



CompetentNL: a common skills language for the Netherlands



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Skills as the foundation for career choice and development

The Dutch labour market increasingly demands the development of new/ additional skills. Skills encompass all personal and professional abilities, competencies, and knowledge components that an individual currently possesses or can develop. Focusing on skills and targeted training makes finding a suitable place in the job market and lifelong development easier.

A common skills language:

- Helps employers to find the right professionals and to create a job vacancy, profile, or training program.
- Provides people in the work force and job seekers with insights into what they already know and are able to do.
- Offers the educational field a foundation for tailored and effective training programs and courses.

- Provides intermediaries the opportunity to connect supply and demand in a better and faster way.

What is CompetentNL?

CompetentNL will be a publicly accessible skills language for all stakeholders in the job market and educational field. This so called skills language will comprehensively describe skills, and link them to occupations and vocational qualifications. As the demand for certain skills changes, new occupations emerge, and others disappear, CompetentNL is continually enriched with new information. Over time, the skills of other education sectors will also be linked. Consequently CompetentNL will form the foundation for career choice and development based on skills.



Why is CompetentNL necessary?

The Dutch labour market currently lacks a common skills language that categorises all possible skills and describes them in context. Whereas currently various parties use their own data and terms. Which makes interoperability more difficult.

A common language is needed to describe occupations and education in the Netherlands in terms of skills. It is a national standard specifically designed for the Dutch labour market. This will make clear for each occupation and educational courses (initially focusing on vocational education) which skills are associated with them.

Who is CompetentNL relevant for?

CompetentNL is aimed at public and private stakeholders in the job market and educational field. They will use the data in CompetentNL to develop or expand their own skills applications.

Key users of CompetentNL include 'Leeroverzicht', UWV, SBB, CBS, TNO and municipalities, intermediaries, and labour market mediators. However, it also caters to companies developing applications such as a skills passports.

Accordingly CompetentNL brings a skills-oriented approach to the job market and facilitates matching of supply and demand.

How does CompetentNL work?

CompetentNL will encompass all possible skills, occupations, and vocational qualifications in the Netherlands. For enrichment and maintenance, CompetentNL is supported by hybrid AI: a combination of the expertise of labour market professionals, the vocational education qualification structure, and artificial intelligence (AI).

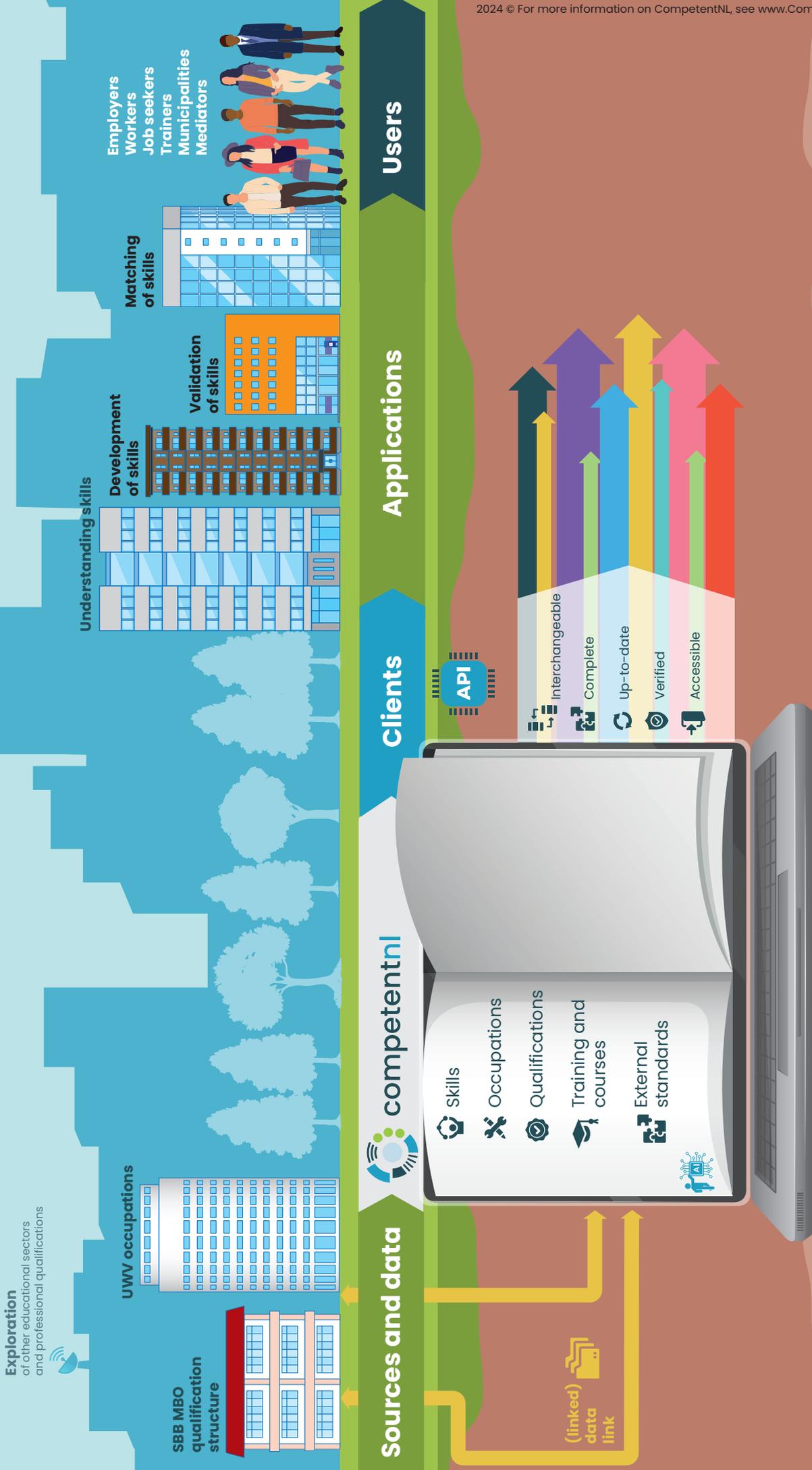
This 'hybrid AI' establishes connections between all skills and the labour market and educational field in the Netherlands. New skills and synonyms, along with descriptions of skills and their context, are presented to experts for assessment before being added. This ensures that CompetentNL remains up-to-date.

