



# Towards a **European** Area of **Skills** and **Qualifications**

## **Results of the Public Consultation**

*Brussels, 17 June 2014*



# Stakeholder consultation on the European area of skills and qualifications

## Main messages

### OVERVIEW

The continuing difficulties surrounding the recognition and transparency of skills and qualifications hinder the development of the right mix of skills and qualifications as well as the mobility needed to achieve a better match between skills and jobs to help boost competitiveness and prosperity.

The European Commission wished to collect the views of stakeholders on the problems faced by Europeans with regard to the transparency and recognition of their skills and qualifications when moving within and between EU Member States, on the adequacy of the related European policies and instruments and on the potential benefits of developing a “European area of skills and Qualifications”. The public consultation on the European Area of Skills and Qualifications (hereafter EASQ) was open between 17 December 2013 and 15 April 2014.

A total of 85 position papers and 289 replies to the online questionnaire were received. 44% of respondents replied in their personal capacity and 56% on behalf of an organisation, based in the EU and in Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Australia. 63% of respondents have indicated education and training as their main area of activity, 8% employment and 29% other sectors (e.g. culture, research, public relations and communication, international relations). Position papers have been submitted by Member States bodies (17), trade unions and employers’ representatives (10), student and youth representatives (5), EU networks and bodies (20), education and professional sectoral organisations at national level (23), individuals (2) and others (8) (see annex II).

This note presents the analysis of the Commission services of the replies submitted to the consultation. It is based both on the position papers received and the replies to the online questionnaire, both closed questions (see also annex III) and open-ended questions. The note draws the main findings and individual comments and proposals are not necessarily included in this document. They will nevertheless be given full consideration by the Commission in further reflections and discussions with stakeholders.

Mirroring the public consultation, this paper presents its results along seven themes, namely:

1. How to place a stronger focus on higher and more relevant skills
2. Further strengthening links between education/training, mobility and the labour market
3. Adapting to internationalisation trends

4. Ensuring overall coherence of tools and policies and further implementing the learning outcomes approach
5. Ensuring clarity of rules and procedures for the recognition of skills and qualifications for further learning
6. Increasing the focus on quality assurance
7. Providing learners and workers with a single access point to obtain information and services supporting a European area of skills and qualifications.

Overall, the consultation respondents confirm that a EASQ should support mobility for both work and education, employability and quality education and modernisation of the education systems. More specifically, it should:

- Pursue coherence, simplification, ease of use, transparency and understanding of the current tools, including by ensuring that the same terminology is used. The relationship and synergies between the tools should be clear and where necessary the governance of the single tools should be reviewed, ensuring representation of all stakeholders.
- Focus on the individual and on the end-users of the tools (e.g. employers, teachers, assessors, practitioners, education providers, etc.). This means also effective communication, availability of information, guidance and training.
- Promote permeability within different sectors of education and training and forms of learning, while respecting sector specificities, thus support flexible learning pathways tailored on the individual.
- Support the development of relevant skills.
- Pursue full implementation of the learning outcomes approach across all tools and policies.
- Firmly anchor the EASQ within the Europe 2020 strategy, the European Semester and the Education and Training 2020 strategy.

Respondents stress nonetheless the importance to give time for implementation of the current tools and support full and consistent implementation in Member States. Particular attention is expected in avoiding creating additional structures, tools, reporting burden and respecting national competencies. Many respondents have also emphasised the need to ensure proper coordination between the different Commission services representing different activities (ex: employment policies, single market fields and sectors in education). Finally several claim the need to ensure full involvement of all relevant stakeholders, in particular for the design/revision, implementation and monitoring of the tools. This would in turn ensure shared ownership of the initiative.

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## 1. HOW TO PLACE A STRONGER FOCUS ON HIGHER AND MORE RELEVANT SKILLS

- There is **broad support for the key competences as set out in the 2006 Recommendation on the European Key Competences Framework<sup>1</sup>**, which should be part of any European strategy. However, according to some respondents, the key competences are not sufficiently well known, understood or used and their awareness should be raised. The key competences could be also better used for the dialogue between education institutions and labour market.
- **46% of respondents strongly and 40% partially agree to a stronger focus of curricula and assessment practices on boosting transversal skills (graph 1 in annex III)**. There is also broad agreement that in a fast changing world and labour market, transversal skills such as digital, language and entrepreneurial competences are crucial to ensure that individuals can adapt and quickly respond to changing environments.
- Some respondents stressed the **need to build and use an evidence base to identify which skills are most relevant** (e.g. labour market intelligence tools), so as to concentrate efforts on the promotion of those. It was also suggested that career management skills should become part of the key competences framework. Other respondents recommended a more holistic approach including self-fulfilment, civic conscience and cultural development. ‘Learning to learn’ as well as ‘social and civic competences’ were mentioned as necessary key competences that need to be fostered in order to manage jobs and lives. Finally, some respondents expressed also reservations about focussing too much on international rankings like PISA and PIAAC, which measure only the most traditional subjects and do not provide a full picture of the whole range of modern skills and competences.
- **Developing reference frameworks at EU level for certain key competences (digital, entrepreneurship) meets broad consensus** with 46% of respondents strongly and 40% partially agreeing on pursuing this objective (graph 2).
- **Respondents dealing with cross-sectoral issues believe that key competences should be integrated into the full range of education and training activities** throughout lifelong learning and that more cooperation at national and European level is needed for this. The supporting role of teachers and guidance was underlined as well as the involvement of social partners and sustainable investment in education, at national and European level. Non-formal and informal learning was specially mentioned as a significant contribution to the development of relevant skills for employability and for life.
- **A full implementation of the learning outcomes approach and a clear definition of the learning outcomes to be achieved at the end of a learning experience**

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<sup>1</sup> The European Key Competences framework includes 8 key competences are: communication in the mother tongue; communication in foreign languages; mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology; digital competence; learning to learn; social and civic competences; sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; cultural awareness and expression.

**are considered of paramount importance.** These should be clear to all involved: the learners, the teachers, the assessors, the education and training providers, the employers, etc.

- However, **some competences are difficult to measure** and knowledge, skills and abilities should be considered together when writing a level per competence. Respondents also reminded that EU action promoting the understanding and transparency of skills is welcomed but it should not overstep national competences in curriculum design.

## 2. FURTHER STRENGTHENING LINKS BETWEEN EDUCATION/TRAINING, MOBILITY AND THE LABOUR MARKET

- There is broad support for the development of better links between education/training and employment, including **through a greater involvement of industry/employers in curricula design and in creating standards for assessment.** 42% of respondents strongly and 40% partially agree that it would be useful to have more hands-on experts from the employers' side involved in the design of the curricula (graph 3). However, some stakeholders highlighted that **an excessive focus on the employers' perspective risks promoting a short-term perspective,** instead of building the conditions for flexibility, innovation and new areas of growth.
- 53% of respondents strongly and 31% partially agree that **forecasts on skills supply and needs must be better integrated in education and training strategies** (graph 8) **and some stakeholders call for more evidence about the actual outcomes of education and training with regards to the preparation for the labour market** (e.g. tracking of students and graduates, benchmarking between institutions). Tools like the European Skills Panorama and ESCO should provide up-to-date information creating better understanding of learning outcomes, skills needs and communication between education and labour market. 52% of respondents consider a common multilingual European terminology (graph 7) such as ESCO useful and 34% somewhat useful in support of those goals but some concerns were raised concerning the feasibility of maintaining a complex tool as ESCO the terminology of which risks becoming soon obsolete vis-à-vis the rapidly evolving context.
- There was a **strong agreement on the importance of high quality and independent guidance services at all levels of education and employment,** including from early stages, in order to reduce early school leaving or drop out and to foster employability. Labour market actors should have an active role in the provision of guidance services to help overcome skills mismatches.
- In order to improve understanding by employers and support job-related mobility, it was noted that **qualifications, with underpinning skills, should be as portable as possible and contain simple, accessible information.** To enhance transparency, the potential of new technologies and services, like open badges and open standards should not be overlooked.

- Many stakeholders regretted a **lack of coordination between DGs EAC, EMPL and MARKT**. In particular, the example of the recently revised directive on professional qualifications was mentioned as a case in which better coordination would have been necessary (e.g. different system of levelling qualifications from the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)).

### 3. ADAPTING TO INTERNATIONALISATION TRENDS

- 43% of respondents strongly and 33% partially agree that **European level coordination is needed (graph 14) for a consistent approach to the recognition of qualifications awarded by international sectoral organisations and multinational companies**. Whilst the majority of views expressed in the position papers favour the direct referencing of these qualifications to the EQF, results of the online questionnaire are more mixed showing 43% of respondents favour the inclusion of these qualifications in the EQF whereas 34% supported an inclusion through the National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) (graph 15).
- The **need to promote mutual recognition of qualifications and credits between the EU and third countries is broadly supported**. There is also broad support for promoting the European Qualifications Framework as a reference tool to facilitate cooperation and dialogue with non-European countries. However, the fact that there is no consistency in the level of implementation of the EQF across EU Member States may be a potential obstacle to such cooperation. Erasmus+ and other EU actions should also consistently support mutual recognition of qualifications and credits, awareness raising, mutual understanding and exchange of experiences. Some respondents highlighted the opportunities offered by Erasmus+ to foster capacity building in the field of youth.
- **Quality assurance procedures and principles and their mutual understanding between the EU and third countries are crucial in promoting trust**. Other initiatives mentioned that can support recognition and transparency between the EU and third countries were the Europass Diploma and Certificate Supplements and ESCO.
- **18% of the respondents to the online questionnaire considered that the current instruments for transparency and recognition are fully and 34% somewhat suitable to support joint degrees** (graph 16) whereas 16% find them not very suitable and 28% had no opinion. Contrasting views have to be noted from respondents from higher education (HE) sector which were more positive (68% considered the tools fully or somewhat suitable) and respondents from the employment sector which are more negative (23%). Increased information sharing and better understanding were mentioned as elements to support recognition. The need for standardised international arrangements on quality assurance as a means to support the development of joint degrees has been pointed by some respondents.

