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**REALITY AND EXPECTANCIES OF
INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT AND
CERTIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS
THE RESULTS OF MONITORING, AUTUMN
2014**

Abstract: *The monitoring of an independent assessment and certification of qualifications held by the Pastukhov Academy in the framework of the project of Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Science and Education (Rosobrnadzor) in the fall 2014 gave paradoxical results. On the one hand, the situation in the sphere of the independent assessment must be judged as barely satisfactory: certification bodies are poorly represented online, their number is insufficient, information is not enough, and plans are incorrect, best practices are also not enough.*

On the other hand, respondents welcomed development of the system of independent assessment. In the future, they expect to get significant benefits both for society as a whole and for individual professionals.

The author proposes the ways to improve the situation and makes recommendations not only to bodies for the independent assessment and certification of qualifications, but also to other interested parties, in particular, professional associations and authorities in the field of education. The process of development of professional standards and participation in this process by various stakeholders are also considered.

Keywords: *independent assessment of qualifications, certification of qualifications, monitoring, open data proceeding, continuing adult education, labor market, labor force demand and supply, professional standards*

1. Introduction

The independent assessment and certification of qualifications are subjects of great importance nowadays. There is no wonder: they are a necessary link of the

continuing education because they allow formalizing the obtained (available or gained) qualification, and making it convincing for employers. They stimulate employees to improve skills, first of all due to informal education which becomes leading in our fast-paced world.

The independent assessment is expected to solve such serious problem as coordination of supply and demand of manpower in a

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labor market.

The independent assessment of qualifications is able to realize the following tasks (Figure 1):

- Adaptation of the groups of competitors which are behind in the labor market (the E.R.F project. is realized in Sweden, Great Britain, Greece, Spain, and Cyprus);
- Acceleration of entrance of the studying youth into the labor market (the PR-ERF project in Sweden, the Netherlands, Greece, Spain, and Cyprus);
- Adaptation of the qualified migrants in the countries of entrance (the CQAF project in the same countries);
- Organization development by means of the independent assessment of staff qualifications and effective gaining of missing competences (the CQAF project in the same countries).

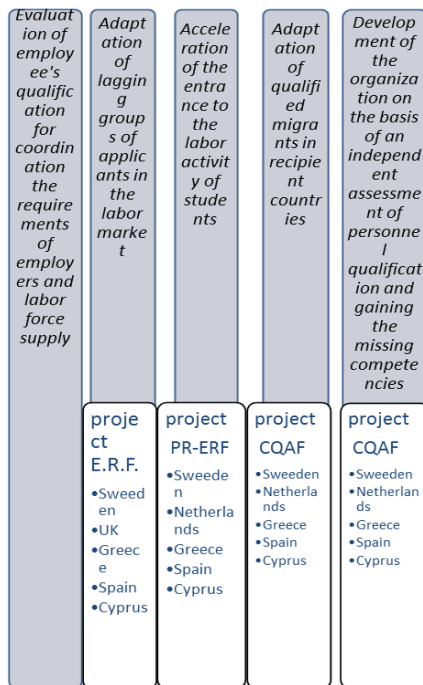


Figure 1. The independent assessment tasks

But, as we know, "the devil is in details". The intention may be magnificent, but implementation is vastly far from perfect. Therefore it does make sense to look, what is the real situation today, what has been already reached, what has not, what are problems, what are perspectives?

For this purpose, on the instructions of the Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Education and Science the Pastukhov Academy has carried out a monitoring of activities of public organizations and professional associations within the project under the Government Contract No. F-43-ks-2014, of August 20, 2014. Monitoring has been carried out in October, 2014. In this article we are intended to present the results of this monitoring.

Results are divided in accordance with two lines of the monitoring:

- **on the one hand**, the monitoring was carried out by means of analysis of the information about the independent assessment of the qualification professional level of qualification of workers which is published by different stakeholders (Reznik, 2008; Sapegin, 2015; Sidorenko, 2010) (**the external point of view**);
- **on the other hand**, we have been analyzing the data obtained as a result of the survey which involved respondents selected among the stakeholders (**the internal point of view**).

Both lines are mutually complementary. They create a three-dimensional vision significant for understanding of current development of the independent assessment of qualifications.

2. General summary on the available information on the independent assessment

What is the general summary?

Unfortunately, at the moment the practice of professional organizations and public associations in the sphere of the independent assessment of professional and qualification level of workers should be recognized as not enough satisfactory.

Why?

Owing to many factors. Majority of them is the extremely weak representation of bodies for independent assessment and staff certification in the cyberspace and a mess in planning of their activities and plans execution. Let us begin with information promotion.

