to as private, labor market, non-governmental, sectoral, industrial and non-formal qualifications. In the project we are implementing, we will call these qualifications as competencies / qualifications acquired in a person's work (CAPW).

Based on the experience of several European countries presented by IBE (2018), it can be stated that the development of non-formal or sectoral qualifications requires primarily organizational capacity. Because it is necessary to refine the needs of a particular sector of the economy and the opportunities available in it to acquire certain competencies from work experience. In addition, describe these competencies, create a system for their assessment and certification (approval), and so on. And it also requires considerable financial resources. European countries are just beginning to consider the relationship between CAPW and (formal) qualifications, national qualifications frameworks and systems.

3. Development and description of work-related qualifications

In the context of project "DEVELOPMENT OF A SUBSYSTEM FOR THE ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS ACQUIRED IN THE WORK OF SPECIALISTS IN THE TRANSPORT SECTOR" No. 2021-1-LT01-KA220-VET-000032965, CAPW are understood as a set of competencies (knowledge, skills and values the person accumulated during the work experience) recognized by the company, business organization or institution representing the employer. It is assumed: 1) that work activities and real professional experience enrich the competencies acquired in the system of formal education of a person, and 2) with the help of the subsystem of CAPW created by employers' representatives, these competencies can be compared, evaluated and recognized.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the relatively new concept of CAPW, it is worth examining in detail the concept of "competence".

Both in Lithuania and in the main EU-related documents, the concept of competence is defined as the ability to perform a certain activity based on the totality of acquired knowledge, skills and values. Competences *per se* are defined in professional standards, but in a broad sense, competencies are defined as the characteristics of a person that determine his or her ability to perform activities and achieve specific performance results. It should be noted that there is no formal and uniform definition of competencies between different countries.

The following categories of knowledge, skills, attributes, motives and self-perception are commonly used to define competence:

- **knowledge** - information that a person has in a specific field;
- **abilities and skills** - the ability to perform a specific physical or mental task;
- **traits** - physical and personal characteristics, such as responsiveness to situations;
- **motives** are a person's ideas that encourage him / her to act and improve;
- **self-perception** - a person's attitudes and values.

Knowledge is the most basic step in the context of performing an activity. With knowledge and in order to perform higher activities, an understanding is required - the intellectual ability to apply information related to a new situation in a meaningful way. In the education system, alongside the concepts of 'knowledge' and 'understanding', abilities and skills are mentioned, which are defined as the automated action of thinking and practicing. The term "learning outcomes" is also used in the context of curricula. Learning outcomes indicate what a learner should know and manage at the end of the learning process. The way in which such outcomes are identified and articulated directs teaching and learning in the right direction and affects the learner, the labor market and society at large. Whether and how learning outcomes have been achieved can only be determined at the end of the learning process through assessments and demonstrations of learning outcomes in real work situations.

Skills are an expression of a person's professionalism, because by using skills, a person does the job automatically without focusing on the activities being done. At the same time, the person can focus on other, more complex parts of the professional activity. The more widely a person uses skills in his / her activities, the higher his / her level of professionalism and competence. Some skills have a particularly high level of operational complexity. The latter is called a special term "excellence", meaning the highest level of performance management.

Thus, the development of a CAPW does not call into question a person's knowledge, understanding, abilities, and initial skills that a person has acquired through formal education and has demonstrated in practice at the end of the learning process. The CAPW assesses how initial competencies or qualifications are expanding with new knowledge and skills at a time when a person is gaining more and more specific work experience. The CAPW also provides clear criteria for measuring a person's level of mastery (as the highest level of performance management).

More detailed recommendations for creating and describing a CAPW are provided in the *Guide to CAPW Description Procedures*, but in summary, the development of a sector-specific CAPW subsystem can be divided into several steps:

Step 1. Definition of the structure of the CAPW subsystem

When developing sectoral CAPWs, it can be decided in each sector of the economy what level of qualification and for which professional qualifications the CAPW subsystem of the sector is developed. This means that experts preparing the CAPW subsystem of a sector must first analyze the qualifications framework in that sector in order to select the levels of qualifications at which the CAPW of those with work experience will be distinguished. Not all levels of the national qualifications framework may be relevant for the development of the CAPW. For example, sector-specific VI-VII national qualifications apply to technologists or engineers, while lower-level qualifications apply to workers. Considering that, for example, in enterprises in the selected sector, 80 per cent of jobs are reserved for persons with level I-IV qualifications, it may be decided to exclude CAPW only for persons with level I-IV qualifications. Each sector may decide differently, so it is natural that sectoral CAPWs may not cover all levels of the national qualifications framework.