#### 4. ENSURING OVERALL COHERENCE OF TOOLS AND POLICIES AND FURTHER IMPLEMENTING THE LEARNING OUTCOMES APPROACH

- **The consultation confirms the need to pursue coherence, simplification, ease of use and a better communication transparency and understanding of the current tools.** Only 4% of the respondents totally agree and 44% partially agree that the current tools seen altogether are clear and understandable (graph 19), while 27% partially and 14% strongly disagree (no opinion 11%). However the need for streamlining should not cause the tools to lose focus. To ensure consistency and synergies, proposals made included a suggestion to establish an overarching governance of all the tools and policies and to check and revise where necessary the governance of the single instruments, ensuring representation of all relevant stakeholders. There should be a consistent terminology across the tools to ensure greater coherence and coordination and no new tools should be developed.
- **Tools and policies should be brought closer to the end users** (learners, workers, teachers, education and training providers, employers, guidance counsellors, etc). This requires more appropriate communication, information guidance and training activities.
- There is almost **unanimous support for a full implementation of the learning outcomes approach across all EU tools on all levels of education and training** (as opposed to input measures such as workload or time spent in a course or programme). This includes strong support to systematically describing qualifications and study programmes in terms of learning outcomes (62% strongly and 27% partially agree) (graph 20a). 53% of respondents to the on-line questionnaire strongly agree (30% partially agrees) that the learning outcomes approach could support the validation of non-formal and informal learning (graph 20c).
- **A clear and detailed definition of learning outcomes, corresponding to qualifications or parts of qualifications, ensures transparency and understanding, thus supporting recognition and portability of skills and qualifications.** Some respondents, in particular among national authorities, stress however that rewriting standards, curricula and qualifications in terms of learning outcomes should be a longer term goal as it requires investment in terms of time and resources. To implement the learning outcomes approach appropriate information and training for the main stakeholders involved is required (e.g. for teachers, assessors, people working in guidance services, etc.). Not all competences can be described in terms of learning outcomes (e.g. civic competences, philosophy).
- There is **broad consensus on the need for credit systems to support mobility and to facilitate permeability between different sectors of education and training, in particular between higher education and vocational education and training but there are less unanimous views on the way to achieve this overall goal.** Though a few respondents feel that there could be a single credit system for both vocational education and training and higher education, several others

think that the two credits systems should cooperate, but remain separate, to better account for sector specificities. The majority of the respondents, however, support developing compatible approaches for the two systems, organised around a common definition of credit based on learning outcomes. This solution is also supported by the results of the online questionnaire, which show that a common definition between vocational education and training (VET) and HE of unit of learning outcomes and credit is supported by the majority of respondents, with 48% who strongly and 28% who partially agree) (graph 20b).

- **The EQF is seen as one of the most important tools to foster transparency of qualifications and which can help other instruments operate.** The fact that the EQF cuts across sectors and across countries is particularly relevant. However several respondents argued that the EQF should be strengthened by increasing its consistency: comparable qualifications must be referenced to the same EQF level by all Member States. The EQF should also be more open towards non-formal and informal learning. There is a need for closer coordination of credit systems (ECTS and ECVET) with the EQF. Several respondents also stress the need to make it better known to the citizens. In particular respondents from the employment sector, stressed that NQF and EQF levels should be clearly stated in certificates and diplomas.
- **Synergies between the EQF and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area (i.e Bologna process) should be improved** such as through a single referencing process to both frameworks and which, according to employment stakeholders, should have clear labour market relevance. Some respondents suggested that the EQF should be opened to the non-EU countries that are currently following the Bologna process (these correspond to 12 out of 48 countries of the Bologna process).
- **The views on the current landscape of European tools for the documentation of learning experiences are mixed** with only 4% of respondents finding it totally satisfactory and 44% finding it somewhat satisfactory, 27 % somewhat unsatisfactory and 19% totally unsatisfactory (graph 20d). Overall, Europass documents should also become more relevant for employers.
- **Within the Europass framework, Europass CV is considered a useful tool** to foster transparency about an individual's skills and qualifications and facilitates the comparison of CVs, **while the European Skills Passport and Europass Mobility are considered less useful.** Main suggestions for improving the Europass CV concern a better documentation of learning outcomes, including non-formal and informal learning experiences.
- **64% of the replies to the online questionnaire support a possible fusion between the Diploma Supplement and the Certificate supplement into a single supplement** (graph 22) whereas 14% would be against it and 22% has no opinion. Support for the creation of this single document is even higher among respondents from HE (70%) and from VET (67%). Arguments in favour of a single supplement relate to the permeability between higher education and VET. Some respondents suggested that the Certificate Supplement could be used also for general education. In general, respondents agree that the most important thing



is clarity and transparency which could be promoted by a standardisation of the content of the Supplements.

- **46% of the respondents strongly and 28% partially agree that better integration between sectoral skills and qualification passports and the Europass Framework is needed (graph 10).** Sector skills and qualification passports are perceived as adding value to the cross border mobility of learners and workers compared to more general European documentation tools such as Europass.
- **40% of respondents consider that self-assessment tools for individuals to measure their knowledge skills and competences would be very or (43%) somewhat useful (graph 37).** 26% of respondents also consider that the possible integration of self-assessment tools into the Europass framework in order to document non-formal and informal learning outcomes (such as the Youthpass) would be very or (44%) somewhat useful (graph 21) and only 15 % find it not very or not at all useful. This support is particularly expressed among the respondents from the youth field where 60% of respondents find it very useful and 20% find it partially useful.

#### **5. ENSURING CLARITY OF RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE RECOGNITION OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR FURTHER LEARNING**

- **33% of respondents of the online questionnaire strongly and 28% partially agree to the development of common criteria and procedures for recognition that apply to all education and training sectors (graph 28).** Support is particularly broad in the school sector (85% strongly or partially agrees) and in the adult learning sector (86% strongly or partially agrees). Views expressed in the position papers are however much more mixed. Some respondents consider that the specificities of the different sectors make it difficult to identify common criteria that cut across all sectors of education and training. There is in particular more caution in relation to general education.
- There is also strong **support to develop European criteria and procedures for the recognition of qualifications for further learning in other areas in which they are currently absent (graphs 26a, 26c, 26d), namely:**
  - Adult learning and general education (49% strongly and 30% partially agree). Moreover, 53% of respondents strongly and 25% partially agree that a European system of recognition of skills, competences and qualification in school education helps improving mobility and employability of young people.
  - Vocational qualifications (48% strongly and 27% partially agree, with in particular strong support from the VET sector where 87% of respondents strongly or partially agree).

- **19% of the respondents partially and 9% strongly disagree that the criteria used by higher education institutions for recognising qualifications acquired in another Member State are sufficiently clear (graph 26b)**, transparent and accommodating of learners' needs suggesting room for improvement. Higher education respondents seem to point to more dissatisfaction with 32% partially and 10% strongly disagreeing that the criteria used are clear and transparent. Views expressed in the position papers confirm the need to foster better and clearer understanding and transparency of the recognition criteria and the way they are applied, while stressing the autonomy of higher education institutions over their recognition decisions. The work carried out by ENIC/NARIC is considered important and contributing to clarification.
- **Only 12% of the respondents believe that the current tools for transparency are fully suitable and 42% find them somewhat suitable for recognising the outcomes of digital learning (graph 27)** such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and other open educational resources even if there is broad agreement on the fact that these new forms of learning present great opportunities. 18% find them not very suitable and 8% not suitable. The suggested role for the Commission is to bring the discussion forward and facilitate dialogue between the different stakeholders (including providers). Respondents also suggested that work underway in the context of validation of non-formal and informal learning can support certification of learning outcomes achieved on the basis of digital learning. Other suggestions well supported are the setting up of independent validation and assessment centres, based on European standards and procedures; that providers of MOOCs could facilitate recognition by indicating the corresponding credits and learning outcomes and that they should undergo accreditation procedures as do providers of traditional courses. Views expressed in the position papers highlighted that this is still a nascent market and it is difficult to formulate specific proposals.
- Suggestions on better recognition include increasing transparency of the assessment and awarding processes and promoting standardisation of testing procedures. A focus on learning outcomes ensures greater transparency and understanding and will thus facilitate recognition.

## 6. INCREASING THE FOCUS ON QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA)

- There is broad agreement that **a strong focus on quality assurance arrangements is needed if education and training systems are to deliver high quality educational outcomes**. In this context openness to external quality assurance review, including from private providers and quality assurance bodies from other countries, can foster trust.
- **The online questionnaire shows broad support for the development of a core of common European quality assurance principles for the provision of learning opportunities in all sectors of education and training (45% strongly and 30% partially agree) (graph 31b)**. 56 % of VET respondents strongly agree. **The views expressed in the position papers are nonetheless more mixed**. Some

respondents consider desirable to develop an overarching quality assurance framework covering all sectors, including internal and external quality assurance principles and a learning outcomes focus, to foster mobility and permeability. Further quality assurance arrangements could then vary on the basis of sector specificities. Higher education respondents are in general positive to the development of such principles across sectors and the ENQA Standards and Guidelines for QA in HE were mentioned as best practice in this field. Some respondents argue that the quality assurance principles of the EQF could be a possible starting point for developing common quality assurance principles. Several respondents mentioned also that a European quality assurance label could help in the recognition of studies in adult learning, non-formal and informal learning and possibly in studies in online learning. On the contrary, other respondents believe it is not possible to develop common quality assurance principles because of sector specificities and argue that the effectiveness of the current QA arrangements lies on the fact that they were developed for a specific sector and by that sector's stakeholders. Finally another group of respondents support bringing closer quality arrangements used in HE and VET, but are not in favour of extending this to other sectors.

