

# Certification as a model of recognising and improving personnel's competences in OSH

*Strengthening OSH knowledge  
and innovation as driver of EU smart growth  
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# Priorities of Europe 2020: A European Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

## Key priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy:

- **Smart growth:** developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation.
- **Sustainable growth:** promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy.
- **Inclusive growth:** fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

**Priorities of Europe 2020** are realized by the flagship initiatives.

„**Inclusive growth**” priority includes an initiative „**An agenda for new skills and jobs**” which addresses improvement of competences and improvement of OSH.



# An Agenda for new skills and job: A European contribution towards full employment

An Agenda includes 13 key actions, e.g.:

- a completion of the European Skills, Competences and Occupations classification (ESCO)
- a reform of the systems for recognition of professional qualifications in the European market,
- a comprehensive review of health and safety legislation.

The review of health and safety legislation may cause changes in the law and need to supplement the education system of qualifications of experts shaping safe working conditions.



# Definition of competence

**Competence (or competency)** is the **ability of an individual to perform a job properly**. A competency is a set of defined behaviours that provide a structured guide enabling the identification, evaluation and development of the behaviours in individual employees.

*(based on: McClelland, D.; 1973)*

**Competence** is a **combination of knowledge, skills and behaviour used to improve performance**; or it is the state or quality of being adequately or well qualified, having the ability to perform a specific role.



# Types and standards of competences

## Types of competences, e.g.

- Threshold competences
- Differentiating competences  
*(according to Poczowski)*
- Core competences
- Role-specific competences  
*(according to Rostowski)*

## Standards of competences, e.g.

- Professional Qualification Standards
- ENETOSH Standard of Competence for Instructors and Trainers in Safety and Health



# Methods of assessment of competences

- **Assessment of competence by supervisors**
- **Selective tests of intelligence and knowledge**
- **Competence Management (CM)  
(Assessment and Development Centre)**

CM is directly related to corporate efforts to leverage internal knowledge and initiate consistent knowledge management initiatives (*Hellstrom et al., 2000; Ley and Albert, 2003*).

- **Incompetence Management  
(Development Centre)**

Method of identifying gaps and developing competences

- **Certification of Persons**

An objective evaluation system, maintain and develop appropriate level of professional qualifications.



# Certification of persons – exemplary approach

## Certification of personnel's competences in OSH

Centre for Certification of Personnel's  
Competence of the Central Institute  
for Labour Protection – National Research  
Institute



# Organisation and Accreditation

The **Centre for Certification of Personnel's Competence (OCKP)** was established in April 1999 within the structure of the Central Institute for Labour Protection – National Research Institute (CIOP-PIB).

The competences of the OCKP are regularly assessed by independent auditors of the Polish Centre for Accreditation.

At present the quality system of the **Centre** meets the requirements of **PN-EN ISO/IEC 17024:2004** “Conformity assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons”.





# Requirements of accreditation

## **Organizational structure – characteristics:**

- Independence and impartiality
- Status of a legal entity or part of a legal entity
- Financial independence

## **Organizational structure – composition:**

- Supervisory Board
- Technical Committee

## **Certification system:**

- Certification process (defined)
- Certification scheme  
(documented criteria and procedures)



# Supervisory Board (ensures impartiality)

**Supervisory Board** - representatives of interested parties, whose activities are related to the certification process:

**State administration:**

- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy,
- National Labour Inspectorate,
- Ministry of Health,
- Ministry of National Education,

**Direct customers:**

- educational centres,
- trade unions,
- OSH Services Employees Association,

**Indirect customers (clients of direct customers):**

- Polish Agency for Enterprise Development,
- Polish Academy of Science,
- Central Institute for Labour Protection-NRI.



# Technical Committee

Day-to-day activities of OCKP are supported by the **Technical Committee** composed of specialists representing all parties interested in certification and specialists invited to meetings as necessary due to the actual scope of certification.

**Certification scheme:** specific certification requirements related to specified categories of persons to which the same particular standards and rules and the same procedures apply.



# The scope of competence certification

The **Centre for Certification of Personnel's Competence** issues competence certificates for:

- lecturers in occupational safety and health,
- specialists in occupational safety and health,
- specialists in measuring of working conditions parameters,
- auditors of occupational safety and health management systems,
- consultants in occupational safety and health management systems,
- consultants in occupational safety and health in small enterprises.

To develop the educational base, necessary in the process of certifying the competences of specialists, **OCKP recognizes competences of educational centres in the field of OSH.**



# Certification Scheme

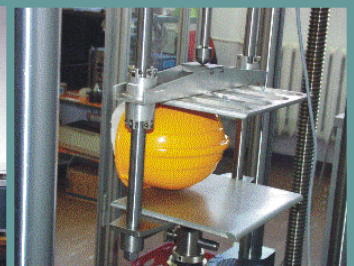
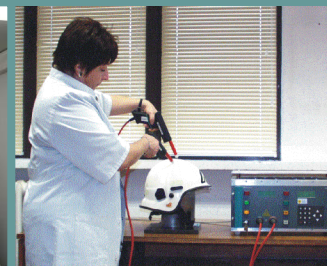
## Certification Criteria:

- **Basic education**
- **Work experience**
- **Continuous education**
- **Professional experience**
- **Practical knowledge and skills**



# Basic OSH education – thematic scope

- **Noise**
- **Electromagnetic fields**
- **Vibrations**
- **Mechanical and Electrical Hazards**
- **Static Electricity and Air Ionization**
- **Optical Radiation and Workstation Lighting**
- **Protective Devices and Systems**
- **Personal Protective Equipment**
- **Chemicals and Aerosols in the Working Environment**
- **Control of Major Industrial Accidents**
- **Ergonomics**
- **Occupational Safety and Health Management**



# Certification procedure

**Submission of the application for certification**



**Evaluation of the submitted documents**



**Assessment of a lecture or an examination**



**Opinion of the Technical Committee**



**Decision of the Head of Certification Centre**



**A competence certificate is issued**



**Supervision of the competences  
of the certified persons**

# Set of Criteria for Certification of OSH Specialists

**Basic  
education**



University studies and studies in OSH

**Work and  
professional  
experience**



At least 3-year work and professional experience in OSH services

**Continuous  
education**



Post-graduate studies in OSH and completion of competence in connection with new certification requirements and changing health and safety law in

**Practical  
knowledge  
and skills**



Proof of the creative nature of relation with OSH services (own solutions, implemented results, projects, publications)



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**– competences growth as a result of supervision by certification Centre**

**Practical knowledge and skills**



Proof of the creative nature of relation with OSH services (own solutions, implemented results, projects, publications)

# Results of the Centre's activity

**Since 2001**

**2000 persons assessed, 900 persons certified**

- 210 OSH specialists,
- 160 OSH lecturers,
- 40 specialists in measuring parameters of working conditions,
- 49 auditors of OSH management systems,
- 28 consultants in OSH management systems,
- 413 OSH consultants in small enterprises.

Moreover, 50 educational centers positively assessed and recognised by OCKP as competent to train personnel to be evaluated within the certification system.



# Conclusions

Competence certification as a system for assessing **and maintaining the highest quality of professional qualifications** makes it possible to recognize them on the European and international market.

Moreover, specialists with certified competences actively participate in research, implementation, legislation and education activities, which results in shaping the high quality of OSH.





# Thank you for attention

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