

## SKILLBRIDGE

# Skills Validation for Borderless Labor Integration into European Markets

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## Non-Cognitive Skills Framework COMPARATIVE REPORT WP2.A2/T4

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## English Version

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## Introduction

This document summarizes the joint work of the SKILLBRIDGE project partners (France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and Slovenia) in comparing the current state of non-cognitive skills across their respective national systems. The information has been gathered through national reports, interviews with institutional stakeholders, and a review of official frameworks, guidelines, and tools shared by each country. The aim is to highlight commonalities and divergences in how soft skills are used, described, and integrated into validation systems, and to derive useful recommendations for building a European model of recognition.

## 1. General Context

### France

France has adopted a systemic approach to non-cognitive skills through the update of the ROME 4.0 framework, which explicitly includes over 90 soft skills categorized as relational, organizational, and learning-oriented.

### Spain

In Spain, transversal skills are acknowledged within tools such as the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP) and SEPE occupational profiles. However, their integration remains fragmented and lacks a centralized reference framework.

### Italy

Italy has no unified national framework yet. The most advanced regional reference is the QRSP from Lombardy, which includes nine transversal competencies.

### Germany

Germany follows a decentralized approach: soft skills are present in guidance, training, and employment services (such as ProfilPASS or KODE®), but there is no national validation strategy.

### Slovenia

Slovenia does not have an official national system, but actively participated in European projects such as SoftSkills4EU, developing the SPOCC model with five soft skill domains.

## 2. Regulatory Framework and Institutional References

Regulatory references to non-cognitive skills vary considerably across countries. France has a clear legal foundation through the integration of soft skills into the ROME 4.0 framework, which formalizes their classification and use within public employment services. In Spain, references are spread across the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP), SEPE profiles, and the DigComp framework, but the absence of a central regulatory framework limits their coherence. In Italy, Lombardy's QRSP serves as a regional operational reference, while national regulation is still under development. In Germany, there are no specific laws governing the validation of soft skills; the tools in use originate from educational initiatives, foundations, or projects. Finally, Slovenia does not have regulatory references but has integrated soft skills into European models aligned with the EQF and a learning outcomes-based approach.

### 3. Terminology and Classification

The terminology used reflects both cultural and systemic differences. In France, the terms “*compétences comportementales*” and “*savoir-être professionnels*” are used, with an official taxonomy. In Spain, the skills are alternatively referred to as *key competences*, *transversal skills*, or *employability skills*. In Italy, they are identified within the QRSP as transversal competences linked to professional performance. In Germany, the terms *personal* or *social competence* (*personale o soziale Kompetenz*) are commonly used. In Slovenia, the SPOCC classification distinguishes between Social, Personal, Organisational, Collaborative, and Creative dimensions.

This terminological variety reflects the heterogeneity of the systems but also highlights the need for harmonization to support European interoperability.

### Synoptic Table of the 38 Soft Skills

The partnership analyzed the repositories of non-cognitive, transversal, and soft skills available in each partner country in order to build a comparison table based on the 38 skills used in the survey and questionnaire addressed to practitioners.

This enabled the creation of a table identifying in which countries a significant number of these skills can be formally certified.

Additionally, the work included a correlation with ESCO competences, which serve as descriptive references and technical support for those countries and regions interested in developing or updating their own skill frameworks.

This image shows the first part of the excel file

| LIST Non-Cognitive Skill | Mapped QRSP ITALY                         | Mapped ROME FRANCE                       | GERMANY Competence Cards (Bertelsmann Stiftung; licensed under CC BY-SA)   | GERMANY (KODE® System; Erpenbeck/Heyse; registered trademark)               | SPAIN  | SLOVENIA   | ESCO Comp      | esempio una somma o una media. | Link  |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|---|--|--|----------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Problem-solving          | Manage problems with a proactive approach | Act in response to unforeseen situations | solving skills: You know how to examine the individual characteristics of a situation. You analyse a situation and are able to determine what has to be done. (Competence Cards) | Ability to solve problems: Ability to design solutions successfully (KODE®) | Described in SEPE occupational profiles and INCUAL; integrated into transversal key competences. | In Slovenia there is no transversal or non cognitive skills mapped into an official repository | solve problems |                                | <a href="http://data.europa.eu/esco/skill/adc6dc11-3378-467b-99c5-9b0a27e6d969">http://data.europa.eu/esco/skill/adc6dc11-3378-467b-99c5-9b0a27e6d969</a>   |
| Critical thinking        | Manage problems with a proactive approach | Take perspective, show curiosity         | not mapped   | not mapped  | Mapped in SEPE and VET training modules; part of transversal education guidelines.               | not mapped   | not mapped     |                                |   |
| Decision-making          | Manage problems with a proactive approach | Ability to make decisions                | Decision-making abilities: You weigh up the different options and then make a decision. This is not particularly difficult for you. (Competence Cards)                           | Decision-making ability: Ability to make decision immediately (KODE®)       | Partially included in occupational profiles and project-based assessment tools.                  | not mapped   | make decisions |                                | <a href="http://data.europa.eu/esco/skill/4f52d2b4c-9f8b-438e-8a1b-4f29ab5f2c47">http://data.europa.eu/esco/skill/4f52d2b4c-9f8b-438e-8a1b-4f29ab5f2c47</a> |
|                          |   |  | Creativity: You are able to create something new where there was nothing. You are artistically.  |   | Referenced in some VET modules and NGO-led integration programs.                                 |  |                |                                |   |

The file allows verification of whether a non-cognitive skill can be partially or fully certified, and the descriptors feed into the project's digital tool, helping both users and practitioners.

#### 4. Public Reference Tools

Public systems show varying levels of tool structuring. France, with MétierScope and the Skills Passport, offers integrated national digital tools. In Spain, SEPE and the CNCP present profiles with implicit references to soft skills, but without dedicated systems. Italy integrates soft skills into the QRSP, but accessibility and use are limited to the regional level. In Germany, tools such as BERUFENET include descriptions of behavioral attitudes within occupational profiles, but in a descriptive rather than a validation-oriented way. Slovenia, although lacking structured public tools, has developed interactive platforms through European projects, such as the e-portfolio from the SoftSkills4EU project.

#### 5. Assessment and Self-Assessment Methodologies

Formal evaluation of soft skills remains limited across countries. France provides reference grids but delegates assessment to employment services. Spain experiments with assessment rubrics in VET. Italy uses observational tools locally. Germany applies structured self-assessment tools (ProfilPASS, KODE®). Slovenia implements diagnostic quizzes and digital badges, but without institutional recognition.

#### 6. Application in Employment Integration Pathways

Soft skills are key in employability programs. France and Spain have more formalized systems; Italy is more experimental. Germany and Slovenia embed soft skills in guidance practices, but lack formal certification. Employer recognition is still limited due to system fragmentation.

#### 7. Inclusion and Accessibility for Vulnerable Groups

All countries recognize soft skills' role in inclusion. Spain and Slovenia rely on NGOs and EU projects. Germany uses multilingual Competence Cards. France's ROME is not fully migrant-adapted. Italy pilots inclusive approaches like DIMICOME. Greater institutional coordination is needed to ensure accessibility.

#### 8. Final Conclusions

The comparison reveals growing convergence in valuing soft skills, but also divergent recognition systems. France leads in formalization; Spain and Italy show evolving, regionally based systems. Germany and Slovenia use self-assessment and project tools. A European interoperable framework, shared descriptors, digital micro-credentials, and inclusive validation paths are essential to move forward.