- **In relation to the suitability of current quality assurance principles and credit systems to support new forms of learning, such as digital learning, respondents point to the need for improvement** with only 8% of the respondents finding them fully suitable and 38% somewhat suitable (graph 32); 21% find them not very suitable and 6% not suitable (no opinion: 27%). In principle, current quality assurance arrangements could be adapted to support this forms of learning.

## 7. PROVIDING LEARNERS AND WORKERS WITH A SINGLE ACCESS POINT TO OBTAIN INFORMATION AND SERVICES SUPPORTING A EUROPEAN AREA OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

- **Overall the current landscape of web tools in the area of skills and qualifications is not considered very effective.** Only the Europass Portal is considered effective by a majority of respondents (57%); others portals have scores below 50 % (EQF Portal: 44%; ESCO: 36%; European Skills Panorama: 27%; Your Europe: 25%; Ploteus: 19%; We mean Business: 17%) (graphs 36, see specific web-tools).
- **44%% of respondents strongly and 33% partially agree that the creation of one-stop shops providing integrated services on learning opportunities, career guidance and recognition of qualifications for employment purposes or further learning - would be beneficial (graph 34).** Looking at the current services provided at EU level, 43% of respondents consider highly and 32% somewhat desirable the integration of European services currently spread over the networks of ENIC/NARIC, Europass, Euroguidance, NQF-NCPs into single service-points for learners and workers covering (graph 35). Also the position papers contain views that the current situation of fragmentation of tools and networks is not effective as information has to be looked for in many different sources (respondents also referred to web tools not included in the consultation document, such as EURES, Solvit, EURAXESS). However, some respondents

argued that merging current networks would not be desirable, as they cater for different needs and target groups. They also mention that it would be difficult to put in practice because of the organisation at national level.

- If single points were created, **specific services and information currently offered by the different web tools and networks should not be lost, and appropriate monitoring and evaluating systems ensuring that information is up-to-date should be available.** It is further pointed that online tools should not replace the availability of other means of contact and interaction such as face-to-face contact. Furthermore the need to clarify the respective roles of EU and national/local authorities in the development of online and physical integrated contact points is a key aspect for successful implementation
- Respondents also pointed to **the essential role of guidance and guidance services in promoting access to relevant information, and the need to better link education and employment services should be promoted.** The role of schools, libraries and universities in the dissemination of EU related information and opportunities should be given greater consideration. In particular, some respondents from the employment sector are of the opinion that the different initiatives and services should be complemented by (e-)services to make them accessible and usable by non-professional end users.

## ANNEXES

- I. List of abbreviations
- II. List of organisations that have submitted a position paper
- III. Results of the online questionnaire

## ANNEX I - List of abbreviations

DG EAC	Directorate General for Education and Culture
DG EMPL	Directorate General for Employment, Social affairs and Inclusion
DG MARKT	Directorate General for Internal Market and Services
EASQ	European Area of Skills and Qualifications
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
ECVET	European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training
ENIC	European Network of Information Centres in the European Region
ENQA	European Quality Assurance Network in higher education
EQAVET	European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
EQF-NCPs	European Qualifications Framework National Contact Points
ESCO	European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations
EU	European Union
EURES	European Employment Services portal
HE	Higher Education
MOOCs	Massive Open Online Courses
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union
NFIE	Non-Formal and Informal Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
Ploteus	Portal on Learning Opportunities throughout the European Space
QA	Quality Assurance
QF EHEA	Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training

## ANNEX II - List of organisations that have submitted a position paper<sup>2</sup>

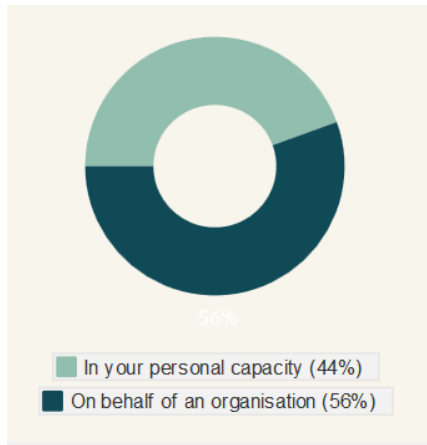
Name	Country
ADEE- Association for Dental Education in Europe	IE
AEI-NOOSR - Australia's National Information Centre for qualifications recognition	AU
AGEFA-PME	FR
Austrian Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (FHK)	AT
Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs	AT
Austrian Ministry of Science and Research	AT
Autorités françaises	FR
BIBB-Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training	DE
BIBB-Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa	DE
BMA-British Medical Association	UK
BUSINESSEUROPE	BE
CEN-European Committee for Standardization	BE
CESI-European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions	BE
CPME-Standing Committee of European Doctors	BE
CYFI-Child and Youth Finance International	NL
DAEA-Danish Adult Education Association	DK
Department for Employment and Learning (DEL), Northern Ireland	UK
Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	NL
Dutch Partnership Life Long Learning	NL
EAEA - European Association for the Education of Adults	BE
EARLALL – European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning	BE
EFAD-European Federation of Associations of Dietitians	DK
EFEE - European Federation of Education Employers	BE
EHA - European Hematology Association	NL
ELGPN-European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network	FI
Employment and Training corporation Malta	MT
EQAVET- European Quality Assurance in Vocational Educational and Training Network	IE
ESN - Erasmus Students Network	BE
Estonian Qualifications Authority	EE
ESU- European Students Union	BE
ETF - European Training Foundation	IT
ETUC-ETUCE	BE
EUA - European University Association	BE
EuCheMS-ECTN / European Association for Chemical and Molecular Sciences	BE
EUCIS LLL -European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning	BE
EUNEC - Network of Education Councils in the European Union	BE
EUpVET	NL
EURAS-European Academy For Standardisation	NL
EUROCADRES	BE
EUROCHAMBRES	BE

<sup>2</sup> A total of 85 papers were submitted, including by two citizens. The list refers to all organisations that did not deny their consent to the publication of their data.

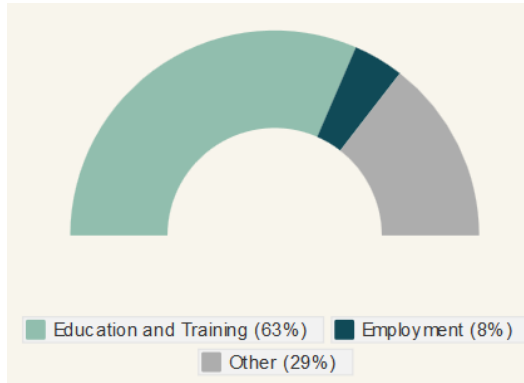
Name	Country
EUROCLIO - European Association of History Educators	NL
EURODOC-European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers	BE
EUROGUIDANCE – Flemish Ministry for Education and Training	BE
EUROGUIDANCE Network	BE
European Office for Catholic Youth and Adult Education	BE
EYF-European Youth Forum	BE
Flemish Ministry of Education and Training	BE
Helmut Schmidt University	DE
IDA - Danish Society of Engineers	DK
IGMetall (Quali2 move EU Project)	DE
IndustriAll Europe Trade Union	BE
Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, de l'Enfance et de la Jeunesse	LU
Ministry of Education and Culture Finland	FI
Ministry of Education and Research Sweden	SE
Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain	ES
National Commission for Further and Higher Education of Malta	MT
Naturvetarna, the Swedish Association of Professional Scientists	SE
NEWTON	DE
NIACE - National Institute of Adult Continuing Education	UK
Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research	NO
Pearson	UK
SACO-Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations	SE
SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT	UK
SMA - Swedish Medical Association	SE
The Reading & Writing Foundation	NL
UK Department for Education and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	UK
UEAPME	BE
University of Melbourne	AU
UUK - Universities UK	UK
VBI-German Association of Consulting Engineers	DE
VLOR - Flemish Education Council	BE
Working Group Europass Certificate Supplement	NL

### ANNEX III. Results of the online questionnaire<sup>3</sup>

You are replying:

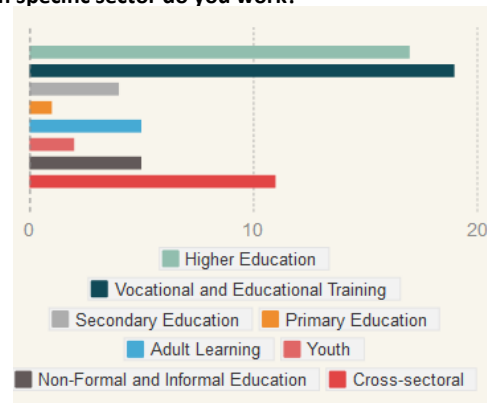


Which is your main area of activity:



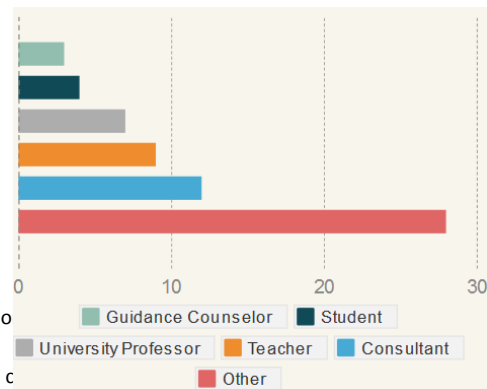
If your main area of activity is Education and Training, in which specific sector do you work?

	Ratio
Higher Education	17%
Vocational and Educational Training	19%
Secondary Education	4%
Primary Education	1%
Adult Learning	5%
Youth	2%
Non-Formal and Informal Education	5%
Cross-sectoral	11%



If you are responding in your personal capacity, please specify your profession:

	Ratio
University Professor	7%
Teacher	9%
Guidance counselor	3%
Consultant	12%
Student	4%
Other (please specify)	28%



<sup>3</sup> EUSurvey "Towards a European Area of Skills and Qualifications", expo

All questions in the survey were optional. Respondents were free to focus on particular issues, according to their interests. The results of the online questionnaire presented in this annex include only the closed questions. The remaining questions (namely questions 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 33, 39) were open-ended.