CompetentNL will be made accessible for use in skills applications through an API (Application Programming Interface) and Linked Open Data. An API is a modern standard for programs to communicate with each other. How CompetentNL will ultimately be utilised is at the discretion of the users of the CompetentNL data.



A common skills language

for education and the labour market



What makes CompetentNL special?

CompetentNL:

- Is an accurate and comprehensive description of Dutch occupations and vocational training qualifications on the level of skills.
- Forms the basis for a labour market focused on skills and lifelong learning.
- Serves as the national standard for exchanging complete and accurate information about skills between the labour market and the (vocational) educational field.
- Is a learning system that stays up-to-date and adapts to changes in the labour market and education programs.
- Can be directly applied in other systems without significant modifications through an API and Linked Open Data
- Connects the Netherlands with the labour markets of Europe and worldwide.



CompetentNL Timeline:

The development of CompetentNL for the Netherlands will be completed by 2026. The first version is expected to be available in 2025. Leading up to this, from September 2023 to mid-2024, several parts of CompetentNL will be tested in multiple pilot projects. The findings will be shared with a feedback group, inviting input from everyone. This collaborative effort aims to enhance and enrich CompetentNL in collaboration with all stakeholders.

There is no need to wait for CompetentNL. During the period leading up to its launch, everyone can make use of their own skills standard or another existing standard. CompetentNL will be linked to the European skills standard ESCO (European Skills Competences/Qualifications and Occupations), Competent VDAB, and the American standard O*NET. Once CompetentNL is launched, it can easily be integrated into existing systems through an API. Subsequently, users can align their skills applications with CompetentNL.

Phase 1:

July 2022 through
March 2023

**Market
consultation**

Phase 2:

April 2023 through
June 2024

**Proof of
Concepts and
Pilot projects**

Phase 3:

July 2024 through
March 2025

**Launch
minimum
viable product**

Phase 4:

April through
December 2025

**MVP
adjustments**

Who are developing CompetentNL?

Competentnl is a collaboration between UWV, SBB, TNO, and CBS. They collaborate on the development of CompetentNL under the auspices of the Ministries of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW) and Education, Culture, and Science (OCW).

UWV Contributes significant expertise in labour mediation and reintegration.
SBB Develops and manages the qualification structure for all vocational qualifications.
CBS Provides expertise in labour market statistics and technological knowledge in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI).
TNO Contributes knowledge in the field of labour market analysis, leveraging AI as part of their expertise.



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CompetentNL is being developed on behalf of the **Ministries of Education, Culture and Science** and **Social Affairs and Employment** by:

TNO innovation for life



beroepsonderwijs  bedrijfsleven

More information available at www.CompetentNL.nl

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