

Competence and learning outcomes in European HE and VET

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Former les pilotes du changement



Les 3 accréditations internationales



Overview

- ◆ Drivers of competence/learning outcomes
- ◆ What is competence?
- ◆ EU diversity: competence, training, regulation
- ◆ ECVET and the Typology of KSC
- ◆ Mobility and permeability issues
- ◆ Competence in the EQF
- ◆ EUCLID network 2008
- ◆ EC Competence Expert Group 2010
- ◆ Conclusions and further information



Drivers of competence/learning outcomes

- ◆ skills mismatches, global competitiveness
 - ❖ HE and VET not meeting labour market needs
 - ❖ competence/learning outcomes ILO, OECD, EU...
- ◆ inadequate labour mobility
 - ❖ HE: ECTS 1989 > Bologna June 1999
 - ❖ VET: LdV 1995, Copenhagen 2002
 - ❖ ECVET, EQF
- ◆ global shift, crises 2008, 2010 > restructuring
 - ❖ *employability* for those facing redundancy
 - ❖ *adaptability* for those remaining



What is competence?

- ◆ beyond intelligence, including skills
- ◆ psycho-social characteristics, behaviours
- ◆ declarative knowledge > procedural knowledge
- ◆ skills, psycho-motor and cognitive
- ◆ competence > multiple meanings, embracing all the above, *usually in a work context*
 - ❖ *wide country variation*
 - ❖ *inconsistent usage even within one country*

F. Le Deist and J. Winterton (2005) 'What is competence?'
Human Resource Development International, 8(1): 27-46.



Varieties of competence

- ◆ US 1959 competence > competency
 - ❖ 2000 multi-dimensions competence-based HRM
- ◆ UK 1980 functional competence-based VQs
 - ❖ 2000 comprehensive frameworks, e.g. NHS
- ◆ FR 1993 *triptyque de compétence*
 - ❖ *savoir, savoir faire, savoir être*
- ◆ DE 1996 *Handlungskompetenz*
 - ❖ *fachkompetenz, methodenkompetenz...*



Taxonomy of training regimes

Regulation

Market

State

Work

UK, MT

DE, SI

Focus

School

[IT]

FR, LV, SE, TU



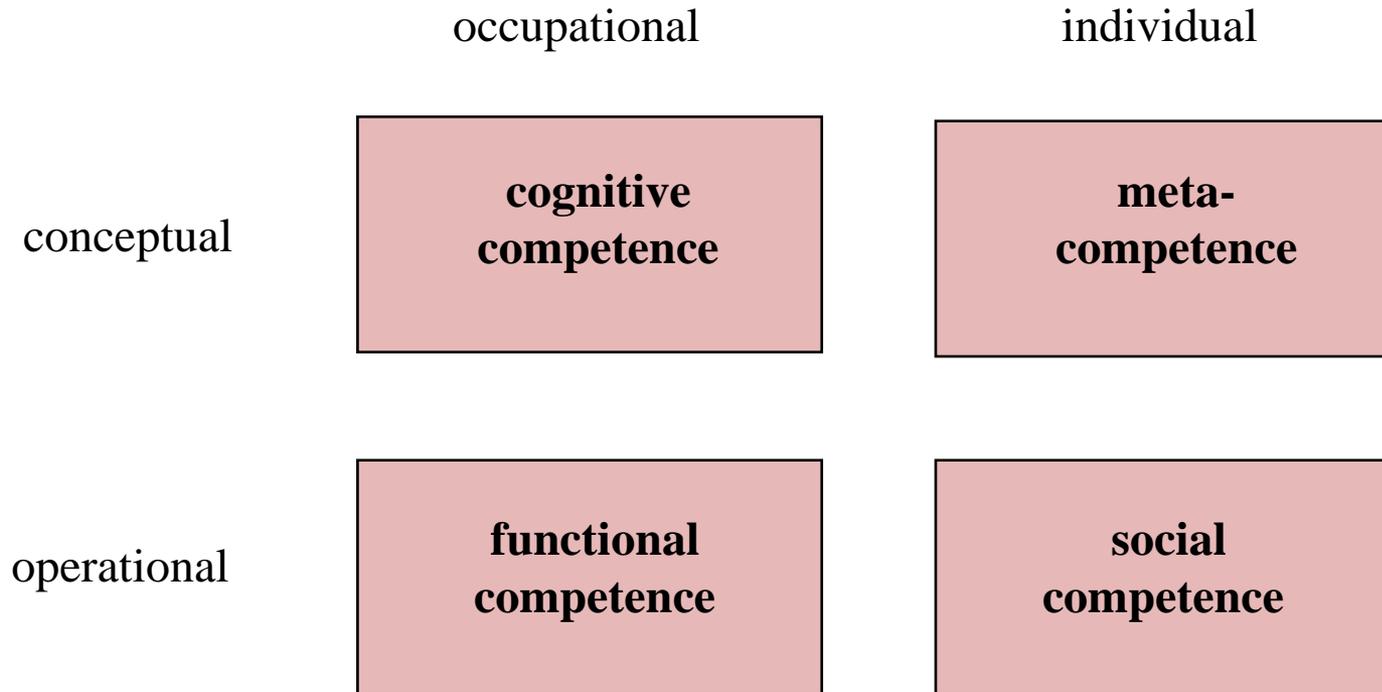
Labour market regulation and work culture