Step 2. Identification of levels of excellence and establishment of criteria for their description

When developing the CAPW subsystem in a specific sector of the economy, it has to be decided how to differentiate the appropriate level of qualifications into levels of excellence. Levels of excellence can be indicated by numbers, letters or words - the marking must be comprehensible and acceptable to those working in a particular sector of the economy (see Table 1). However, when describing levels of excellence, it is recommended that they be based on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level descriptors. If the selected level hierarchy differs (does not match) from the level notation used by the NQF, it is recommended to predict which specific NQF level the CAPW will correspond to. It is important that the qualifications described in the CAPW subsystem are recognized within or between countries.

A wide variety of criteria can be used to describe levels of excellence:

- identifying the competencies required to demonstrate each level of excellence;
- identifying the work experience required for each level of excellence;
- describing in a free form what a person who has reached each level of excellence must know and understand, as well as what and how they must be able to do.

Tables 1-2 below provide some examples (prototyping protocols) of possible descriptions of CAPW levels.

Table 1. Example of marking and description of excellence levels

Excellence level		Description of excellence level
1	Beginner (BG)	Demonstrates basic knowledge and skills in practice, does not make decisions himself, work experience does not exceed 1 year.
2	Advanced (ADV)	Works independently, takes responsibility for part of the results, makes simple decisions, work experience is at least 1 year and does not exceed 3 years.
3	Proficient (PRF)	Works independently, takes responsibility for the results of activities, makes decisions related to the activities, coordinates the activities of 1-3 persons, work experience of at least 3 years and not more than 5 years.
4	Expert (EXPT)	Works independently, assigns tasks to others, evaluates the quality of tasks performed by other employees, makes complex decisions related to activities, coordinates the activities of a group of 3-10 people, work experience of at least 5 years.

Table 2. A possible structure for describing levels of excellence

Qualification Title: _____				
Excellence level	Work experience required (years)	Knowledge and understanding (what do you need to know and understand?)	Skills (what, how and how long must be able to do?)	Personal qualities (what are the necessary personal qualities and attitudes towards work, team, clients, etc.?)

As the development of the CAPW subsystem is a new practice in Lithuania as well as in Latvia, Poland and Spain, the authors of this publication do not intend to present a single proposal for the description of CAPW levels. It is assumed that sectors are different - what is relevant for one sector may not be relevant for another, so a variety of CAPW level criteria is necessary and even encouraged. Transparency and publicity of the criteria for levels of excellence are essential requirements for developers of CAPW subsectors in all sectors.

Step 3. CAPW description

The CAPW is a qualification description designed to provide clear and comprehensive information to those seeking to assess and recognize their CAPW. On the other hand, when formulating a CAPW profile, its developers need to refine the competencies available, missing, and desired by employees, then agree on a list of them and ensure that the CAPW evaluation and recognition process is transparent. The CAPW description identifies the competencies expected of employees who claim to demonstrate possession of a CAPW. The main difference between the CAPW and the qualifications described in the professional standards is that the competencies are acquired through learning in formal education, while the CAPW is awarded after proving competencies that have been acquired or established through practical work.

Competencies do not necessarily have to be limited to specific job functions. The concept of competence is holistic, and with the rapid changes in work organization

and technology, so-called universal, general or 21st century skills have become more important than ever. Therefore, it is recommended to take into account changes in the labor market, sector and society when forming CAPW profiles. These descriptions should also encourage the acquisition of the range of competencies needed to respond to these changes. In describing the CAPW, we need to decide on the priority elements of qualifications and competencies. For example, for some sectors it may be relevant to emphasize general or universal competencies, personal qualities or attitudes towards work (such as loyalty), for others – labor force productivity.

After consulting with employers in a particular sector, the authors of CAPW descriptors should decide how detailed the information in the CAPW description should be, how to describe the levels of excellence and competencies, and what aspects of the CAPW content and their assessment and recognition should be included in the description.

