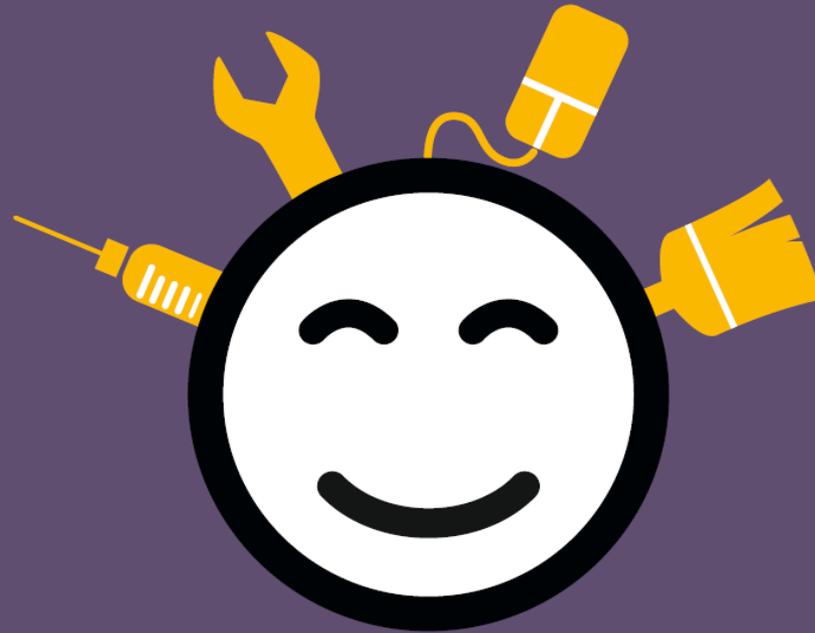


QUESTÕES-CHAVE  
DA EDUCAÇÃO

# ENSINO PROFISSIONAL



# Christopher Winch

# Knowledge, Skills, Competence - European divergences in VET and the Implementation of the European Qualification Framework:

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## **Nuffield-funded study: Cross-national equivalence of vocational skills and qualifications**

- Nuffield Review of Education Phase 14-19
- European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- Two-year project
- Cross-national: England, Germany, Netherlands, France
- Case-study approach: four occupations in four sectors



- **Aims of the project:**

- To explore differences in understandings of qualifications and skills in various European countries
- To examine and compare different meanings of terms and concepts, such as ‘knowledge’, ‘skills’, ‘competence’, ‘training’ and ‘education’
- To analyse the ways in which concepts are embedded within the different national contexts
- To identify the problems the differences pose to integration within an EU framework
- To develop transnational categories and criteria for comparing qualifications



# Methodology

- Literature review
- Case study approach – 4 occupations in 4 sectors:
  - Nurses in Health
  - Large Goods Vehicles (LGV) drivers in Logistics
  - Software engineers in ICT
  - Bricklayers/masons in Construction
- Development of Transnational conceptual framework
- Macro-level interviews (social partners, regulatory bodies)
- Micro-level interviews (employers, training providers)



# Similarities & Differences in VET models

- **Learning outcomes:** reference point GB= performance criteria related to functions/tasks in workplace;  
Germany=development of individual in particular *Beruf* defined through curricula
  - **GB as qualitatively distinct:** e.g notion & role of qualification divorced from (very weak) VET
  - **Particular occupational qualifications** greater similarity (e.g. nursing)
- **Zones of Mutual Trust:** but difficult to encompass GB e.g. lack of social partnership arrangements



# National Models: Germany

- **National VET federal & Länder law** (key BIBB role)
- **Established social partnership all levels:**  
 federal = codetermination training regulations  
 Länder = regional VET planning  
 local = supervision on exam boards  
 company = *Mitbestimmung* & works councils
- **Concept of Beruf:** not geared to single worksite
- **Dual System:** college & work-based, integration of technical & civic education/*Bildung*
- **Bildung** combining *Unterricht* and *Erziehung*, representation of self & capacity for autonomy
- **Handlungskompetenz:** integration of declarative knowledge into operational practice, broad & integrated capacity, taking responsibility



# National Models: Netherlands

- ***Developing national & civic identity:***
- ***Selective:*** general education tracks versus VET as alternative route
- ***Extensive qualification system*** for all occupations + licence to practise regulations for entry to skilled occupations
- ***4 level system:*** 2 tracks, one qualification  
- preference for full time tracks growing
- ***Dual track:*** employee and student
- ***Publicly supported:*** as preparation for career & member of society
- ***Tightly integrated,*** coherent & utilitarian system
- ***Strong social partnership***



