

# European standards for qualifications and skills in the e-commerce sector



<http://www.allecom.org>

Newsletter n°3, January 2017

ALL-ECOM



ALL-ECOM project is a Sector Skills Alliance to set European standards for qualifications and skills in the e-commerce sector" that seeks to address the challenge of skills and competencies imbalance within the commerce sector by improving commerce human resources' qualifications in e-commerce through the integration of new technologies in the strategy of both retail and wholesale commerce and by contributing to ensure harmonization at national and European level of standards of qualifications and skills in the e-commerce.

## WHAT'S NEW IN THE PROJECT?

The research carried out in earlier stages of the project in the 3 participating countries (Austria, Portugal and Spain) showed a gap between the required and existing skills in e-commerce in the commerce sector and the urgent need to focus on the improvement of skills in this area as well as the need to review and update the national/regional qualification standards currently in use, so that they can be more adjusted to market needs and offer more market driven qualifications.

In fact, one of the central aims of the project is to design new learning outcomes in e-commerce to incorporate in existing (commerce related) qualifications, or in new ones if it is the case, that can be as common as possible, contributing to make the qualifications of the countries participating in the project more updated and market responsive but also contributing to a better harmonization of the qualification standards at European level.

That's what the partnership have been doing in the last months, the preliminary results being the design of **7 common units of competence (UC)** in the field of e-commerce in 2 functional areas considered critical by all the partners (selling - including prospection, assistance, selling and after-selling - and marketing), at an European Qualification Framework (EQF) level 3 to 4:

1. To carry out the commercial prospecting and plan the sales of products through interactive or digital means;
2. To assist and advise the customers on products through interactive or digital means;
3. To sell products through interactive or digital means;
4. To do the after-sale monitoring through interactive or digital means;
5. To handle and monitor customer complaints through interactive or digital means;
6. To formulate e-marketing plans in collaboration with the marketing manager/director;
7. To establish and monitoring e-marketing plans in collaboration with the marketing manager.



The following digital and technological skills where the ones identified as more in need and due to be covered by the UC above mentioned:

- ◆ General e-commerce skills;
- ◆ Role and function of e-commerce;



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

# European standards for qualifications and skills in the e-commerce sector



<http://www.allecom.org>

Newsletter n°3, January 2017

ALL-ECOM

- ◆ Working with new technological applications;
- ◆ Training concerning online consumers, motivation, purchase, marketing;
- ◆ Using social media to communicate with clients;
- ◆ Using of e-commerce and social media to increase sales.



[ANOEP, I.P. the Portuguese Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education and Training](#) provided their technical expertise in the development of qualifications in learning outcomes. Together with the Austrian partner [NOWA](#) they assured that all participating partners had the required technical and methodological basic expertise to design the units.

The seven units of competence were, therefore, designed following the methodological framework and the technical guidelines provided by ANOEP, so each unit - considered as a coherent combination of learning outcomes, subject to evaluation and autonomous validation - is composed by the following elements:

- ◆ Professional actions
- ◆ Knowledge
- ◆ Skills
- ◆ Competence
- ◆ Performance criteria
- ◆ Products/outputs

From the project perspective, to have those common units is a major achievement!

In fact, according to Teresa Duarte from ANOEP, I.P., the *"main challenge was the adaptation of the Portuguese methodology conceived by ANOEP to the project requirements, more precisely the differentiation between skills and competence and the formulation of performance criteria"*.

But also the project partners applying the methodology defined by ANOEP, I.P. faced some challenges in its use. According to the Spanish consortium ([FETICO - Federation of Independent Workers of Commerce](#), [SOC - Employment Service of Catalonia](#) and [IBECON](#)) one of the main challenges was *"the adaptation of the proposed methodology to the national context"*. In fact, *"the approach and methodology proposed is very similar to that used in our National Qualifications System, but the terminology and structure of the units of competence is different; because of that the work of defining the UC was complex and required a continuous comparison between the elements of our system and the elements of the model proposed"*. Another element stressed out by the Spanish partners was *"the definition of the knowledge, skills and competence of each UC and its correspondence with the professional actions and performance criteria of our national system"*. And a final challenge - for sure shared by the partners of the 3 countries - was *"to establish the appropriate professional profiles of the people who must have the knowledge, skills and competence defined"*.

But more challenges are to be overcome during 2017! The design of training units and training contents to answer to the knowledge, skills and competence identified for each unit of competence and the definition of the strategies that will insure, at national or regional level, the integration of the units created in the Qualification Systems.

Not easy tasks but with the "right" stakeholders involved we will succeed! In fact, **validation meetings with relevant stakeholders are due to take place at regional or national level in March**



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

# European standards for qualifications and skills in the e-commerce sector



<http://www.allecom.org>

Newsletter n°3, January 2017

ALL-ECOM

2017 and we are counting on your participation. If you feel you can contribute positively to the discussion please [contact one of the partners in your country/region](#).



## WHAT'S NEW IN THE SECTOR?

**Online shop or street shop? That's a question for people in the UK**

A new survey done by the online shop software provider ePages among 1,012 UK adults showed that, in the United Kingdom, 44% of adults add to their income by selling products or services online and 30% thinks they will do this regularly. And half of Britons would prefer to run an online store rather than a high street shop. The United Kingdom is often called a nation of shopkeepers and the ecommerce participation study shows that this passion for retailing has perhaps become even more prevalent now everything is done online. In fact, 25% of respondents have considered setting up an online store and 50% would prefer to run solely an online store, while 27% would run both. Only 10% opted to run just a high street shop and 39% believes more in an omnichannel approach.

**Decathlon launches an e-commerce website in Switzerland**

French sporting goods retailer Decathlon have launched a dedicated ecommerce website in Switzerland. Just a few days before Christmas, consumers in Switzerland can now order cheap sports clothing and accessories online.

Decathlon sells products for over 70 different sports in physical stores as well as online. The international retailer is already widely available throughout Europe, but just launched the Swiss online shop.

Swiss newspaper Blick quoted Otto's CEO, Mark Ineichen, who said that if chains like Decathlon come to Switzerland, "we (local discount competitors) would all have a problem. They are much more aggressive than we are", he explained.

This ecommerce website is still in a first test phase, expected to be improved with the help of comments and feedback from its customers; the digital business blog Carpathia considered the online store of Decathlon in Switzerland "rather disappointing".

**E-commerce Berlin Expo - February 02 | Berlin, Germany**

The event will feature trade fairs as well as a series of knowledge sessions led by ecommerce industry leaders. There will be speakers from Alibaba, Hubspot, Rakuten and Google. There are also exhibitor opportunities available for 90 sponsors to network with merchants and other attendees, of which 3,000 are expected.

E-commerce Berlin Expo also has an online contest for the best presentations. Submissions with the largest number of votes in each category will be accepted to the agenda.

Visiting is free of charge but it requires prior online registration on the website (<http://ecommerceberlin.com/>)

## MORE INFO?

[www.allecom.org](http://www.allecom.org)

[emiliamartin@fetico.es](mailto:emiliamartin@fetico.es)



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union