The CAPW subsystem may consist of:

- individual CAPWs covering a complete set of competencies attributable to a specific job or profession (eg. project manager, welder);
- CAPW related to the performance of certain work tasks (eg. use of IT, project management, welding quality control). Several such CAPWs can be combined into one - wider one;
- detailed competency matrices in which competencies are arranged according to the chosen model.

CAPW makers should choose the most appropriate subsystem model, taking into account the needs of the chosen sector, the qualifications of the employees and the competencies acquired in the workplace, as well as the vision of providing the CAPW (who will evaluate and provide the CAPW).

When formulating a CAPW, it is recommended to consider and anticipate the characteristics listed in Table 3.

Table 3. Recommended structure for CAPW description

1. Name of CAPW	
2. Economic sector, position	
3. CAPW level (also according to NQF)	
4. Description of CAPW	<i>List of competencies</i>
	or <i>Knowledge</i> <i>Skills</i> <i>Preferences</i>
	or <i>Free-form text describing what competencies (knowledge, skills, values, etc.) are expected from the candidate</i>
5. Requirements for obtaining a CAPW (if any, requirements for education and / or training completed, duration of employment, competencies, etc.)	
6. Ways to acquire CAPW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - eg. assessing and recognizing existing competencies - eg. after assessing the available competencies and completing the training program - other
7. Criteria for assessing the competencies that make up the CAPW (eg. statements illustrating the acquisition of the CAPW)	

8. Methods for assessing the competencies that make up the CAPW	
9. Career opportunities for a person who has acquired a CAPW	

ANNEX 1. Guide to CAPW Description

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide specific recommendations and suggest ways to compile and describe the CAPW. As the development of the CAPW subsystem is a new practice in Lithuania, Latvia, Poland and Spain, the authors of this publication do not intend to present a single proposal for the development of the CAPW. It is assumed that the sectors of the state economy are different - what is relevant to one sector may be completely irrelevant to another. The publication proposes a sequence of steps to determine and describe the composition of the CAPW and provides practical and methodological advice for describing the content of the CAPW.

I. Recommendations for developing and describing a CAPW

The CAPW development process consists of the following key steps:

1. Analysis of the needs of the economic sector to prepare a CAPW

The needs of individual sectors of the economy to implement the CAPW may vary. The purpose of this analysis is to take into account the economic, technological and organizational development trends of the economic sector and to assess the needs of employees' qualifications and competencies, as well as the priority directions of strengthening the competencies of employees.

The following sources are recommended for the analysis of the economic sector:

- sector strategy documents and normative legal documents,
- research and other problem-based analyzes of the sector (reports, scientific articles, etc.),
- statistics on the financial situation of the sector and its enterprises, exports and imports of services and / or goods, as well as the size of enterprises and the number of employees,

- job descriptions for employees,
- professional standards setting state qualifications in the formal education system,
- descriptions of international qualifications,
- other documents.

NOTE: *in order to identify the problems of employees' qualifications and competencies affecting the development of the sector, it is recommended to conduct a survey of the most advanced companies in the sector and a focus group of the main stakeholders in the sector.*

Before developing a CAPW subsystem and preparing CAPW profiles, the following questions should be answered:

- 1) Why does the sector need CAPW?;
- 2) What companies, professions, positions or competencies do you focus on?
- 3) How will they be implemented?.

NOTE: *the development of the CAPW must be reasonable, appropriate and should not duplicate the formal qualifications described in the professional standards (see also Chapter II, Concluding remarks).*

2. Definition of the structure of the CAPW subsystem

In this step, the CAPW model is designed, providing (1) the structure of the system of different levels of qualifications and their levels of mastery, and (2) the structure of individual qualifications. As the experience of foreign countries shows, there are various models of CAPW. For example, a CAPW model can consist of:

- individual qualifications covering a complete set of competencies attributable to a specific job or profession (eg. project manager, welder);
- qualifications related to the performance of certain work tasks (eg. use of IT, project management, welding quality control). Several such qualifications can be combined into one - broader qualification;
- detailed competency matrices (competency models) in which competencies are arranged according to the chosen model.