country	labour market regulation	culture of work	training regime	competence model
UK	liberal free market	# 6 fence wire	market work (voluntarist)	narrow job function
DE	corporatist concertation	<i>Beruf</i>	state work (dual system)	complex comprehensive
FR	statist concertation	qualifications	state school	simple comprehensive



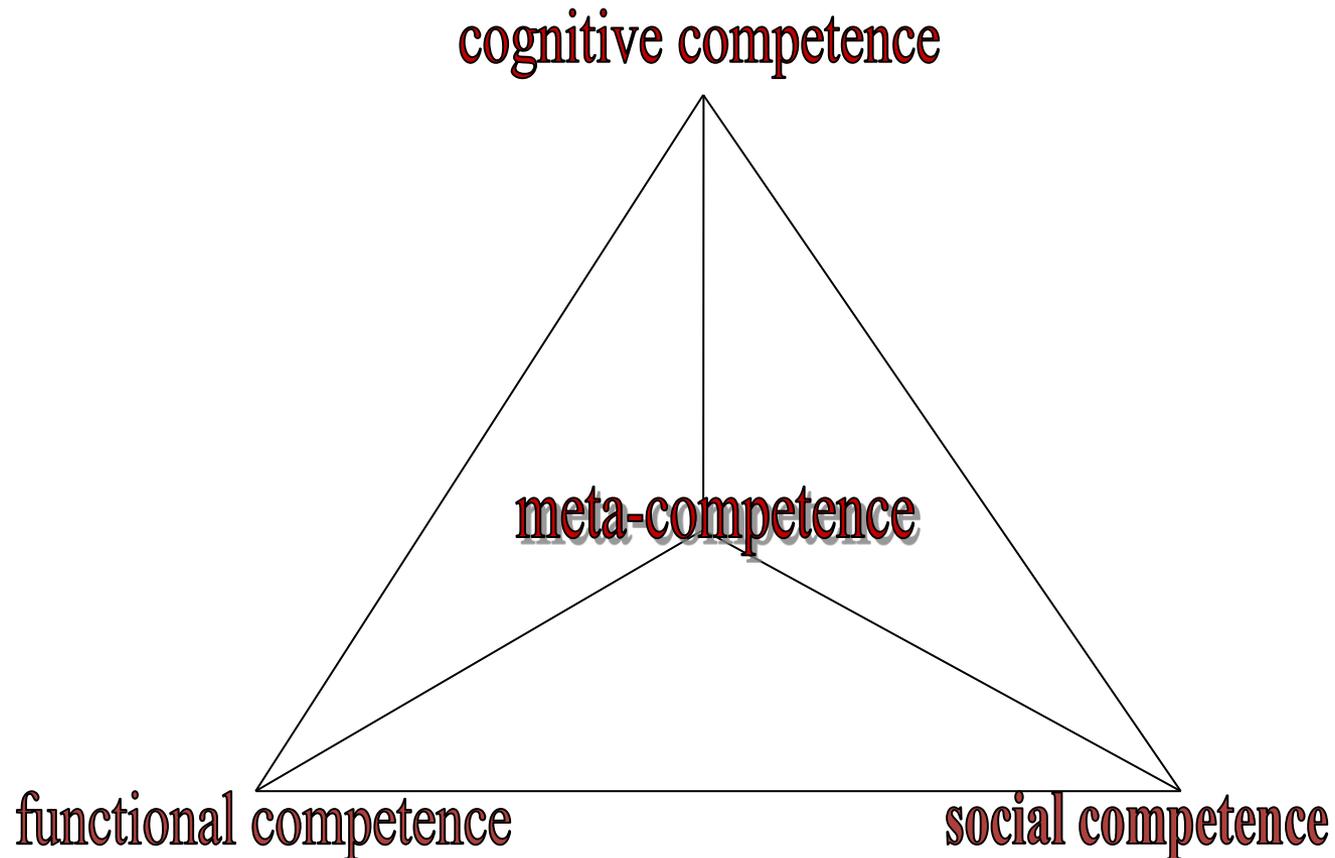
Analytical dimensions of competence

Drawing on the common ground of the three predominant European approaches



J. Winterton, F. Le Deist and E. Stringfellow (2006)
Typology of knowledge skills and competence, CEDEFOP.

Holistic competence model for ECVET



J. Winterton, F. Le Deist and E. Stringfellow (2006)
Typology of knowledge skills and competence, CEDEFOP.

ECVET competence typology

- ◆ We proposed adoption of *cognitive competence*, *functional competence* and *social competence* as overall learning outcomes (*meta-competence* as a facilitating as well as resulting competence)
- ◆ TWG retained KSC from the original brief:
 - ❖ Knowledge (declarative knowledge, cognitive competence) know that, *savoir*
 - ❖ Skill (functional competence, psycho- motor and cognitive) know how, *savoir faire*
 - ❖ Competence (social competence, behavioural, attitudinal and *meta*) know how to be, *savoir être*



Mobility and permeability issues

- ◆ spatial mobility of European workforce
 - ❖ HE relatively homogeneous
 - ❖ significant diversity in VET regimes
- ◆ Berlin Communiqué September 2003
 - ❖ compatibility between HE and VET
 - ❖ focus on learning outcomes and competence
- ◆ limited VET-HE permeability:
 - ❖ parallel universes of VET and HE?
 - ❖ 10% non-academic entrants to HE



European Qualifications Framework

- ◆ EQF was adopted on 23 April 2008:
 - ❖ offers a translation device for national qualifications
 - ❖ relates NQFs to a common European reference framework
 - ❖ NQFs were required to reference against EQF by 2010
 - ❖ eight reference levels based on learning outcomes
 - ❖ outcomes defined as “knowledge, skills and competences (responsibility and autonomy)”



EUCLID network

- ◆ network established to compare approaches to competence
- ◆ explains differences through cultural and institutional contexts
- ◆ identified differences in meanings even where terminology appears consistent
- ◆ inconsistencies between *and within* usage in different countries

J. Winterton (2009) 'Competence across Europe: highest common factor or lowest common denominator?' *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 33 (8/9): 681-700.