2.1. Certification authorities in the Internet

Why do we consider it feeble? If you fancy yourself as a potential applicant for an independent assessment and you will try to find online the nearest certification body, you are at risk of not to find anything because there is no information about the majority of Centers for Assessment and Certification of Qualifications (CACQ) and Regional Agencies for Qualification Development (RAQD) (Borisova, 2002).

For example, if in January 2015 you google a web search query "Center for Assessment and Certification of Qualifications", among the first search results you would find the site of the University of Oil and Gas (one of its departments is active in the field of the independent assessment of qualifications (Breslav, 2014)), sites of two Centers for Assessment and Certification of Qualifications by Construction Colleges, the one site of a Regional Agency for Qualification Development, and six links to different normative documents.

It is rather poor, isn't?

At the regional level the situation doesn't seem to be better: among the first search results for the "RAQD" query You will see RAQDs of Tatarstan (with large volume of irrelevant information) and Naberezhnye Chelny. Other results are links to normative documents again.

Without having got the necessary information from the sites of bodies for independent assessment, we have used the list of the organizations provided by the National Agency for Development of Qualifications (NADQ) as a list of certification bodies in order to intensify the analysis. It consists of 86 items, and some of them are duplicated. Finally, 75 organizations supposedly active in the field of the independent assessment of qualifications have been analyzed. Results of the assessment of these organizations are shown in the Figure 2.



Figure 2. Results of the assessment

The best practice: the informative site, the advanced measuring tools, certification provisions are clear and useful; the certificate is recognized by experts - 8 organizations

Work: low level of one of the criteria – 11 organizations

Weak: certification is carried out, but its procedures and results raise doubts - 8 organizations

Fiction: organization certifies NOT qualifications - 9 organizations

Not available: the organization isn't represented in information space or isn't engaged in certification of qualifications - 39 organizations

Result seems to be alarming, therefore we

decided to estimate the level of practice of the independent assessment and certification of qualifications for each type of organizations listed above. Results are following:

- Agencies for Qualification Development have the highest score – 2.31, i.e. the general level of the practice is slightly higher than "low";
- Centers for Assessment and Certification of Qualifications – 2 (the general level of the practice is "low");
- Professional associations and public

organizations – 1.25 (very low level);

- Corporations and enterprises – 0.73 (the initial stage of development of qualifications certification);
- Educational organizations – 0.18 (qualifications certification is inadequate).

And with all this, the desirable level of practice by all types of the organizations is high!

Figure 3 shows Average rating of level of certification practice of workers' qualifications of various types of organizations.

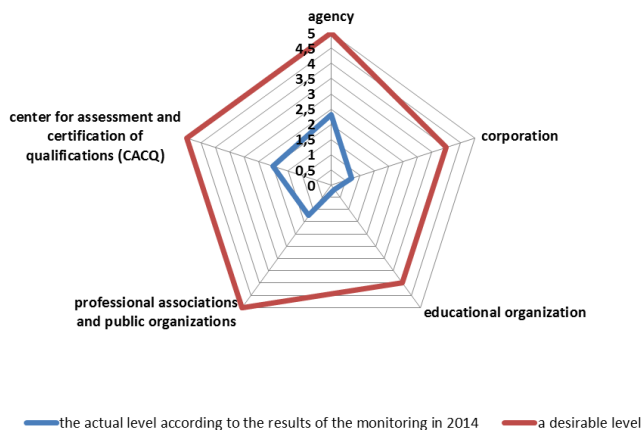


Figure 3. Average rating of level of certification practice of workers' qualifications of various types of organizations

The gap between the desired and the actual is huge – but respondents expressed the sure opinion that development of the system has just began. The disclosed shortcomings are not "diseases", and they are rather "infancy". Perhaps.

However we strongly recommend all bodies for certification of qualifications to intensify the promotion in the Internet: to create sites, to publish there the appropriate information, to update it regularly, and etc. After all, the promotion is a mandatory component of a new activity. Without promoting it remains unknown!

As a result, only 3 practices of 28 were placed among the best practices of professional associations and public organizations. Activities of 3 public organizations were recognized as satisfactory. In 4 cases we had to recognize it as weak. The another 16 professional associations are generally not active in the sphere of the independent assessment of professional level of workers' qualification, despite the fact that they are represented in the organizations list of the National Agency for Qualifications Development (Figure 4). Two professional associations certify something another, but not qualifications of

workers at all, in particular, construction objects and goods exported from the Russian

Federation. This certifications mess must be stopped.



Figure 4. Professional associations and public organizations according to levels of practice of independent assessment of qualification specified by information in open access.

Since there are a small number of the best practices we are able to bring the whole list (Table 1).