CAPW makers should choose the most appropriate model, taking into account the needs of the sector and the vision of providing the CAPW (who will assess the competencies, who will provide the CAPW, from which sources the development and maintenance of the subsystem will be funded). Similarly, the question of the complexity of the subsystem should be answered: 1) whether the descriptions of the CAPW and the competencies that make them up will be based on qualification levels, or whether a common matrix of competencies in the sector will be chosen as the basis for the development of the subsystem; 2) whether and what assessment tools will be provided - assessment criteria, assessment scales, tools for determining the need for competencies have been developed, and perhaps training programs have been developed to provide the identified competencies.

Bearing in mind that the CAPW should not only help to assess the competencies acquired by individuals in the course of their work, but also to consciously project their career prospects, the development of training programs for high excellence would be particularly encouraged.

3. Preparation of CAPW descriptions

At this stage, the composition of the CAPW is formed: 1) the name of the CAPW is decided; 2) competencies / work tasks of employees, characteristics of quality work are identified and described; 3) other requirements for granting a CAPW are formulated. The description of the CAPW is intended to provide clear and complete information for those seeking to acquire the CAPW. On the other hand, in drawing up the description of the CAPW, its authors refine the competencies available, missing and desired by the staff and, by agreeing on a list of them, ensure that the process for awarding the CAPW is transparent.

The main steps in preparing CAPW descriptions are:

1. Collection of information on employees' professional activities. The following methods can be selected and used to collect information:

- *document analysis* (useful information about the tasks performed by employees and the competencies required to perform them is provided by company strategies, personnel documents, job descriptions, sector research, experience

of other countries, national professional standards and vocational training / study programs, certification requirements, quality standards);

- *analysis of employee performance in the workplace;*
- *individual interviews with employees and their managers or group interviews (during the interview, the knowledge, skills, attitudes / values and personal qualities required for the job function are specified);*
- *employee survey using a questionnaire (similar to an interview, the survey gathers information about the knowledge, skills, attitudes / values and personal qualities required to perform the job function. Compared to the interview, this method allows more employees to be interviewed at the same time. However, a major shortcoming of such a tool is the insufficient "depth" of the information collected.);*
- *interviews with clients about the competencies or needs of employees in the sector.*

2. After collecting the information, the description of the CAPW is started: 1) the hierarchical structure of qualifications / competencies is determined; 2) areas of activity, functions / competencies or their separate elements (knowledge, skills, attitudes), etc. are summarized.

3. In the last stage, according to the chosen CAPW description form, information about the name of the CAPW is filled in, competencies or their equivalents are determined and formulated, their elements are detailed, and other information is filled in.

Practical tips:

1. What information should be included in the description of the CAPW?

CAPW makers, depending on the specifics of the sector and / or chosen area of activity, decide how detailed the information should be in the description, as well as what aspects of the content and delivery of the CAPW should be described. When forming a CAPW, it is recommended to consider and anticipate the following characteristics of the CAPW:

- CAPW name;
- CAPW level according to the national qualifications framework;

- list of competencies that make up the CAPW;
- ways to acquire CAPW;
- requirements for a person to acquire CAPW (education, work experience, etc. required);
- criteria for assessing the competencies that make up the CAPW (for example, statements illustrating the acquisition of a competence).

2. What is competence?

For example, in Lithuania the term “competence” is widely used and, according to the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania, means the ability to perform certain activities based on the totality of acquired knowledge, skills, values and values.

Thus, there are two distinct elements in the definition of "competence": WHAT is done and HOW it is done. A person with competence is characterized by a more efficient performance result - the work of a person with competence should be of better quality and more efficient than that of a person without such competence.

NOTE: *CAPWs must be formulated in such a way that they can be monitored and measured in real work.*

On the other hand, the CAPW can be of different levels: 1) essential thresholds common to all employees, and 2) those that distinguish average performance from exceptional performance — demonstrating a person’s competence and mastery. Another important aspect is whether the CAPW is oriented towards the current situation or the future, thus “coding” the directions of competence development in the sector.

3. Is it necessary to indicate competencies? What other information can be provided?

Disclosing the content of the CAPW through competencies would allow for a comparison between the CAPW and national "formal" qualifications and, where appropriate, incorporate the CAPW into national professional standards and facilitate the recognition of existing competencies. However, CAPW makers can choose how to describe the CAPW. Examples of alternatives:

- provide free-form text describing what work or other tasks the employee is performing;
- detail knowledge, general abilities and practical skills and attitudes;
- describe the level of independence and responsibility;
- describe professional and personal (social or general) competencies separately.

