What is claimed is:

1. A key blank configured to fit into a keyway of a cylindrical key plug of an associated cylinder lock, comprising a substantially flat key blade, which:

- extends from a grip portion along a longitudinal axis,
- includes a connecting portion, a major longitudinal bitting portion to be provided with a row of coded cuts, and a free tip portion, and
- has a cross-sectional profile which, in said major longitudinal bitting portion,
    - is confined within a rectangle having a height, measured in a vertical direction, being at least 2.5 times larger than a width thereof, and
    - extends upwards in said vertical direction from a lower edge surface to an upper edge surface along a vertical mid-plane through said rectangle, the vertical mid-plane being located in the middle of said rectangle,
    - includes three parts:
      a lower part, including said lower edge surface and having a maximum width, measured between a first lower side surface and a second lower side surface, being the same as or slightly less than the width of the rectangle, the maximum width being 75% to 100% of the width of the rectangle,
      an upper part, provided with said upper edge surface and being narrower than the lower part, and
      an interconnecting part extending between the lower and upper parts along said vertical mid-plane,

wherein:

- said upper part has a lateral width being no more than 33% of said maximum width of said lower part, and extends obliquely upwards along a first direction pointing away from said second lower side surface of the lower part and being inclined at an angle α, in the interval 3° to 12°, relative to said vertical mid-plane of said rectangle, and
- the sideways or lateral location, within said rectangle, of said upper part of said key blade, including first and second upper side surfaces thereof, is such that an imaginary downward extension thereof, substantially in a second direction opposite to said first direction, will fall onto said lower edge surface of the substantially flat

key blade, at a same second side of said vertical mid-plane of said rectangle and inside said second lower side surface of the substantially flat key blade and

wherein:

- said lower part of the substantially flat key blade includes, at a vertical level adjacent to said interconnecting part, a laterally offset region located substantially at a same lateral side of said mid-plane as said second lower side surface, and
- said interconnecting part of the substantially flat key blade adjoins to said laterally offset region of said lower part and extends vertically upwards therefrom:
    - with a central side surface being located in the vicinity of said vertical mid-plane of said rectangle and being inclined in said first direction, away from said laterally offset region of said lower part,
    - and with an outside side surface adjoining, possibly via a transition, to said second lower side surface of the substantially flat key blade, and
- said upper part of the substantially flat key blade:
    - forms an upward extension of said interconnecting part,
    - forms, at said first upper side surface, a substantially straight extension of said central side surface of said interconnecting part, and
    - also forms, at said second upper side surface, an opposite, substantially straight surface which adjoins to said outside surface of said interconnecting part, possibly via a transition.

2. The key blank as defined in claim 1, wherein said upper part is substantially uniform along the vertical extension of said upper part, possibly with a tapering uppermost portion thereof.

3. The key blank as defined in claim 1 or 2, wherein at least a part of each said first and second upper side surface of said upper part of the substantially flat key blade is located on a first side and on a second side, respectively, of said vertical mid-plane.

4. The key blank as defined in any of the preceding claims, wherein a total vertical height of said interconnecting part and said upper part of the substantially flat key blade is in the interval 50% to 85% of a total vertical height of the substantially flat key blade.

5. The key blank as defined in any of the preceding claims, wherein said central side surface of said interconnecting part crosses said vertical mid-plane.

6. The key blank as defined in any of the preceding claims, wherein the lower part of the substantially flat key blade has an upper first transverse surface located substantially on the same lateral side of the vertical mid-plane as the first lower side surface thereof, said first transverse surface forming a corner with an adjoining central side surface of said interconnecting part, the corner being located in the vicinity of the vertical mid-plane, and the first transverse surface forming at least a part of a first step-like transition between the lower part and the interconnecting part of the substantially flat key blade.

7. The key blank as defined in claim 6, wherein said first transverse surface extends laterally all the way from said first lower side surface of said lower part to said corner, so as to form said first step-like transition.