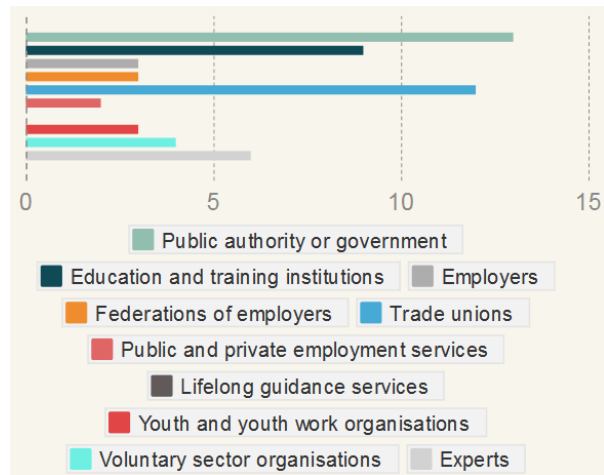
The sectors shown on the graphs 1-38 are: Higher Education (HE), Vocational and Educational Training (VET), Primary and Secondary Education (Schools), Adult Learning, Youth, Cross-sectoral (more than one educational sector), Non-Formal and Informal Education (NFIE) and Employment.

For the purpose of this note, the value "No opinion" includes both respondents who have actively flagged the value and those who have not replied to the question.

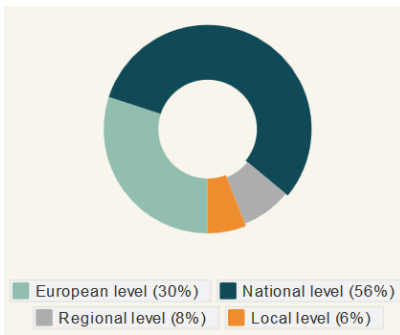


**Who do you work for or who do you represent?**

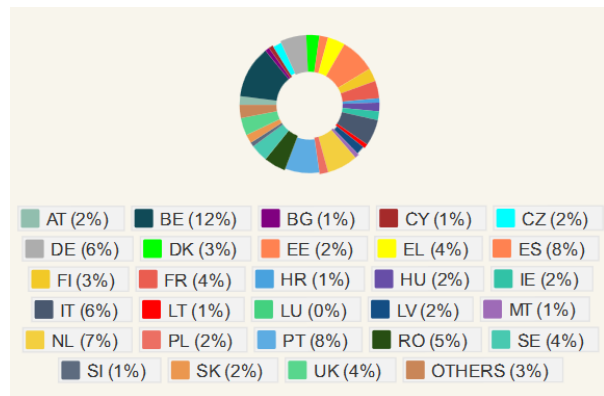
	Ratio
Public authority or government	13%
Education and training institutions	9%
Employers	3%
Federations of employers	3%
Trade unions	12%
Public and private employment services	2%
Lifelong guidance services	0%
Youth and youth work organisations	3%
Voluntary sector organisations	4%
Experts	6%



**Please specify level:**



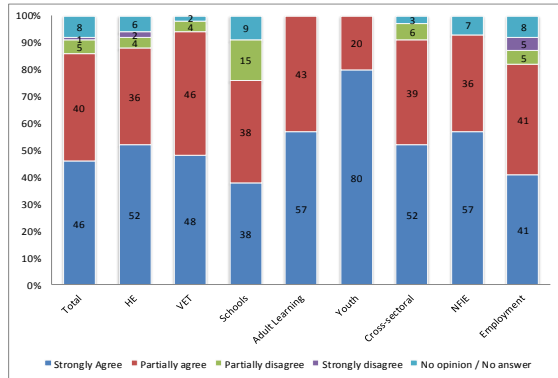
**Indicate the country where you legally reside or where your organisation is principally based:**



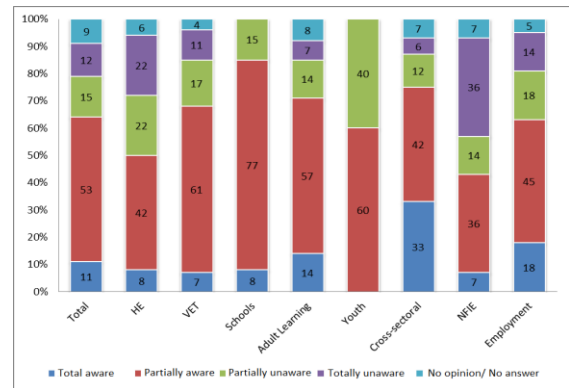
Received contributions, together with the identity of the contributor, may be published on Directorate General Education and Culture website, unless the contributor objects to publication of the personal data on the grounds that such publication would harm his or her legitimate interests. In this case the contribution may be published in anonymous form. Otherwise the contribution will not be published nor will, in principle, its content be taken into account

	Answers	Ratio
Do not publish my data	75	26%

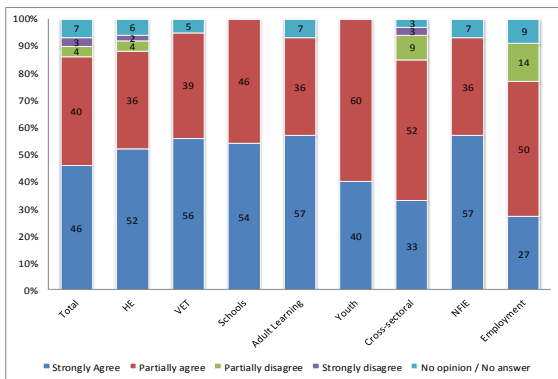
1. Should curricula and assessment practices be more focused on boosting transversal skills such as digital, language and entrepreneurial competences?



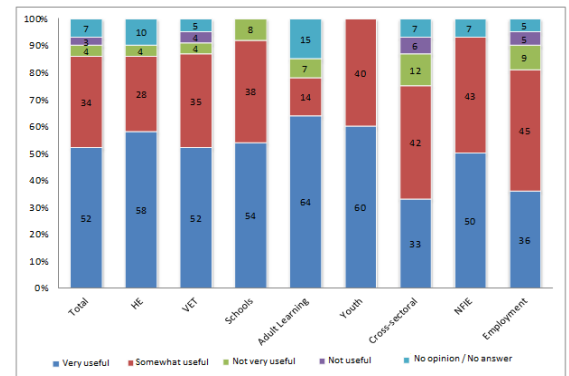
6. To help individuals take advantage of available opportunities in a wider and more open context, career guidance policies and practices are crucial. Are you aware of the European policies on career guidance?



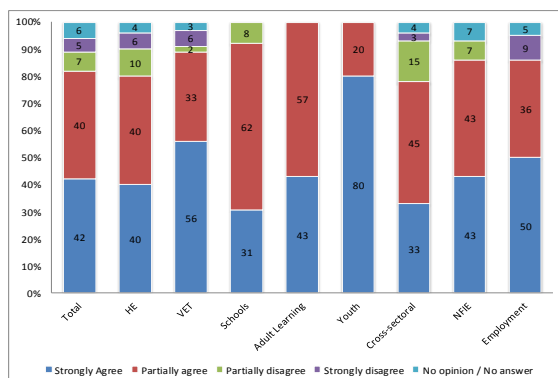
2. Would it be useful to develop reference frameworks describing learning outcomes per level and competence, following the example of the language competence framework?



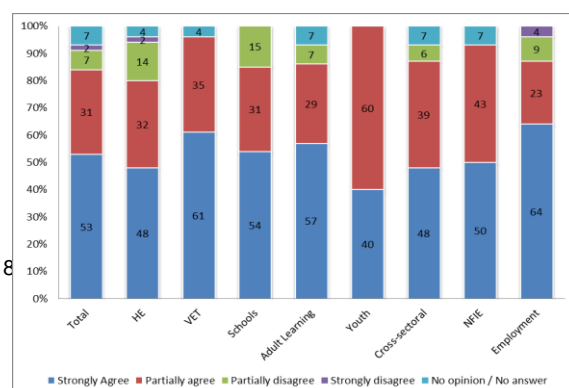
7. Is it useful to be able to use a common multilingual European terminology (such as ESCO) to support describing learning outcomes of education and training programmes in terms of knowledge, skills competences relevant to the labour market?



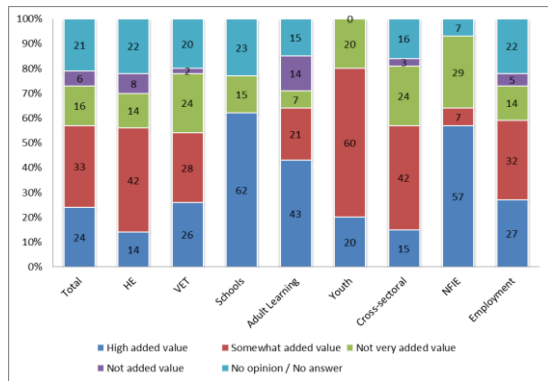
3. Would it be useful to have more hands-on experts from the employers' side involved in the design of the curricula?



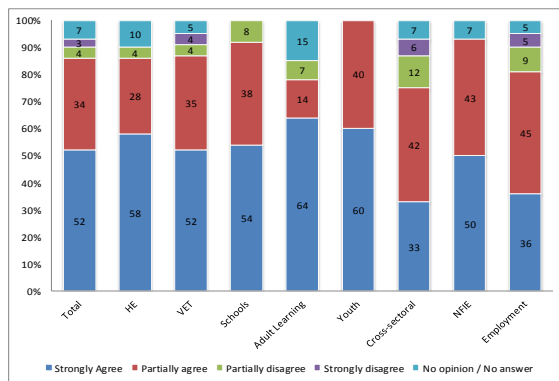
8. Should forecasts on skills supply and needs be better integrated into education and training strategies in order to reduce skills mismatches?