4. What competence groups and their constructs are foreseen?

Various classifications and models of competencies can be found in the literature on competencies. This only shows that there are different approaches to competences and that those competency models that are practically applicable to a particular situation, rather than simply being 'copied' or 'dropped' from above, will work best. Therefore, the widest possible circle of stakeholders must be involved in the development of the CAPW model.

Competencies can be divided into:

1. organizational competencies;
2. social competences;
3. cognitive competences;
4. personal competencies;
5. work competencies.

With the spread of national qualifications frameworks, it has become quite common to include the following segments of knowledge, skills and attitudes (values) in the descriptions of competencies:

1. *general knowledge and information* (knowledge of basic facts and professional knowledge);
2. *skills* (analytical, problem-solving, decision-making, social skills, emotional resilience, proactivity, etc.);
3. *“meta-qualities”* (creativity, mental activity, learning habits and abilities, self-awareness).

5. How is the concept of competencies changing? What are the new emerging trends?

Recently, there is more and more talk about the importance of 21st century competencies for competencies - those competencies without which there is no way to function properly in today's world.

The last few years have highlighted the need for the following skills to competently deliver services to both students and staff: critical and qualitative thinking; effective cooperation and communication; literacy in relation to information, media and technology; as well as personal qualities such as flexibility, initiative, sociality, productivity, and leadership.

There are even three competency clusters that are critical to exceptional performance:

1. *cognitive competences* (competences related to thinking);
2. *competences of emotional intelligence* (including self-knowledge, self-management, control of emotions, etc.);
3. *social intelligence competencies* related to communication with the outside world, as well as empathy and teamwork.

6. How to formulate competencies?

Typically, the wording of the competency consists of the following parts (see Table 4):

- 1) a verb describing an activity (general),
- 2) object of activity (supplement),
- 3) the context of the action, the condition
- 4) requirements for the performance of the action.

Table 4. Structure and examples of competence wording

Verb	Object of activity	Context or condition	Performance requirements
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Supervise	work performed by lower-skilled workers	at the construction site	according to company standards and business schedule.
Accept and serve	guests	at the hotel	in accordance with the company's hospitality policy.
Ensure	replacement of equipment consumables	at the set time	in accordance with environmental principles.

NOTE: *it is suggested to limit yourself to 6-10 key competencies, then detail them, describing measurable behavior or performance criteria.*

7. What sources can be used to describe the CAPW?

The CAPW is designed to describe competencies that are acquired only in practical work activities. The education system, due to its limited time and material and human resources, or, in most cases, the need for work experience to acquire certain competencies, cannot provide these competencies to graduates of formal education programs.

Professional standards remain one of the sources of information. The national Classification of Occupations, which provides data on many occupations, and the ESCO, the multilingual European Classification of Skills, Abilities, Qualifications and Occupations, can also be used to describe the content of the CAPW. Finally, it is always worthwhile to get acquainted with good practice in foreign countries in the development of sectoral qualifications frameworks, developed and already recognized international qualifications or international competence models. Examples of such qualifications or qualifications frameworks:

- ICT certifications (eg. Microsoft, Cisco);
- Certificates of the International Association of Project Managers;
- International Welding Institute certification system;
- European e-Competence Framework;
- European Hospitality Qualifications Passport;

- Worldchefs Global Hospitality Certification.

8. For what purpose and how to identify the level of CAPW?

In order to make the CAPW comparable with national qualifications and qualifications in other European countries, it is recommended to assess the compliance of the CAPW with the NQF and EQF levels. The best fit principle should be used to determine the level of the CAPW - the content of the CAPW (competencies, learning outcomes) should be analyzed in comparison with the national qualifications level descriptors, thus determining the level whose description best corresponds to the CAPW level.

The following steps are recommended for assigning a CAPW to qualification levels:

- competences / learning outcomes / information on knowledge, skills or performance criteria that make up the CAPW are read carefully;
- essential keywords are identified that reveal the complexity of the activity, the independence and variability of the person performing the activity, or other aspects of the activity according to the criteria for qualification levels;
- this information is compared with the descriptions of the expected NQF level and adjacent levels;
- based on this comparison, a hypothetical correspondence of the CAPW to the NQF level is determined.