Table 1. Best practices

Best practices of professional associations and public organizations	Working practices of professional associations and public organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification Association “Russian Register” • Project Management Association “SOVNET” • Self-regulating organization Nonprofit Partnership National Agency of the Control of Welding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Institution "Center for the Development of Vocational Education Zabaikalsky Krai" • National Lift Union • Nonprofit Partnership Community of appraisers “SMAO”

2.2. Certification authorities – plans and reality

Without having been satisfied with the Internet information, the project team has obtained data on plans of Centers for Assessment and Certification of Qualifications for the third quarter of 2014. Data source is the National Agency for Development of Qualifications (NADQ). We are sincerely grateful to the NADQ for that.

These plans contain indexes for three aspects of activity:

- 1) Number of certification authorities in each territorial subject of the Russian Federation;
- 2) A share of graduates of the programs of professional education and vocational education which have been successfully certified;
- 3) Development of regulations for certification of graduates of educational organizations of the

region and accounting of results.

According to the provided data, 56 of 85 territorial subjects of the Russian Federation didn't provide data on the plan of opening of Centers for Assessment and Certification of Qualifications in 2014 and its realization. In 21 territorial subjects of the Russian Federation, plans have been implemented absolutely precisely. As for another, the plan execution varies from a double overfulfillment to the total absence of results.

From region to region the number of Centers for Assessment and Certification of Qualifications and indexes of the opening plan execution for also strongly differ (Figure 5):

The main evident distinction is an exceptional variation of a share of graduates of the programs of professional education and vocational education which have been certified: from 0% in many regions (it is

clear, the process there is not yet launched in full) to 63% in the Stavropol Krai where the plan is 100% by the end of 2014 (Figure 6).

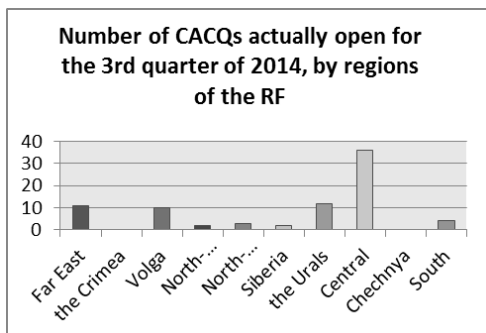
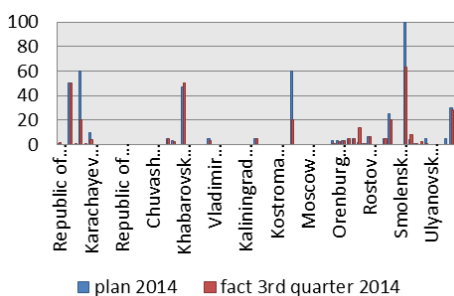


Figure 5. Number of CACQs actually opened for the 3rd quarter of 2014, by regions of the Russian Federation



Data raise doubts from positions of voluntary independent assessment, as well as the capacity of CACQs

Figure 6. The proportion of graduates of vocational education and training which were successfully certified (according to CACQs' reports for 3 quarters of 2014).

Such mass character makes it difficult to believe as in voluntariness of the independent assessment of qualifications, so in fairness of tests – the capacity of the only Stavropol Center for Assessment and Certification of Qualifications is not enough.

As for procedural documents, the situation seems to be even simpler: development of them was planned in 6 regions; in the 3rd quarter of 2014 documents have been already developed in the 5 of them. But

running a few steps forward and being guided by replies of our respondents, we have to add that 16% of applicants "had to procure" regulatory documents, and 76% of applicants were dissatisfied with qualification requirements: 11% considered them outdated, 16% - excessive, and 49% - irrelevant. Sad.

3. Success factors of the best practice

3.1. At the stage of formation of the independent assessment system

Having analyzed differences between successfully operating professional associations, public organizations, and outsiders, we found out the following factors of success:

- 1) Membership in an international association which provides access to the international measuring materials and training of certification experts. It assures the high level of the certificate that confirms the high quality of a service (it is typical of all representatives of the best practices);
- 2) Close contact with employers which provides feedback and continuous actualization of requirements to applicants for certification of qualifications (all representatives of the best and operating practices);
- 3) Active and sequential promotion of certification services which enables to attract sufficient number of applicants (all representatives of the best and operating practices);
- 4) Regular certification sessions – there is an interdependence with the previous factor (all representatives of the best and operating practices);
- 5) Evidences of efficiency and advantages of qualifications certification. Among them are

obvious advantages which a certificate can give to successful applicants that almost definitely shall be associated with enhancing their workplace responsibility as certified experts (all representatives of the best and operating practices).

3.2. At the stage of growth

However, at the stage of growth, which has already begun, the factors of the best practices are changing (Table 2).