# National Models: France

- **Important role of state & social partnership**
- **Part of education system:** basis for developing individual worker as individual, worker, citizen
- **Development of lycée professionnelle:** 1970s/80s tripartite system strengthened
- **Formation,** includes significant educational element
- **Qualifications not licence to practise,** but have labour market, educational and social currency
- **Competence:** successful accomplishment of often specialised jobs, but not behavioural concept, exercise of professional judgement through application of knowledge to practice
- **Statutory entitlement:** to continuing VET  
→ need to manage risk & give greater job security



# National Model: England

- **Heterogeneous & low status VET:** informal, work-based learning, apprenticeships & college-based
- **Sharp distinction between education (personal development) & training (development task-based skills):** only professionals apply systematic knowledge to practice
- **trades** different from *Beruf* - more restricted in scope
- **Lacking social partnership,** premised on employer demand i.e. strong role for individual employers in SSCs
- **Very limited regulation** e.g. licence to practise rare
- **NVQs premised on ability to perform specified** occupational descriptors = lists of tasks
- **Apprenticeship = Levels 2-4:** 3 non-integrated elements: NVQ certificate (work-based skills); technical certificate (underpinning knowledge); functional skills (basic level general education)
- **NQF 8 levels:** some qualifications (e.g. BTEC) integrate declarative knowledge into practice



# National variations: Governance

- ***Continental:*** state sets framework in negotiation with social partners ; comprehensive VET system (college & dual-based); little reliance on traditional apprenticeship; apprenticeship alternative to full-time studies (same curricula & qualification); relatively broad qualifications; intra-occupational mobility
- ***England:*** weak social partnership, but employer needs paramount; traditional apprenticeship; narrow task-based qualifications



# National variations: Labour Market

- **Continent:** link between qualification & remuneration through collective agreements; labour market & VET strongly connected through social partners (e.g. by negotiating scope of occupation qualifications); broad occupational competence
- **England:** narrowness of qualifications based on outcomes (i.e. desired products of work); depth & breadth of skill tend to be discounted for pay purposes; qualification has little labour market value



# National variation: Competence

- ***Continental:*** multi-dimensional conception, integrative of knowledge, attitudes (NL) & practical ability; D = learning fields related to occupation; NL & F = emphasis on academic subjects in VET
- ***England:*** narrow, built around occupational standards i.e. bundles of discrete tasks descriptions; close to skills; behavioural



# National variations: Education

- ***Continent:*** stressing continuity with school-based education i.e. concern to continue broad educational element + broad curricula + theoretical underpinning + development of citizen (e.g. foreign languages)
- ***England:*** sharp distinction between general education & VET; VET as preparation for job



# European policies on VET

- Policy debates – similarity of language (in English!)
  - Knowledge based economy
  - Employability
  - Competence-based approach
  - From learning inputs to learning outputs/ outcomes
  
- EQF
  - Outcomes-based
  - Descriptors of learning outcomes:  
Knowledge, Skills, Competence



# Qualification strategies: VET vs Employability

- Models of qualification strategies (Rauner)
  - *Vocational education* (qualification, regulated course curricula, rigid)
  - *Employability* (certification of competencies, modular)
- Shift towards employability in each country
  - Practice-oriented learning
  - Flexible learning
  - Greater transparency, transferability, occupational mobility
  - Greater access to learning



# Four Dimensions of Comparison

Analytically distinct but closely connected:

1. Governance
  2. Labour Market
  3. Competence
  4. Education
- significant national, sectoral and occupational differences in each dimension
  - two distinct models of VET can be detected