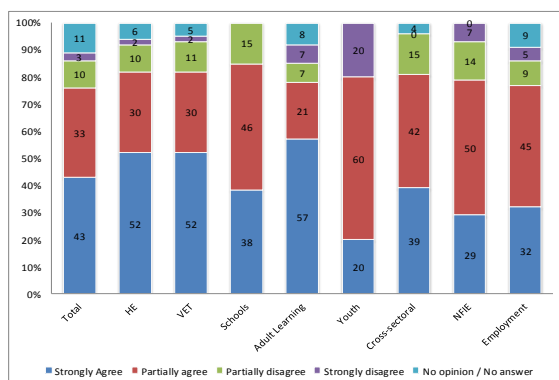
9. Several sectoral skills and qualification passports have been developed that promote the recognition of skills, experiences and qualifications, facilitating transnational mobility within the same sector. They can play a role in the phase of identification and documentation of skills. Do sectoral skills and qualifications passports or cards have added value compared to more general European documentation tools such as Europass, e.g. for cross border mobility of learners and workers?



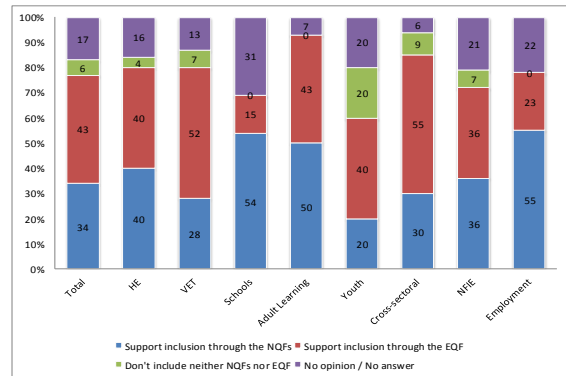
10. Is better integration between these passports and the Europass framework needed?



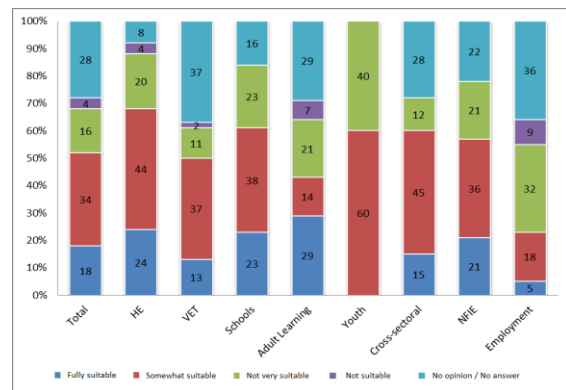
14. A number of qualifications awarded at international level (e.g. by international sectoral organisations and multinational companies) are often valued in the labour market. Is European level coordination needed to facilitate the recognition of such qualifications throughout Europe?



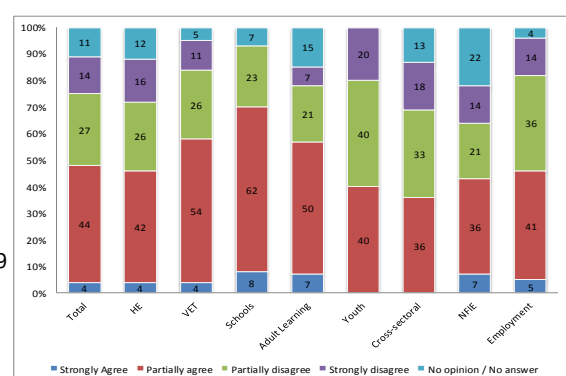
15. Should criteria and procedures be developed for the inclusion of international qualifications in National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) and the European Qualification Framework (EQF)?



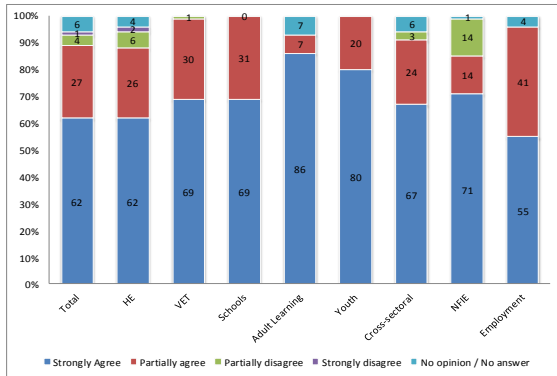
16. An increasing number of study programmes, such as Masters or PhDs are being jointly developed by two or more higher education institutions in different countries offering joint degrees. Are existing recognition arrangements suitable for the recognition of these degrees?



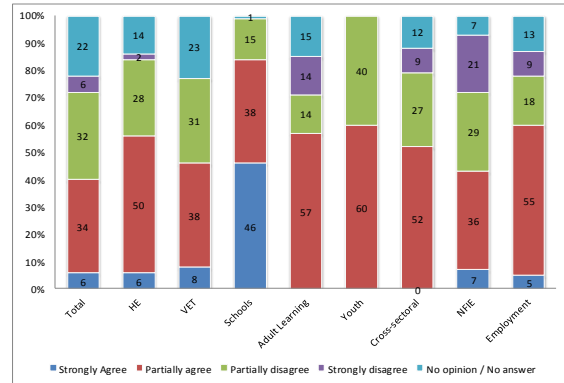
19. In your opinion, are the current tools seen altogether clear and understandable?



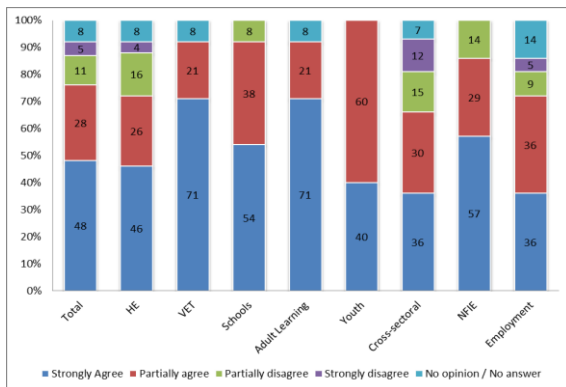
**20.a. Should qualifications and study programmes be systematically described in terms of learning outcomes (knowledge skills and competences to be acquired)?**



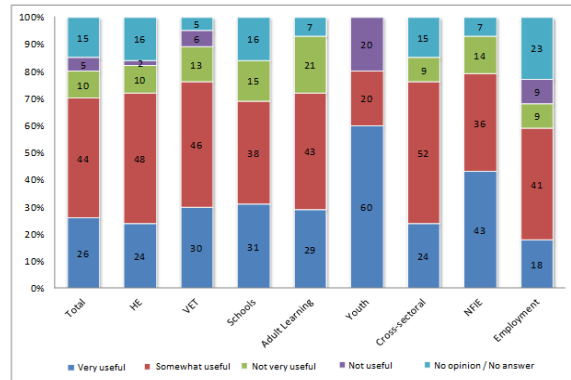
**20.d. Do you consider the current European tools for the documentation of learning experiences satisfactory or unsatisfactory?**



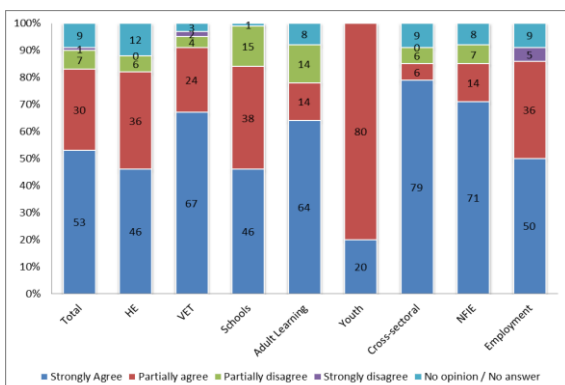
**20.b. Would a common definition of "unit of learning outcomes" and "credit" between higher education and vocational education and training be desirable?**



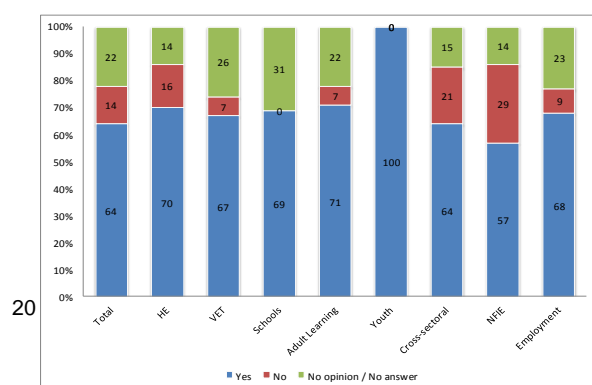
**21. Do you consider the possible integration of Europass tools and self-assessment tools to document non-formal and informal learning outcomes (such as the Youthpass) in a common framework useful?**



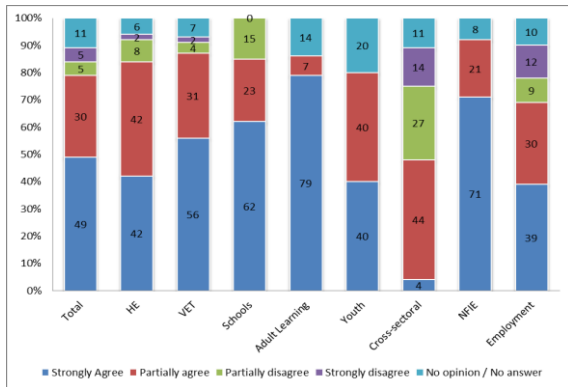
**20.c. Could the use of the learning outcomes approach support the validation of non-formal and informal learning?**