Table 2. Predicted Factors of the Best Practices of the Independent Assessment of Qualifications

Predicted Factors of the Best Practices of the Independent Assessment of Qualifications	Factor Rationale	Current Situation (based on the result of monitoring)
Scope	Perspectives for a certified specialist; priority for the international certification	There is a small number of the International Certificates.
Availability of the developed and implemented level structure for accreditation and certification	Gives all the benefits of working with a stable, reliable, well-functioning system	Not available
Recorded schemes of personnel certification and clear procedures (availability of formalized requirements to qualifications of experts, simplicity of documents preparation, clear procedures, and etc.)	Convenience of services for the customer (one of the important aspects of its quality)	At the moment, requirements to applicants are not sufficiently clear, documents and procedures are not fully clear.
Prior provisions for applicants	Guarantee for employers adequate level of qualification of the expert	Not available in many cases
Assessment tools: professional standards (PS) or international measurement tools	The validity of services for the customer (it is important when making decisions on certification)	At the moment, the assessment tools are at least imperfect: PS are developed for a relatively small proportion of profession, measuring instruments for the rest are not always satisfactory, international measuring instruments are known a little.
Availability of appeal procedure	An important factor of feedback regarding the service, the client –side control of its quality	Has not been reviewed during this monitoring
Service rendering terms	An important factor of efficiency of the service provision	At the moment most organizations are held it irregularly or infrequently

Predicted Factors of the Best Practices of the Independent Assessment of Qualifications	Factor Rationale	Current Situation (based on the result of monitoring)
Cost	Must be differentiated; an important factor [of sales] of distribution of services	Has not been reviewed during this monitoring
Register of accredited certification bodies	The required assurance of quality of services	Not available in many cases, or is kept carelessly.
Register of certified personnel	The required assurance of quality of services	Has not been reviewed during this monitoring; Expert Reviews characterize the maintenance of registers as unsatisfactory
Frequency of certification confirmation and conditions of certificate prolongation		

4. The result - paradoxical but encouraging

Despite the negative results of the monitoring of the actual practice of independent assessment, the general attitude of the respondents towards the idea of monitoring and independent assessment of the nascent system of certification and qualification is positive. Serious positive expectations are associated with it and our respondents referred the most of negative aspects to the initial stage of development of the system as a whole.

What allows us to say that? The results of a survey conducted in October-November 2014 by the Pastukhov Academy within the same project under the state contract №F-43-CS-2014, of August 20, 2014, on the instructions of the Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Science and Education.

The survey was conducted anonymously in order to obtain correct and more objective information, but respondents identified themselves with one category or another, so it was possible to apply many filters.

5. Respondents

For the period from 02.09.2014 to 11.05.2014, 274 respondents have been involved in the survey. 72 of them have refused to participate in the monitoring, despite its anonymity.

The main reasons to refuse:

- Incompetence of the respondent - in cases where a potential respondent by post or occupation in organization would have to be competent. Most often, this reasoning is presented by specialists of commercial organizations, as well as **employees of state agencies**. Geographically, this reasoning is common in the Crimea, which reflects the situation caused objectively: Crimea has only recently become a subject of the Russian Federation, development of the system of independent assessment of qualifications is only started on the Crimea territory (perhaps is not even beginning), respectively, potential respondents even under conditions of anonymity, did not want to reveal a lack of information;

- Being busy - typical for representatives of **public authorities** in the vocational education system: recognizing the importance of monitoring in words, they de facto refuse to participate in the questionnaire.

Also the phenomenon of monitoring sabotage was revealed, primarily by CACQs, which agree to participate in monitoring and in survey, but de facto do not respond. Finally, we have received the feedback only from 2 respondents. In combination with the lack of sites with information about them, it has to be stated that their activities are either just in the infancy, or are not sufficiently promoted; the stakeholders are not informed and the modern tools of promotion (websites, social networks, etc.) are not applied.

As a result, 202 respondents have been actively participating in the monitoring. Their distribution by federal districts is presented below (Figure 7):

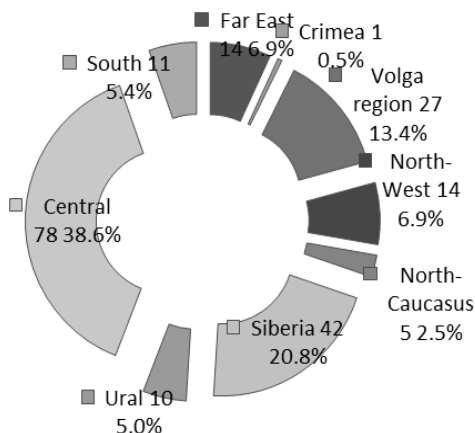


Figure 7. Monitoring of respondents, by federal districts

Also the phenomenon of partial refusal to provide data has been observed when respondents answered some of the questions, mostly of a general nature, but missed out questionnaires in which they were required

to provide information relevant to the category of a stakeholder (state institutions, CACQ, professional associations, and etc.). Accordingly, the total number of respondents representing stakeholders is 113. It is significantly lower than the total number of respondents (Table 3).