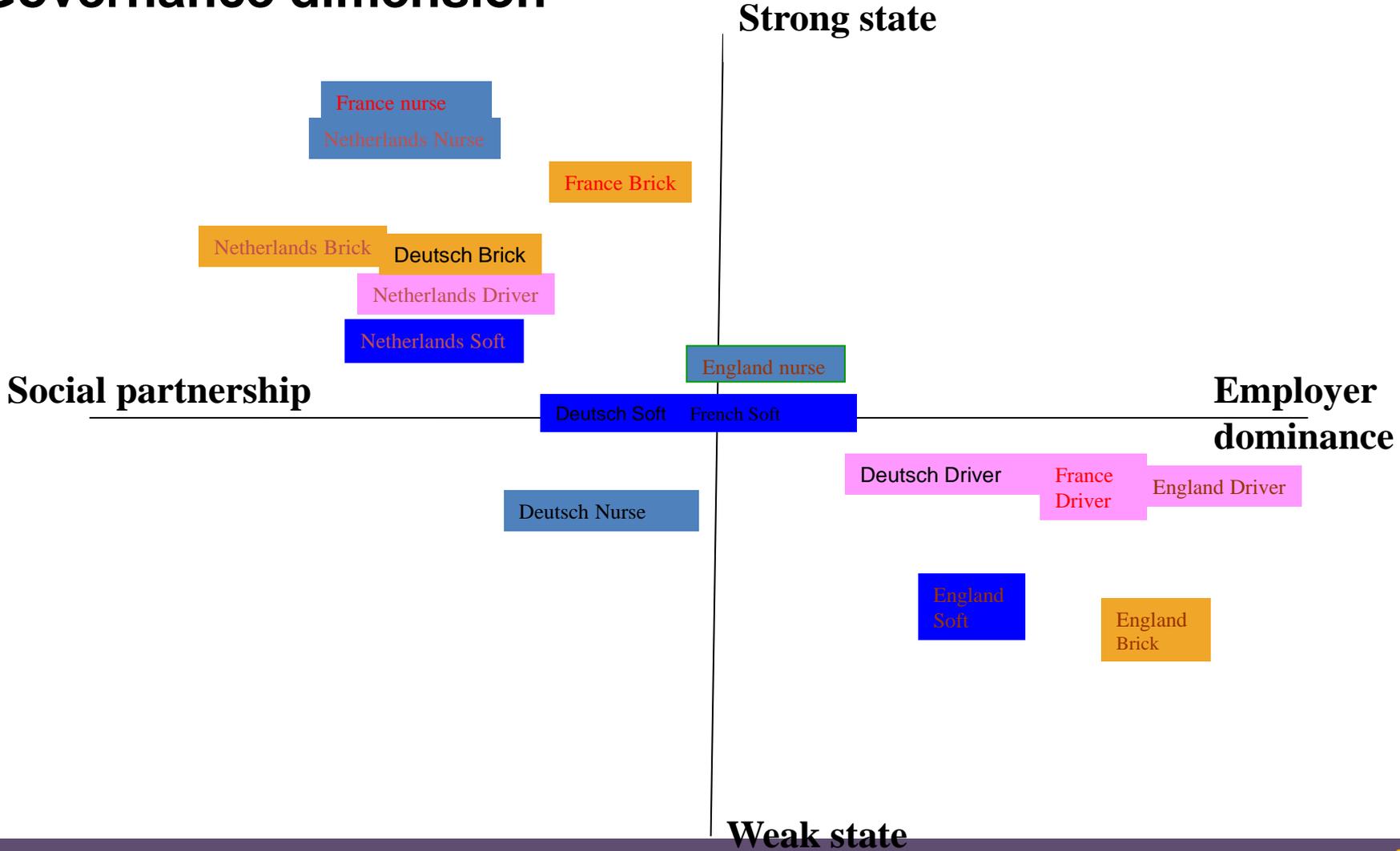
# Governance dimension concerns:

the relationship between

- strong and weak state intervention in VET
- social partnership and employer predominance



