

CNEL Position about National sharing of a Standard Reference Model, like EUCIP
(Roma, IT STAR 2009, 27th and 28th November 2009)

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I thank the Program Committee of the “IT Star Workshop” for the opportunity given to me – formerly IT professional, to day member of CNEL (National Council of Economy labour) representing SME in the services area - to offer a contribution on the subject of “Profiles and Competences Standards”.

As a general premise, any individual appointed as “professional” is expected to supply other subjects (individual, private or public) with services (or “intangible products” whose intellectual aspects are relevant), wherein specific technical/scientific pieces of knowledge, as well as expertises and abilities are required.

In the current life as in business relationships, lists of standard denominations or titles are available and commonly used to indicate specific professional profiles: each title unambiguously evokes both the nature of the expected services, and the fields of knowledge, the experiences and abilities associable to the corresponding professional profile.

All this matter has been traditionally considered so relevant in most European countries, as to press for a public intervention to protect large classes of individuals and other subjects from improper offering: systems of rules and institution of government bodies to warrant the effective qualification of any professional corresponding to a specified title (e.g. “medicine doctor”) have been so provided.

Moreover – as happens particularly in Italy – the practice of some specific professional activities (professioni “riservate”) is regarded as so critical to ask for some more warranties: public bodies like “Ordini” have been promoted to collect qualified specialists (e.g. Ordini degli Ingegneri, dei Medici, dei Notai, degli Avvocati) under selective admission rules, and to provide some supervision functions.

A set of rules and an associate operation of public bodies – as those mentioned - can ensure a satisfactory practice of the professional activities assuming a state of stability as to:

- “the state of the art” (regarding all the scientific and technical aspects),
- the basic structure of the whole of the users and the corresponding demand.

The intrinsic dynamics of both these factors in a modern complex society – even in a non quite turbulent state – asks in fact for a continuous process of revision and adjustment of terms, rules and operating conditions of public bodies at a rate practically unworkable in Italy, given the basic structure of the legislative and government institutions. So, particularly, we can point out the most evident gap among the professional profiles now required in most ICT activities – given the high-rate dynamics of the sector – and the profiles strictly conformal to the actual rules, as a result of the corresponding instruction processes.

So, with reference to the ICT sector in Italy, the fulfilment of the simple legal requirements related to the practice of professional activities is generally regarded as a first indication to qualify a particular subject: additional information, tests and warranties are required in order to evaluate its effective professional profile.

For that purpose, scientifically founded evaluation and certification techniques have been developed in European countries as in USA in the last years, and proposed to all operators involved in ICT with the aim to describe the actual knowledge and capability profiles of individual subjects applying for specific professional roles.

Lists of standard professional profiles, fit for defined duties and responsibilities, are also suggested, where each profile is articulated in terms of titles of knowledge to be owned at given levels.

Of course, all above said techniques rely upon the availability of an exhaustive, dynamically updated and largely acceptable glossary of terms describing the elementary segments of the technical and scientific knowledge relevant for a given application field.

The above said description and evaluation model can work on a voluntary basis with reference to a system of “technical standards”, opposite to models and compulsory systems founded on sets of rules.

A proposal of technical standards – whose success is strictly consequent to the prestige of the issuing subject and to a wide diffusion of its applications with a stable level of acceptance – can be so regarded as a real market proposal, to be evaluated in terms of “customer satisfaction”.

With reference to the subject of this IT Star workshop, given my most recent experience gained as councillor of Cnel - in a Commission where the interest for professional activities is institutionally relevant – I can confirm that a market approach for professional ICT activities relied on the voluntary adoption of qualified international standards, is of fundamental importance to foster a suitable meeting between the demand and the supply side, especially in Italy where the traditional model of definitions and qualifications supported by a system of rules needs a continuous updating and integration processes.

The EUCIP Standard presented in this meeting, jointly with the emergence of a new e-Competence Framework conceived to facilitate interoperability among other existing frameworks, has all the requirements - as the standing of the issuing subject, the gained international sharing, and the satisfaction of the actual users – to envisage its upgrading into an integrated system management standard, to support the convergence processes between the ICT professional demand and the supply sides, not against but as an integration of the traditional model.

The approach to build up an ICT competence reference framework and the usefulness revealed by the ICT market, suggested CNEL to establish in November last year a specific ICT Standard and Certification Table to help awareness and discussion on this topic at a high institutional level and to propose this method to enhance the convergence processes between the demand and the supply sides in other fields of qualified professional services.