Table 3. Structure of respondents of the monitoring of activities of non-governmental organizations and professional associations in the field of independent assessment of professional level of qualification of workers, by type of stakeholders

Types of stakeholders	Number of respondents	
	Indicating their organization as	Indicating themselves as
Employers	137	17
The authorities	State institutions - 49 (not all are authorities)	2
Professional associations	2	28
Experts	7	64
CACQ	7	2
Total	202	113

The detected difference can be interpreted as greater confidence of the respondents in their personal competency in the area of assessment and certification of qualifications as compared to their job competency.

The most active position towards the independent assessment of qualifications is taken up by persons with higher education (Figure 8).

Thus, even by means of this small sample we are pleased to note the high level of interest of people with higher education in improving the skills and have the right to assume their high interest in the recognition of obtained qualifications, and accordingly - in the independent assessment.

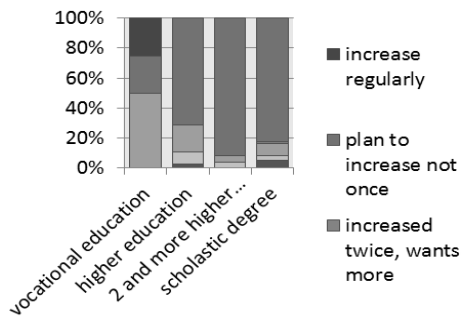


Figure 8. Structure of respondents of the monitoring according to plans for improvement of professional skill (with the elimination factor of respondents).

Analysis of plans to develop qualifications in terms of the education sector as a whole has shown the similar picture. But obvious distinctions between different spheres are interesting (Figure 9).

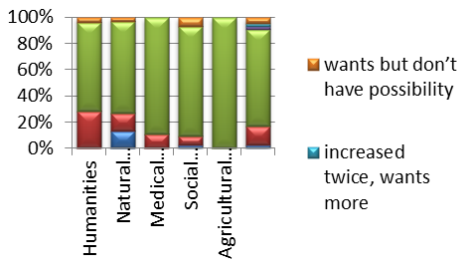


Figure 9. The structure of respondents having qualifications in various areas according to their plans to improve professional skills (with the elimination factor of respondents).

After bringing results to the comparable form we can see that the greatest interest in improving skills is displayed by representatives of the social sciences (The highest interest shown by representatives of Agricultural Sciences - but the number of respondents is small (6 people)) – and this despite the fact that models of the independent assessment of qualification available at present in this area is the least developed. The reason is high importance of

the so-called soft skills (Skills, the manifestation of which is difficult to track, verify and demonstrate. This group includes communication and management skills. Results of the research conducted at Harvard University and Stanford Research Institute suggests that the contribution of hard skills to the professional success of an employee is only 15%, whereas soft skills determine the remaining 85%) which are difficult to measure. So, one of conclusions is to accelerate and intensify the development of an independent assessment of the qualifications in the field of the social sciences.

6. Awareness of respondents with models of independent assessment of qualifications (prevalence of models)

Respondents showed a sufficiently low level of acquaintance with specific models of the independent assessment of personnel qualifications: models of mandatory assessment (health and safety, certification of personnel) are the most known. Models of the voluntary assessment significantly fall behind (almost in half, Figure 10).

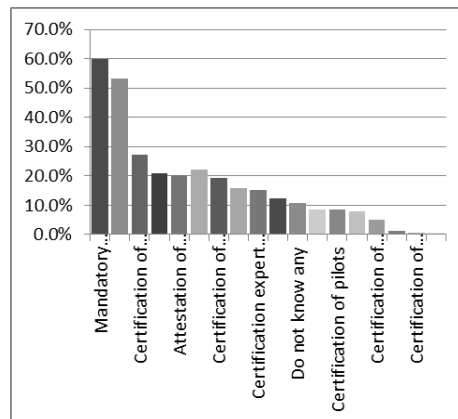


Figure 10. Prevalence of individual models of the independent assessment of personnel qualifications among the respondents of the monitoring.

Of great interest are the differences of the levels of acquaintance of different respondents' categories with the **specific** models of the independent assessment of qualifications:

- The most informed are workers of CACQs: they are aware of 15.4% of models presented in the monitoring. This in itself is not surprising, but the number of representatives of CACQs among the respondents, as already mentioned, is extremely small - 2 people;
- With a large margin the second highest awareness are respondents who identified themselves in the category of "experts": they are aware of 13.1% of models presented in the survey;
- Employers are aware of 12.9% of the models;
- Representatives of professional associations and public associations are familiar with 10.1% of the models;
- The authorities are too small in number to determine their actual awareness.

The lower level of awareness of professional communities and associations as compared with other categories of respondents is [supposedly] the cause of their passivity in the development of professional standards (PS).