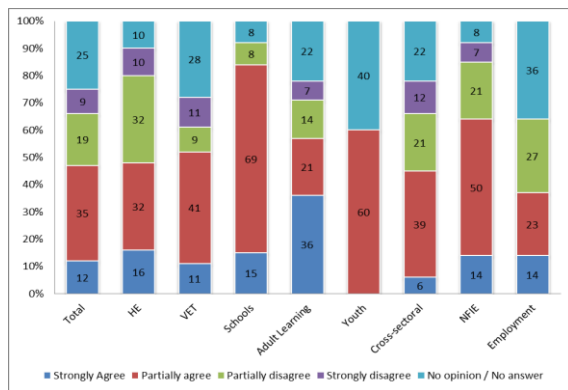
**22. Would you support a development towards a single supplement documenting learning outcomes acquired in formal education bringing closer together the Diploma Supplement (for higher education) and the Certificate Supplement (for Vocational Education and Training)?**



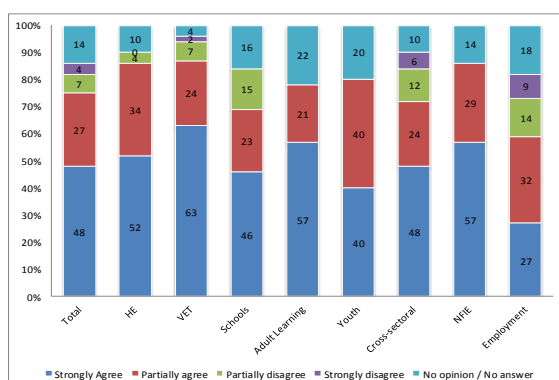
**26.a. While respecting national competences, should European criteria and procedures for the recognition of qualifications for further learning be developed in the areas of adult learning and general education?**



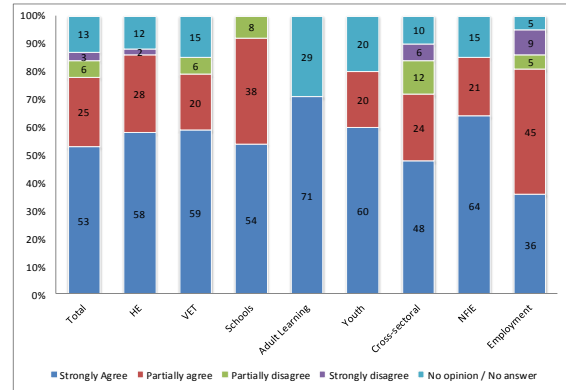
**26.b. For the purposes of further learning (and in the context of the autonomy of higher education institutions), are the criteria used by higher education institutions for recognising qualifications acquired in another Member State sufficiently clear, transparent and accommodating of learners' needs?**



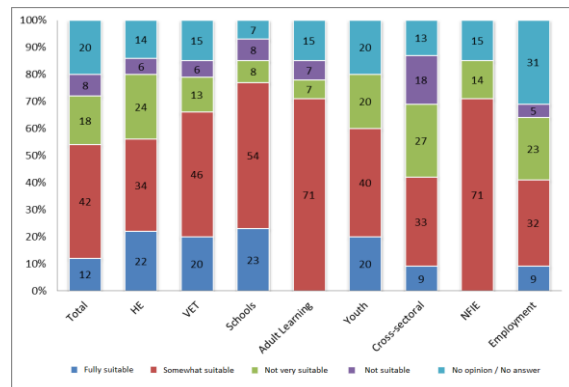
**26.c. Should European criteria and procedures for the recognition of vocational qualifications for further learning within and across Member States be developed?**



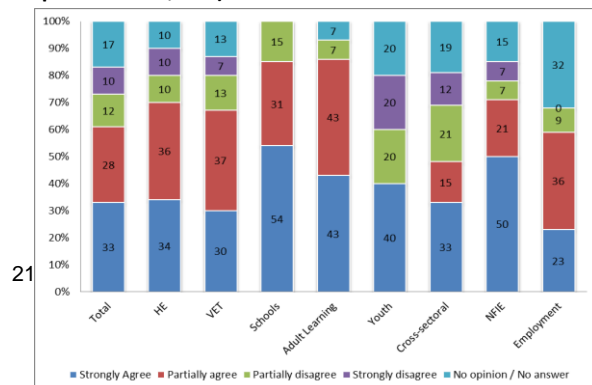
**26.d. Would a European system of recognition of skills, competences and qualifications in school education help improving mobility and employability of young people?**



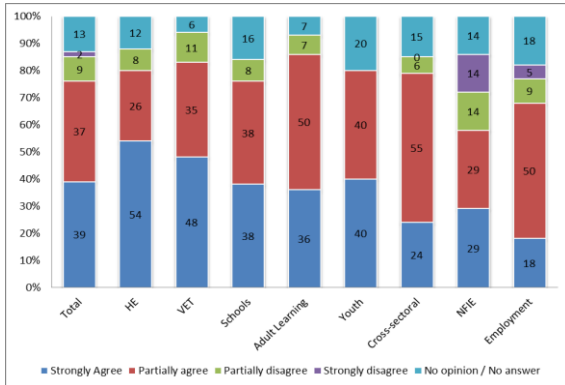
**27. To which extent are validation systems and credit systems suitable to recognise the outcomes of new forms of learning such as digital learning (e.g. Massive Open Online Courses, MOOCs)?**



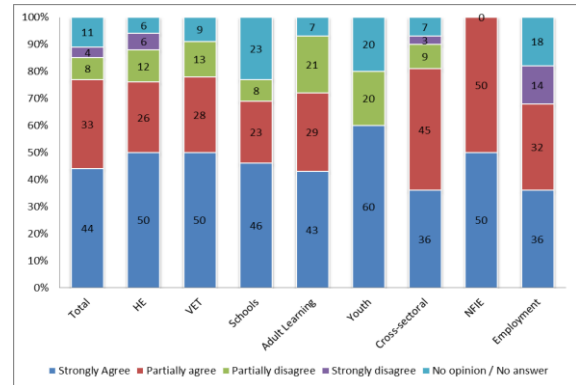
**28. Would it be desirable to develop common criteria and procedures for recognition that could apply to all education and training sub-systems (for vocational education and training, schools, adult education), and all qualifications related to European qualifications frameworks (including those obtained through validation of non-formal and informal learning, open on-line courses, private qualifications, etc.)?**



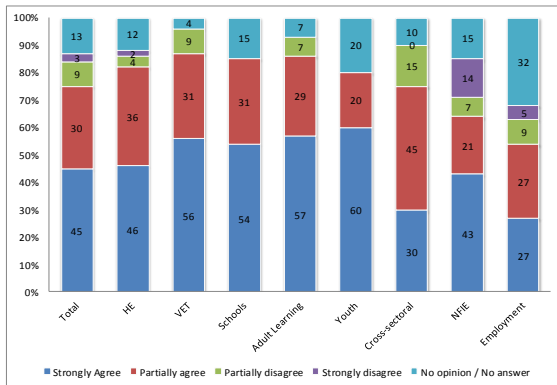
**31.a. Is it possible to identify some common basic principles and guidelines of quality assurance valid across sectors and applicable to all qualifications?**



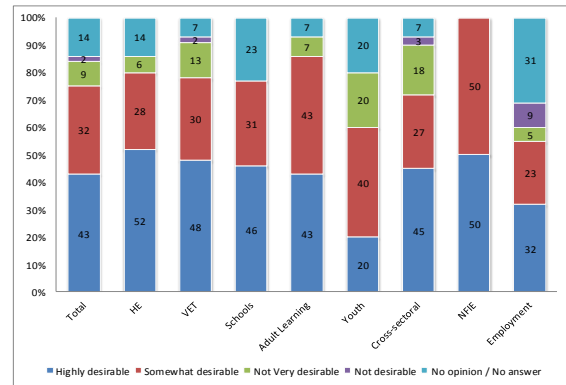
**34. Could learners and workers benefit from a one-stop shop providing integrated services - including their supporting platforms - covering the full range of European services on learning opportunities, career guidance and recognition of qualifications for employment purposes or further learning?**



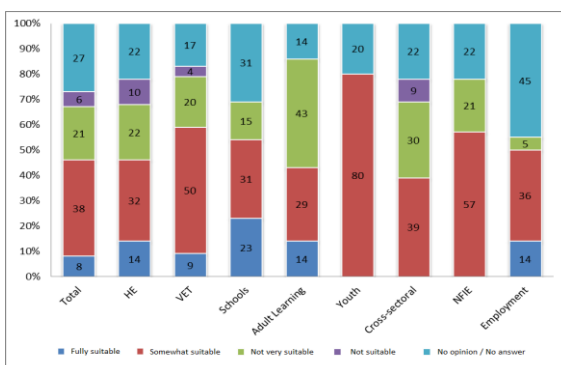
**31.b. Should there be a core of common European quality assurance principles for the provision of learning opportunities in all sectors of education and training?**



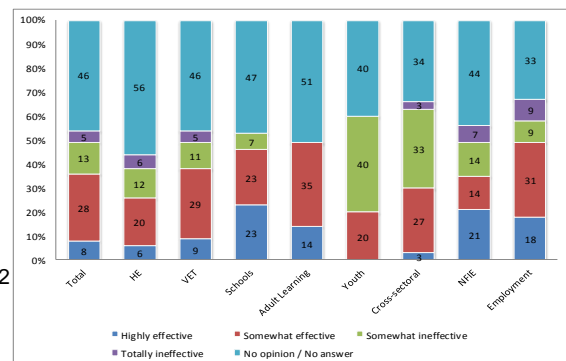
**35. In your opinion, to which extent is it desirable to create integrated service-points for learners and workers covering the full range of European services currently spread over the networks of ENIC/NARIC, Europass, Euroguidance, NQF-NCP?**



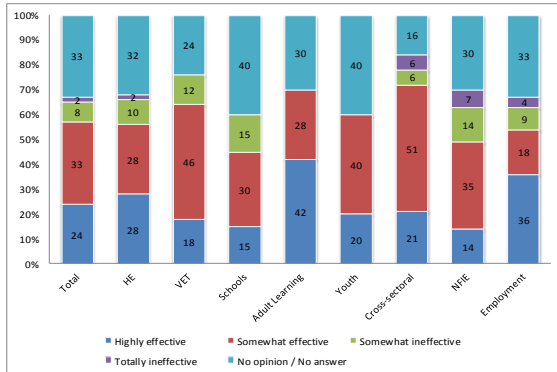
**32. In your opinion, to which extent are existing quality assurance principles and credit systems suitable to support new forms of learning, such as digital learning (e.g. Massive Open Online Courses, MOOCs)?**