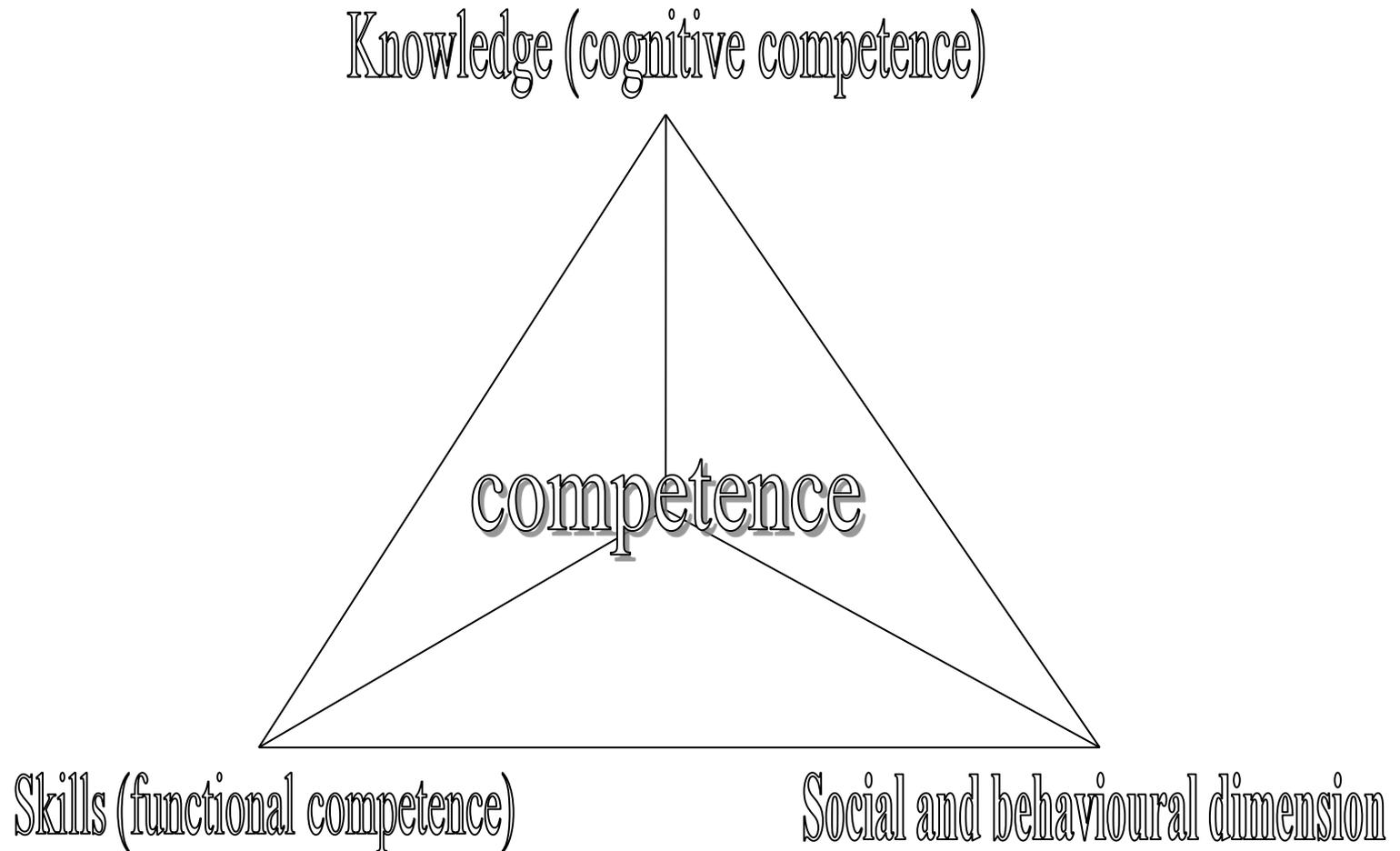


European Commission Competence Expert Group 2010

- ◆ different conceptions of competence in EU instruments (ECTS, ECVET, EQF)
- ◆ aim was to achieve a common understanding of competence as a unifying concept
- ◆ work was to have resulted in a Commission Communication early 2011 > dropped
- ◆ subsequently further diversity in conceptions of competence in EU publications...



Proposed unifying competence model



Competence Expert Group June 2010

Conclusion

- ◆ common competence model is essential for mobility and permeability
- ◆ conceptual models of competence reflect profound differences in training regimes
- ◆ diverse interests of VET providers, HE institutions, state, employers and unions
- ◆ but share an interest in using competence as a unifying concept – ‘the glue’
- ◆ but diversity and confusion is increasing despite EU harmonisation efforts



Further information

- F. Le Deist and J. Winterton (2005) 'What is competence?' *Human Resource Development International*, 8 (1): 27-46.
- J. Winterton, F. Le Deist and E. Stringfellow (2006) *Typology of knowledge, skills and competences: Clarification of the concept and prototype*, CEDEFOP Reference series 64, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- J. Winterton (2009) 'Competence across Europe: highest common factor or lowest common denominator?' *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 33 (8/9): 681-700.
- J. Winterton (2011) 'Competence in European policy instruments: A moving target for developing a National Qualifications Framework?' *Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies*, 62(5): 72-87.
- J. Winterton (2012) 'Varieties of competence: European perspectives' in M. Plitz (ed.) *The Future of Vocational Education and Training in a Changing World*, Bonn: Springer Verlag, pp. 455-480.
- J. Winterton (ed.) (2013) *Trade Union Strategies for Competence Development: An emerging area of social dialogue*, London: Routledge, forthcoming.