25% of "experts" and 17.7% of employers are not aware of the independent assessment

of personnel qualifications at all. This fact seems to be noteworthy.

7. Evaluation of influence of the independent assessment of qualifications

According to the respondents' replies, the positive and negative effects of diffusion of the independent assessment of qualifications were identified and ranked.

As the strongest or the likely positive effects for individual persons, as well as the education system the following were mentioned:

- Facilitation of recruiting for individual employers;
- Improving conditions of the labor market through cooperation between employers and educational institutions;
- Job search facilitation for individuals;
- Increase the education level due to control by bodies for independent assessment.

The effects of a large number of persons interested or employees on the job search are considered by a large number of employers as possible, but not yet manifested. With high probability it is explained by the fact that development of the system of the independent assessment of personnel qualifications has just begun (Figure 11).

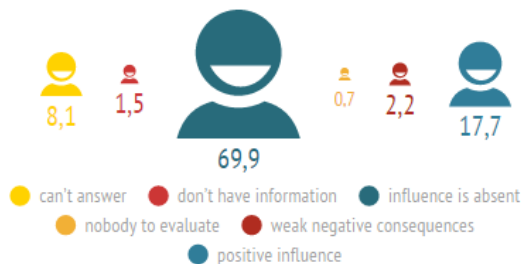


Figure 11. Assessment of the already manifested influence of the independent assessment of the qualifications on business and society. As the "other" positive effects the respondents have reported the following (Retained the style of the original responses.)

Table 4. Microeconomic and Macroeconomic levels

Microeconomic level	Macroeconomic level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing responsibility of enterprises and organizations for the formation of requirements for quality characteristics of the personnel; • The growing trend to update the content of vocational education in the response to demands for the independent assessment qualifications of employees; • Increased level of self-appraisal of qualification of the expert; • Ratings of educational institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To form an objective market competition; • The growth of the country's competitiveness; • Integration into the global educational and / or professional space; • Possibility of natural self-regulating management of migration flows within the State; • Reducing contradiction between a significant number of graduates of educational institutions and staff shortage in the real economy.

As the main negative effects, the respondents consider expensiveness of the independent assessment of qualifications as well as unjustified expectations - both of employees (hopes of a career and increase of salary in the future) and the employer (in terms of employee's qualification confirmed the qualification through the independent assessment procedures). This risk appears to respondents so serious that some of them extend it to the whole system and warn of false hopes to improve the functioning of the

labor market as a whole.

The respondents see lesser risk (Table 5) in downgrading the experienced and qualified professionals who do not pass an independent assessment of qualifications as compared with their "assessed" colleagues. The risk for young professionals is considered as low - primarily because they are young and have opportunities to pass the independent assessment.

Table 5. Assessment of the impact of the independent assessment of qualifications on the labor market (as of the autumn 2014)

	on the satisfy demand of labor force	on the training of the workforce
positive	■	■
low positive	■	■
low negative	•	•
negative		
no impact	■	■
can't evaluate	■	■

The overall impact of the independent assessment of qualifications on the workforce training as well as on satisfaction

of the demand for it is estimated by respondents as a weakly positive.

8. Development and application of professional standards (PS)

Awareness of the respondents of the PS should be considered as good: 46.7% of

respondents use them, 20% are aware of them, 20% are familiar with them. Only 13.3% of the respondents do not know what the PS are about (Figure 12).

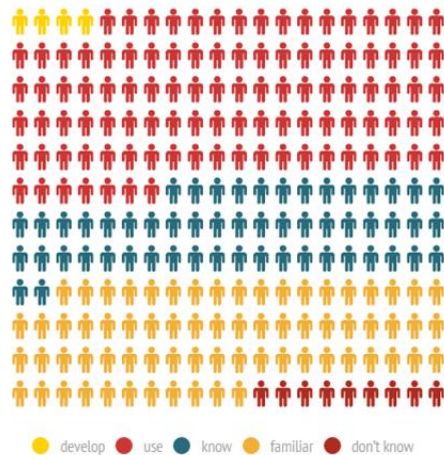


Figure 12. Awareness of respondents of the professional standards (PS)

Of those who are familiar with PS, 76% of the respondents know a small number of PS (1-2), but 24% of the respondents are aware of many PS.

However, respondents' rate of PS reliability is not very high: only 4 people (2.9%) gave PS "excellent". 37.5% of the respondents regarded them as "good", which the respondents "can rely on, but which need to be improved and / or updated and / or periodically reviewed." Opinion of the rest was not formed, or was unsatisfactory.

As an example of the unsatisfactory PS the following are specified:

- teacher professional standard (many times);
- architect professional standard;
- manager professional standard.