NOTE: *assignment of CAPW to appropriate qualification levels is always relative. It is possible that the level of knowledge required by the CAPW will best correspond to the level 3 qualifications and the level of responsibility – to 4. In this case, a holistic approach should be taken, with the final decision taking into account the CAPW as a whole and the specifics of the sector.*

9. How to distinguish levels of excellence?

Some competencies may be more important for certain categories of employees, so the developers of the CAPW subsystem have to decide how the appropriate level of CAPW will be differentiated into levels of excellence.

NOTE: *excellence levels can be denoted by numbers, letters, or words. If CAPWs are expected to be evaluated internationally, it is better to use foreign-recognized signs or words. It is recommended to assess and predict how well the levels are consistent with NQF levels and their descriptions. This is important for CAPW to be recognized within or between countries.*

Various criteria can be used to describe the levels of excellence:

- identifying the competencies required to demonstrate each level of excellence;
- identifying the work experience required for each skill level;
- describing in a free form what a person who has reached each level of excellence must know and understand and what and how he or she must be able to do.

NOTE: *when describing the CAPW, the priority elements are decided. For example, for some sectors of the economy it may be relevant to emphasize general or universal competencies, personal qualities or attitudes towards work (such as loyalty), for others – labor force productivity.*

10. What might the description of the CAPW look like?

CAPW makers should choose the most appropriate CAPW description model for them, taking into account the needs of the industry and the vision of providing the CAPW (who will evaluate and provide the CAPW). After selecting the CAPW subsystem model, which describes the individual sector CAPW, it is recommended to consider and anticipate the following CAPW characteristics when forming the CAPW:

Recommended structure of the CAPW description

1. Name of CAPW	
------------------------	--

2. Economic sector, position	
3. CAPW level (also according to NQF)	
4. Description of CAPW	<i>List of competencies</i>
	or <i>Knowledge Skills Preferences</i>
	or <i>Free-form text describing what competencies (knowledge, skills, values, etc.) are expected from the candidate</i>
5. Requirements for obtaining a CAPW (requirements for education and / or training completed, duration of employment, competencies, etc.)	
6. Ways to acquire CAPW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - eg. assessing and recognizing existing competencies - eg. after assessing the available competencies and completing the training program - other
7. Criteria for assessing the competencies that make up the CAPW (eg. statements illustrating the acquisition of the CAPW)	
8. Methods for assessing the competencies that make up the CAPW	

9. Career opportunities for a person who has acquired a CAPW	
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4. Validation of CAPW descriptions

After preparing the CAPW descriptions, it is recommended to discuss them with external experts (specialists of the company's personnel departments, social stakeholders and the employees themselves).

The following questions can be asked to these experts:

- is the description understandable and informative?
- are the competencies (components) described in the description described clearly and in detail and are they required to complete the task successfully?
- can the CAPWs described in this way be monitored, measured and evaluated in real work activities?
- what information is missing, what should be adjusted?

5. Review and update CAPW descriptions

It is recommended to review and update CAPW descriptions every 3-5 years. The update should start with an assessment of the needs and challenges of the economic sector in terms of development trends and innovation, and anticipation of how these processes will affect the competencies of employees and what competencies are needed to respond to the related challenges.

II. Concluding remarks

The CAPW subsystem can help the economic sector to solve various employee competence problems:

- from the point of view of the strategic development of the sector, to provide the employees with the missing competencies or, after assessing the competencies of the employees, to clearly indicate what additional competencies it is recommended for them to acquire and to organize training for that purpose;
- create transparent employee motivation systems.

The criteria for the success of such a subsystem are the involvement of the various stakeholders (stakeholders), the adaptability of the subsystem and its benefits for the employees.

The following questions should be answered in detail when developing the CAPW subsystem:

- is the purpose of the CAPW clear?
- is the need and relevance of developing the CAPW subsystem clarified and justified?
- are all potential stakeholders involved in the development of CAPW profiles?
- have the costs of installing and maintaining such a subsystem been assessed?
- is there a clear vision of how this subsystem will be maintained?
- is the timeframe for the implementation of the subsystem realistic?

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