8. The key blank as defined in claim 6, wherein said first step-like transition also comprises an upward ridge extending upwards in a direction substantially in parallel to said interconnecting part said upward ridge having an outside surface portion adjoining to said first lower side surface of the lower portion, a top surface portion, and an inside surface portion adjoining to said first transverse surface, said first transverse surface thus forming only a part of said first step-like transition, and there being formed an undercut groove being defined by said inside surface portion of said ridge, said first transverse surface with said corner, and said central side surface of said interconnecting part.

9. The key blank as defined in claim 7 or 8, wherein said second upper side surface of the upper part adjoins as a substantially straight extension to the second lower side surface of the lower part, or there is also a second step-like transition on said other side of the vertical mid-plane, where said second upper side surface of the upper part adjoins to said outside surface of the interconnecting part.

10. The key blank as defined in any of the preceding claims, wherein the key blank, on one or both lateral sides of the substantially flat key blade, is provided with at least one longitudinal groove or at least one profile rib serving to provide:

- a specific cross-sectional profile and/or

- a stopping arrangement which enables releasing the associated cylinder lock with a correctly configured substantially flat key blade, so that the latter will be stopped when it has reached a certain longitudinal position upon being inserted into the key plug of an associated cylinder lock.

11. The key blank as defined in claim 10, including said stopping arrangement being provided with a first selectable abutment surface facing in a forward direction along said longitudinal axis, wherein:

- said first abutment surface on the substantially flat key blade is formed as a forward end surface of a longitudinal rib portion:
  - being located at a lateral side of the upper part of the substantially flat key blade at a vertical level lying within a vertical range of the bitting portion of the substantially flat key blade,
  - extending in parallel to the longitudinal axis of the substantially flat key blade,
  - being confined longitudinally to the connecting portion of the substantially flat key blade,
  - being confined also within the contour of or laterally slightly outside said rectangle, with a possible lateral extension exceeding the width of the rectangle by at most 25%, and
  - having a selectable length, measured from said grip portion, being any desired fraction of the length of the connecting portion,
- whereby the location of said forward end surface of the rib portion is selectable along the whole length of the connecting portion.

12. A coded key formed from the key blank as defined in any of the preceding claims, provided with at least one key code pattern in said substantially flat key blade, wherein said at least one key code pattern includes a central key code pattern with a longitudinal row of coded cuts in said upper inclined part of the substantially flat key blade and possibly also at least one side code pattern in said lower part of the key blade.

13. The coded key as defined in claim 12, wherein said at least one side code pattern in said lower part of the key blade is located inside an upright security ridge of the substantially flat key blade so as to be at least partly concealed when being observed sideways from a lateral side of the substantially flat key blade.

14. The coded key as defined in claim 13, wherein said at least one side code pattern is located at a bottom surface of an undercut groove pocket which is situated at an inside of said upright security ridge.

15. The coded key as defined in claim 14, wherein there is also a side code pattern in an upper portion of said upright security ridge of the substantially flat key blade, so that there are two neighbouring side code patterns side by side, including an inner wave-like side code pattern being partially concealed by a remaining portion of said security ridge.

16. A cylinder lock and key combination, formed from the coded key as defined in any of claims 12 to 15 and said associated cylinder lock, possibly forming part of a cylinder lock and key system with several coded keys and corresponding cylinder locks.

17. The cylinder lock and key combination as defined in claim 16, including a longitudinal rib portion forming a first abutment surface on the substantially flat key blade, wherein: the key plug of the associated cylinder lock is provided with a second abutment surface:

- either in a longitudinal cavity formed on one or both lateral sides of the keyway in said key plug, or
- by a front end surface located at a radially widened front end portion of the key plug,

a release of the cylinder lock being enabled when said first and second abutment surfaces make contact with each other.

18. The cylinder lock and key combination as defined in claim 17, wherein each said longitudinal rib portion, by way of its lateral integration in one piece with said upper part of the substantially flat key blade in said connecting portion, forms a reinforcement of the coded key in said connecting portion thereof.