The following recommendations that exact attention are given:

- to review the main document on development of PS – a draft of the professional standard;

- to set communication - "in writing and available to all public - between the Federal state educational standards (Aniskina, 2011; Aniskina, 2013a; Aniskina 2013b; Aniskina 2014) of higher education and secondary vocational education, professional training, and professional standards";
- to unify PS for various specialties (in fact, this is one more a recommendation to change the draft of PS): "The very form of the standard is not very conducive to alignment of the independent assessment, as different standards have different levels of detailed elaboration. Some reflect the activities of one profession, specialty, and others - of economic activity " ;
- "Too lengthy procedures of registration, mandatory confirmation. And if an employee is

replaced by a new one, then everything starts over again".

9. Participation of professional communities and public associations in development of PS

The respondents evaluated involvement of professional communities and public associations in development of PS as the most desirable (Figure 13). There is no surprise.

The second and third places among desirable participants of the development are taken by vocational education institutions and employers of leading companies. And the margin between them and the professional communities is very small. The "Top three" can be considered together as an "obligatory triad" of developers of PS. The experts (represented as expert communities and individuals) are not very far behind them. Despite the low rating, participation of the State in the form of central authorities, is

also regarded as desirable. But the participation of local governments is recognized by the respondents as not mandatory - "wherever possible".

In fact the most active participant in the development of PS is the State represented by the central authorities, next are vocational education institutions and professional communities, and other potential participants remain, in substance, potential.

A comparison of desirable participation and the actual participation of various stakeholders in the development of PS reveals that some stakeholders need to enhance their involvement in the development of PS. Moreover, the professional societies and associations have to enhance their involvement *radically*, and the vocational training institutions and leading companies have to substantially enhance the involvement. On the background of enhancing their participation, the diminishing of involvement of public authorities, both central and local government, is desirable.

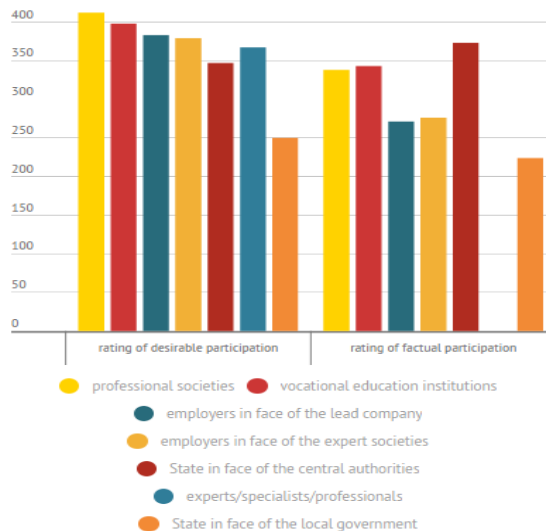


Figure 13. The difference between the actual and the desired level of participation in the development of PS. Than greater the difference, than stronger is a need to change the level of involvement - usually towards intensification.

Additionally, we have to admit that the participation of professional communities and public associations in the activity of the system of the independent assessment of qualifications of employees in general is insufficient, despite the fact that in 37% of cases their involvement is sufficient, in 54% of cases, their participation is not enough, and the system as a whole suffers from their

passivity. On this background, the attention is drawn to the fact that some members of professional communities and public associations participate actively as experts in the activity of the system of the independent assessment of qualifications of workers (Figure 14). This is another argument in favor of the hypothesis of distrust of professional associations.



Figure 14. Assessment of participation of individual members of professional communities in the activity of the system of the independent assessment of qualifications of workers, %.

10. The participation of the professional and public associations and employers in the independent assessment of qualifications

The respondents' answers regarding their intentions to use the independent assessment of qualifications are contradictory: the respondents declare their willingness to work

with it, but do not indicate the time. In addition, there is a confusion associated with the lack of information about the way how the activity is organized and conducted. As a result, only 7 of 35 respondents of the category "Professional associations and employers" are intended to adopt the independent assessment of qualifications, the rest either do not intend to do it at all, or their intentions are very vague (Figure 15):



Figure 15. Distribution of replies of the respondents' of the category "Professional associations and employers" depending upon the intention to use the independent assessment of qualifications. Font size refers to the number of respondents.

During the independent assessment of qualifications the employers declare the greatest interest in compliance of the applicant with requirements of PS, and only secondarily - the requirements of specific

jobs (Figure 16). We can assume that this is due to lack (or inability) of formulation of requirements to workplaces and the presence of the real assessment procedures in the areas where PS still have been developed.



Figure 16. Aspects of qualification assessment, the interests of employers.

The good news is that the accuracy of the independent assessment of qualifications of workers is rated as high: 77% of the respondents are inclined to trust it, and this percentage is constant and has remained almost unchanged during the survey.