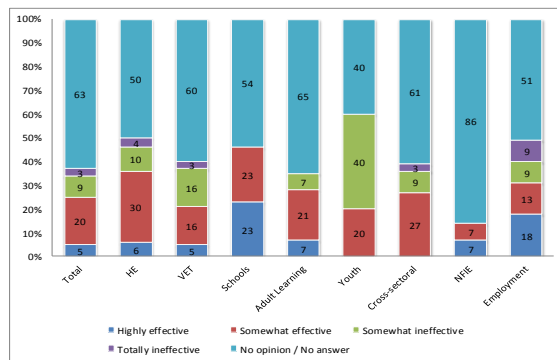
**36. Do you consider the current landscape of webtools in the area of skills and qualifications (Europass Portal, Your Europe, Study in Europe, We mean Business, Ploteus, EQF Portal, European Skills Panorama, ESCO) to be effective/ineffective?: ESCO**



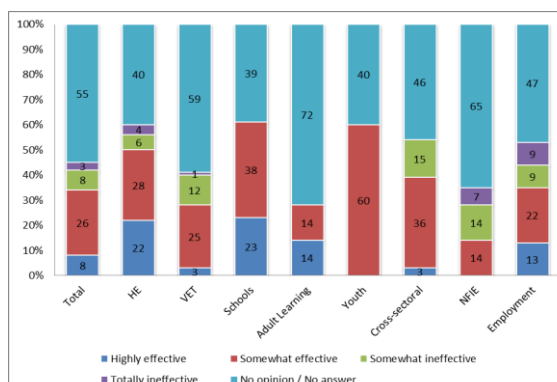
36. Do you consider the current landscape of webtools in the area of skills and qualifications (Europass Portal, Your Europe, Study in Europe, We mean Business, Ploteus, EQF Portal, European Skills Panorama, ESCO) to be effective/ineffective?: Europass Portal



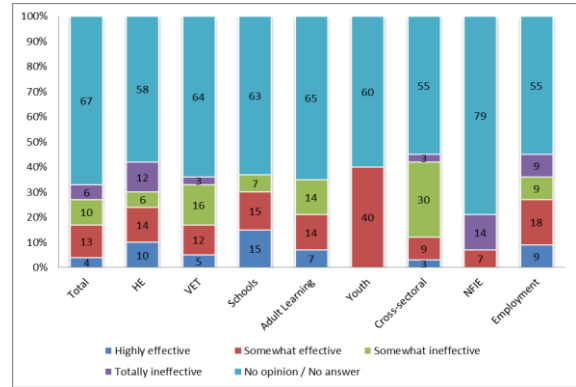
36. Do you consider the current landscape of webtools in the area of skills and qualifications (Europass Portal, Your Europe, Study in Europe, We mean Business, Ploteus, EQF Portal, European Skills Panorama, ESCO) to be effective/ineffective?: Your Europe



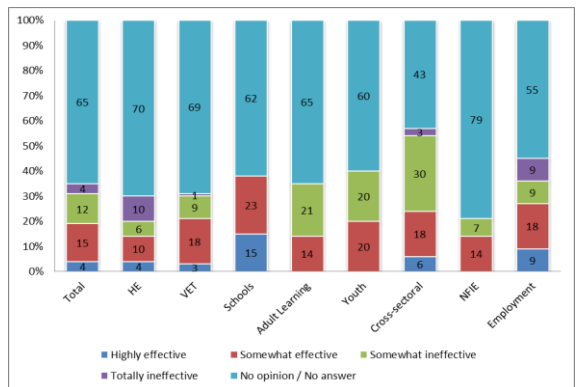
36. Do you consider the current landscape of webtools in the area of skills and qualifications (Europass Portal, Your Europe, Study in Europe, We mean Business, Ploteus, EQF Portal, European Skills Panorama, ESCO) to be effective/ineffective?: Study in Europe



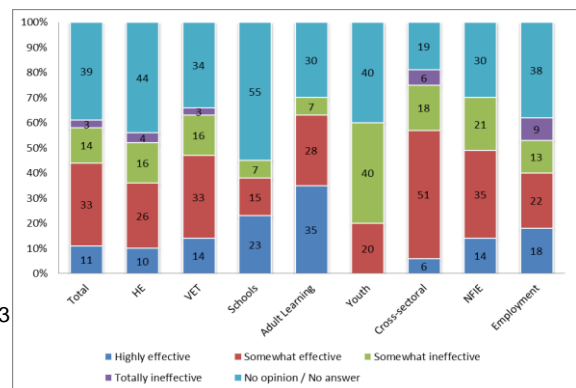
36. Do you consider the current landscape of webtools in the area of skills and qualifications (Europass Portal, Your Europe, Study in Europe, We mean Business, Ploteus, EQF Portal, European Skills Panorama, ESCO) to be effective/ineffective?: We mean Business



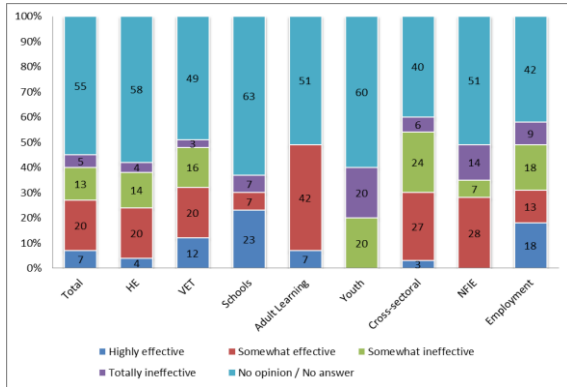
36. Do you consider the current landscape of webtools in the area of skills and qualifications (Europass Portal, Your Europe, Study in Europe, We mean Business, Ploteus, EQF Portal, European Skills Panorama, ESCO) to be effective/ineffective?: Ploteus



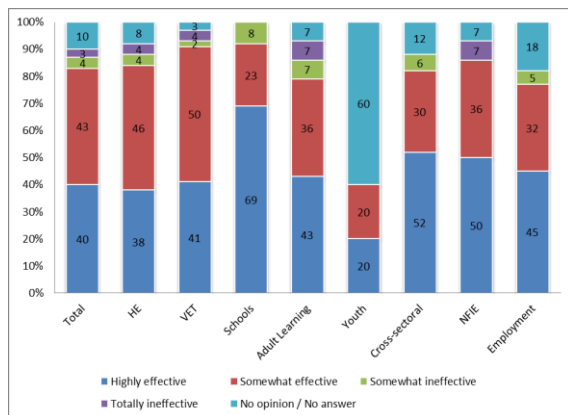
36. Do you consider the current landscape of webtools in the area of skills and qualifications (Europass Portal, Your Europe, Study in Europe, We mean Business, Ploteus, EQF Portal, European Skills Panorama, ESCO) to be effective/ineffective?: EQF Portal



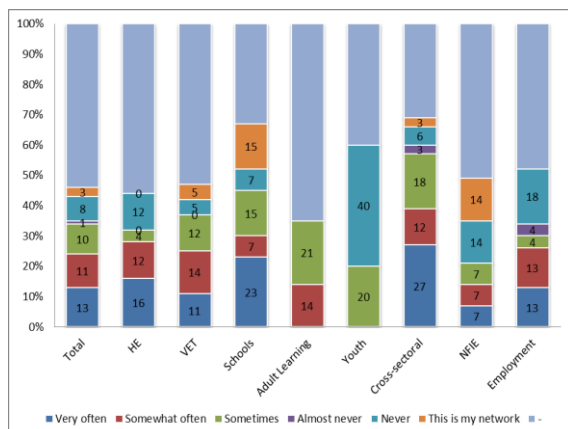
**36. Do you consider the current landscape of webtools in the area of skills and qualifications (Europass Portal, Your Europe, Study in Europe, We mean Business, Ploteus, EQF Portal, European Skills Panorama, ESCO) to be effective/ineffective?: European Skills Panorama**



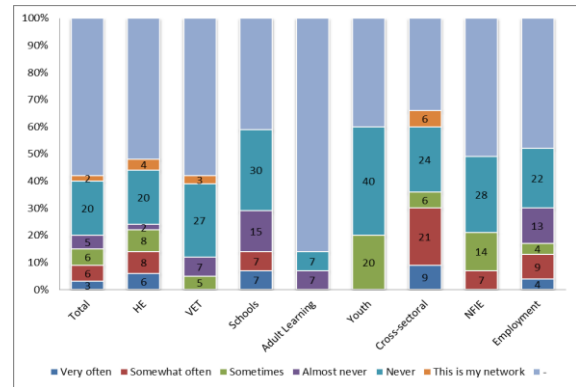
**37. Do you consider it useful/not useful to provide individuals with self-assessment tools for measurement of knowledge skills and competences?**



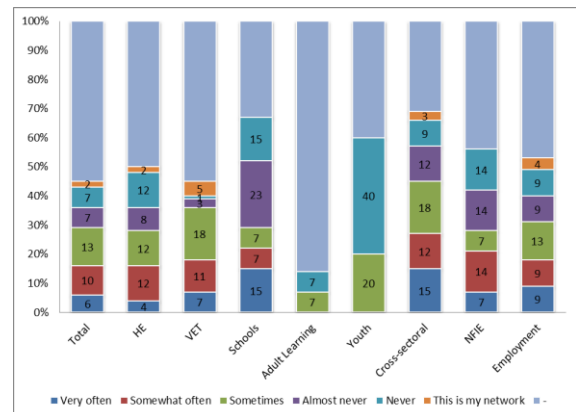
**38.a. How frequently do you work with the following networks?: National Agency**