# Governance dimension



## **Labour market dimension, concerning relationship between:**

- qualifications and skills
- individual attributes and performance outputs

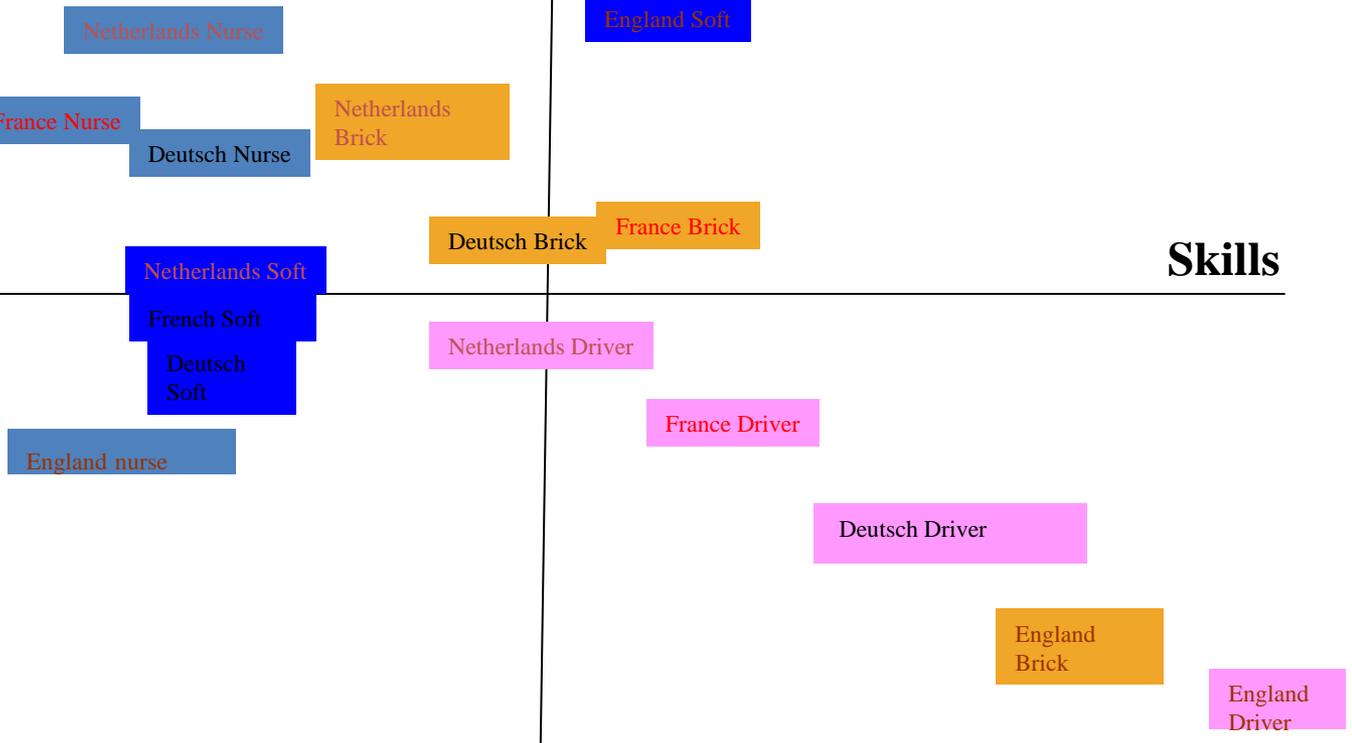


# Labour market dimension

# Individual Attributes

# Qualifications

# Skills



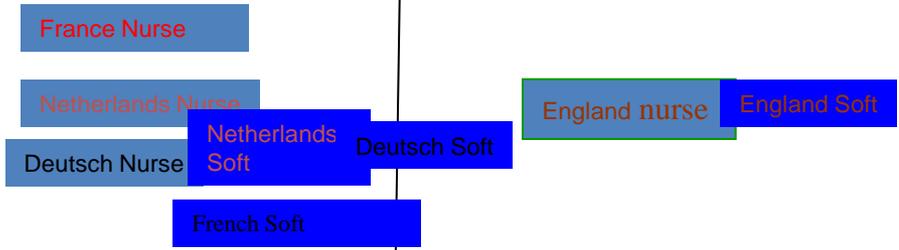
# Competence dimension, concerning relationship between:

- holistic and task based conceptions
- knowledge-based and behaviourally based conceptions



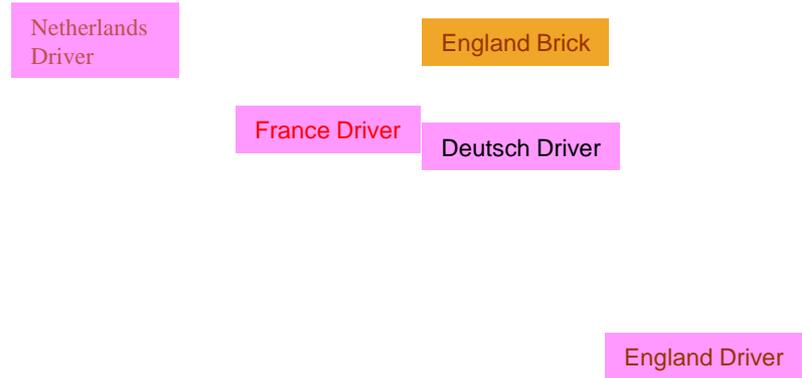
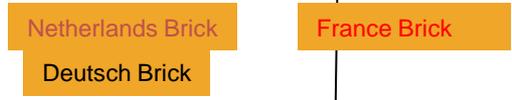
# Competence dimension