On the other hand, despite this high rating of the accuracy of the independent assessment of qualifications, the respondents indicate incomprehensibility and / or inadequate reasonableness of requirements for the applicants: only 34% of experts believe the

requirements are clear, for the remaining 66% of the requirements they are more or less not clear. The reasons must be sought in adherence of the assessment to PS which are necessary to be updated with more active participation of professional communities and associations, and employers.

This opinion is confirmed by the assessment of the quality of requirements for the applicants which are recognized insufficiently relevant or reasonable in 76% of the responses (Figure 17):



Figure 17. Assessment of incorrect requirements to applicants for the independent assessment of qualifications.

11. Cost and efficiency of the system of independent assessment of qualifications by resources types

In the survey, the respondents have

evaluated cost and efficiency of the system of independent assessment of qualifications according to the types of resources. The comparison of results of this evaluation is presented in Table 6.

Conclusions are given in Table 7.

Table 6. Comparison of the results of evaluation of cost and efficiency of the use of various types of resources. The size of the symbol is proportional to the corresponding evaluation result.



Table 7. Conclusions resulted by comparing of cost and efficiency of functioning of the system of independent assessment of qualifications of workers.

	Cost	Effectiveness	The general conclusion
In terms of cost of the used time	High	Under average	It takes a lot of time. Optimization of processes for their acceleration and increasing productivity is required.
From the point of view of the human sources	High	Low	<i>Human resources are used inefficiently; there are too many personnel involved in the independent assessment of qualifications. Efficient use of the personnel is very low. This discrepancy is one of the most burning issues of the independent assessment of qualifications.</i>
By organizational criteria	Low	Above average	Procedures of the independent assessment of qualifications are organized effectively.
In terms of the financial sources used	Low	High	Little money is spent, and these costs are effective. Funds invested in the independent assessment of qualifications are compensated.

These results are made by comparing the results of cost and efficiency assessments.

12. Assessment of potentials of expanding the system of independent assessment of workers

The similar comparison was carried out for

evaluation of the current satisfaction of the participants with potentials of the system of independent assessment of qualifications. Its results allowed us making the conclusions shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Conclusions resulted by the comparison of satisfaction of the various participants with potentials of development of the independent assessment of qualifications of workers

	Satisfaction	Potentials	The general conclusion
In general		High	The system of independent assessment of the qualifications is perceived as worthy of dissemination
From the position of the unemployed or the person searching for new and higher- skilled job	Low	Negligible	The system is not designed for the unemployed and applicants for a new job
From the standpoint of public authorities	Under average	Above average	It is strongly recommended to optimize the system of independent assessment qualifications as worthy to be extended, but insufficiently effective at the present
From the standpoint of a qualified employee who intends to get a certificate as a proof of his qualification	High	High	The system must be expanded as it is effective and perspective for qualified specialists and employers.
From the standpoint of employers	Low	High	
From the standpoint of the local government	Low	Under average	The system of independent assessment of qualifications should be more perspective for the local authorities and employment services.
From the standpoint of the local authorities	High	Under average	
From the standpoint of employment services	High	Belowaverage Under average	

The conclusions are followed by quite specific recommendations:

- Intensified dissemination of information on the independent assessment of qualifications, its potentials and authorities, where it can be passed. This recommendation is in excellent alignment with the recommendations to the bodies for certification of qualifications to contribute to the promotion, including Internet resources;
- Optimization of the system of independent assessment of qualifications from the standpoint of both the organization of activity and the financial results (secondary

in relation to the promotion and improvement of business processes).

13. Expert opinion on the independence of the used models an independent qualification assessment and the dual circulation of documents

Operating models of the independent assessment of qualifications are recognized by the respondents as actually dependent on employers and educational institutions. Anyway, only 41% of the respondents have clearly proved the independence of models.

The rest is missing confidence in the independence of the qualification assessment (Table 8).

Table 8. Assessment of the independence of the used models of the independent assessment of qualifications of workers.

	from employers ↕	from education institutions ↕
independent	●	●
don't know	●	●
dependent	●	●

Well, at this stage of development of the independent assessment of qualifications, this "residual" dependence is rather natural. To get rid of it instantaneously will not work, though it would be desirable.

14. Conclusion

The monitoring of an independent assessment and certification of qualifications held by the Pastukhov Academy in the framework of the project of Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Science and Education (Rosobrnadzor) in the fall 2014 gave paradoxical results. On the one hand, the situation in the sphere of the independent assessment must be judged as barely

satisfactory: certification bodies are poorly represented online, their number is insufficient, information is not enough, and plans are incorrect, best practices are also not enough.

On the other hand, respondents welcomed development of the system of independent assessment. In the future, they expect to get significant benefits both for society as a whole and for individual professionals.

Therefore, the general conclusion is to develop persistently the system and look for new mechanisms and models. They certainly will appear; the aim of the professional community is to note, to join the work and to support!

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