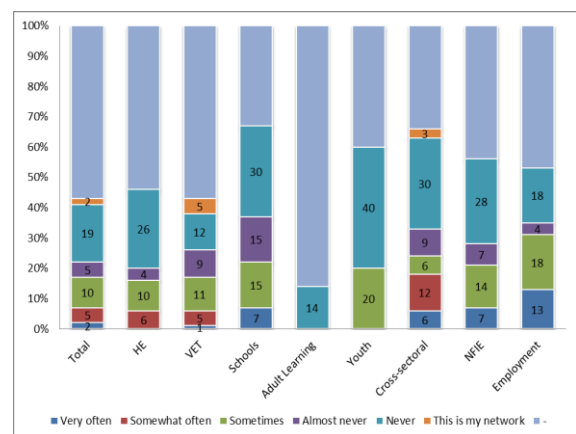
**38.a. How frequently do you work with the following networks?: ENIC/NARIC**



**38.a. How frequently do you work with the following networks?: Europass**

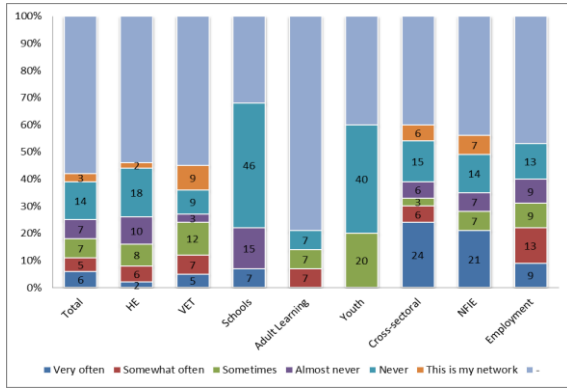


**38.a. How frequently do you work with the following networks?: Euroguidance**

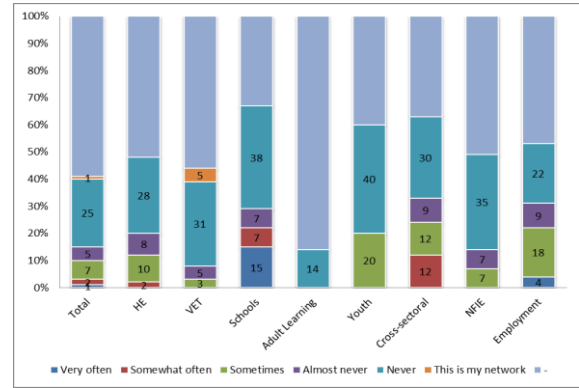




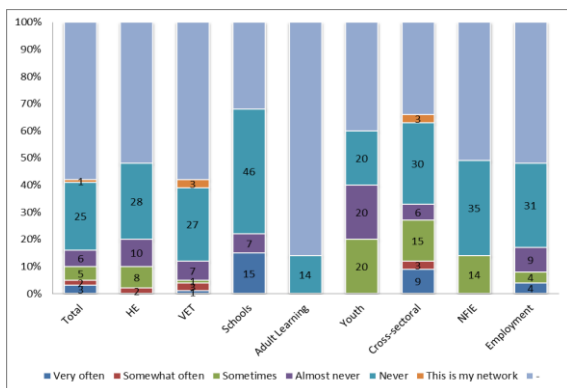
**38.a. How frequently do you work with the following networks?: NQF-NCP**



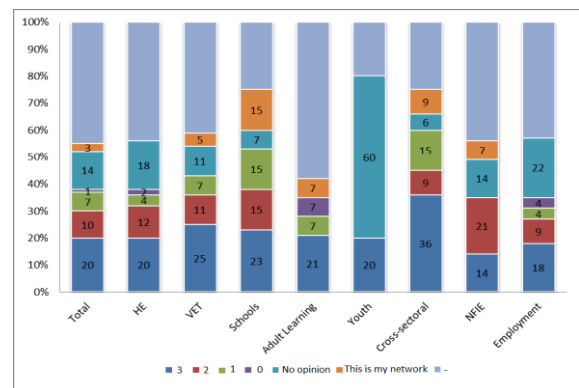
**38.a. How frequently do you work with the following networks?: Europe Direct**



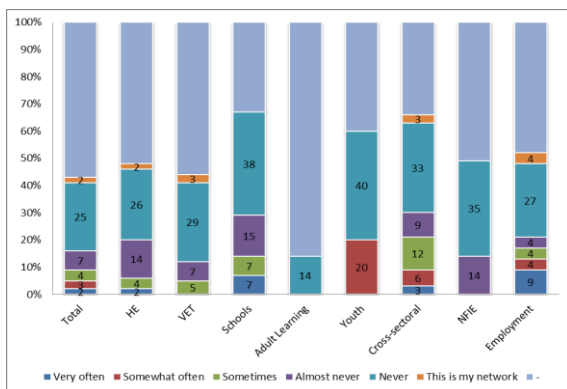
**38.a. How frequently do you work with the following networks?: Eurodesk**



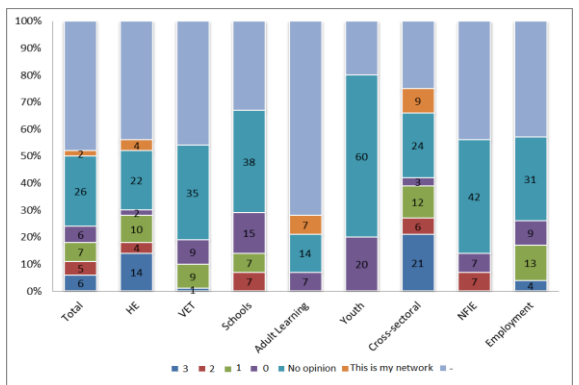
**38.b. How would you rate your contacts with other European services in your country in terms of cooperation?: National Agency**



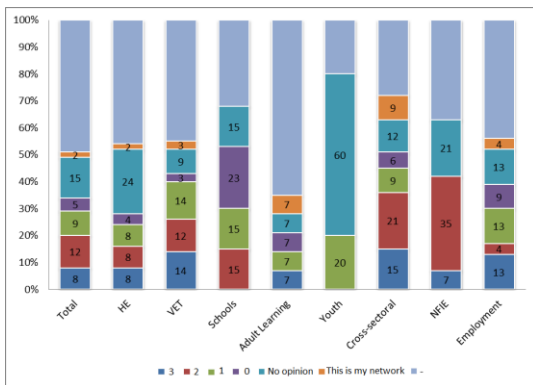
**38.a. How frequently do you work with the following networks?: Eures Advisers**



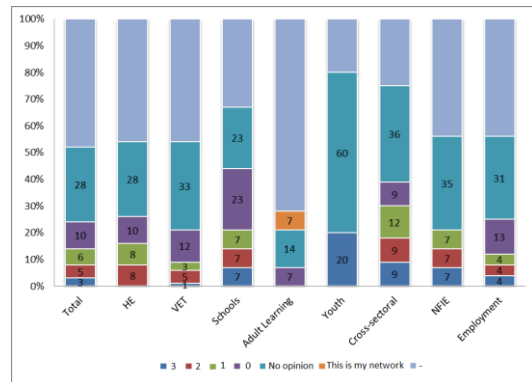
**38.b. How would you rate your contacts with other European services in your country in terms of cooperation?: ENIC/NARIC**



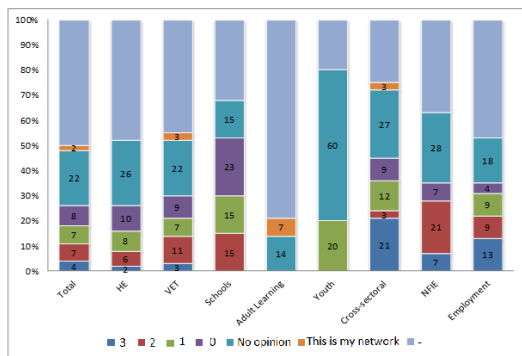
**38.b. How would you rate your contacts with other European services in your country in terms of cooperation?: Europass**



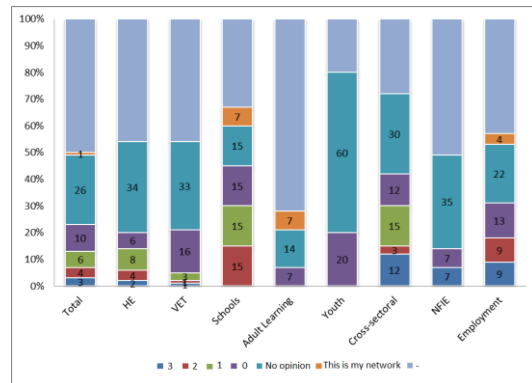
**38.b. How would you rate your contacts with other European services in your country in terms of cooperation?: Eurodesk**



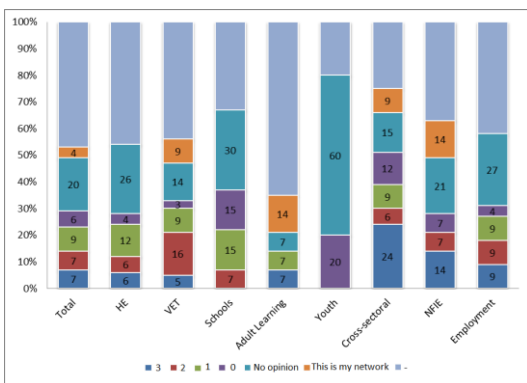
**38.b. How would you rate your contacts with other European services in your country in terms of cooperation?: Euroguidance**



**38.b. How would you rate your contacts with other European services in your country in terms of cooperation?: Eures Advisers**



**38.b. How would you rate your contacts with other European services in your country in terms of cooperation?: NQF-NCP**



**38.b. How would you rate your contacts with other European services in your country in terms of cooperation?: Europe Direct**