Knowledge Based



Holistic

Task Focused



Behaviourally Based



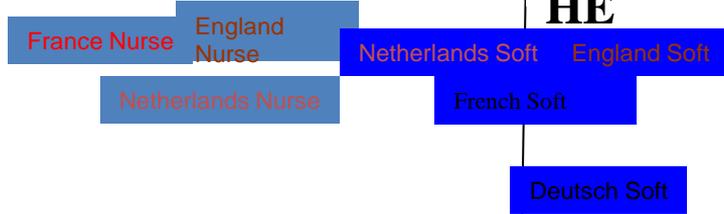
# Education dimension, concerning the relationship between:

- education and training
- VET model and HE model



# Education dimension

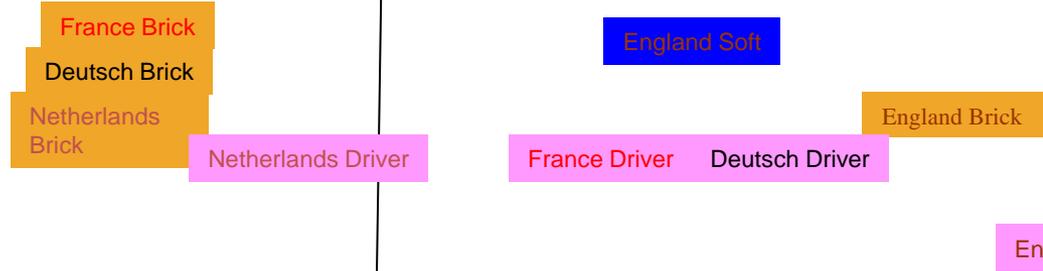
# Involvement of HE



# Education

# Training

Deutsch Nurse



# VET Model



## Particularities of National VET: Trust or Mistrust?

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- **Germany**
  - *Beruf, Handlungskompetenz*, dual system, extended social partnership and works council roles
- **Netherlands**
  - Broad competences, development of national & civic identity, extensive & integrated system, strong social partnership
- **France**
  - *Savoir, Formation*, VET part of education system, central state role,
- **England**
  - Skill, training, low status VET, lack of integration, weak social partnership



- 
- **Governance**
    - social partnership versus voluntarism
  - **Labour Market**
    - qualifications versus skills
  - **Competence**
    - multi-dimensional versus functional
  - **Education**
    - education versus training
- 



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- Occupational model

- individual capacity within a broad occupational field (broad-based occupational, general and civic education)

- Skills-based model

- individual skills sets, meeting specific employer needs (minimal underpinning knowledge)
- 



## Trust or mistrust?

### A case study approach to European qualifications and skills

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- ‘Semi-profession’ – regulated occupation (nursing). A zone of mutual trust established through EU regulation, complemented by common structural changes.
  - ‘Employability’ - new sector, weakly regulated (software engineering). Emergent mutual trust, operating through a combination of formal and informal practices, underpinned by global developments.
  - Occupational versus skill-based model - traditional manual occupation (bricklaying). Zones of mistrust?
- 



# Conclusions (1)

Considerable national variation between all four occupations on all the dimensions:

- *English driving and bricklaying* firmly lodged in lower right quadrant in all four dimensions -suggesting an employer-based, training and output oriented conception of these occupations
- *Nursing and software engineering* in England share more attributes with the other countries but retain some distinctive characteristics



# Conclusions (2)

- NL has most coherence on all dimensions with all *occupations* clustered on left-hand side of nearly all of the diagrams – suggesting a social-partner regulated, holistic and knowledge-based system where labour is valued more for its intrinsic qualities than immediate output
- Considerable divergence in *French occupations* on all dimensions, especially governance & labour market position
- Coherence of German traditional *Berufe* (*bricklaying & nursing*) but much less clear for *lorry driving* and *software engineering*



# Conclusions (3):

- EQF based on learning outcomes philosophy  
i.e. outputs rather than inputs
- In England, learning outcomes, especially in NVQs, tend to be seen as detached from curricula
- This perception does not necessarily hold for learning outcomes in France, Germany and the Netherlands
- Differences in understanding of EQF likely to occur
- Zones of Mutual Trust likely to develop unevenly.

