



**OVERVIEW** OF  
NATIONAL  
QUALIFICATIONS  
FRAMEWORK

DEVELOPMENTS  
IN **EUROPE** 2017

# OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE

Country	Scope of the framework	Number of levels	Level descriptors	Stage of development	NQF linked to EQF
<b>Albania</b>	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>theoretical and factual knowledge</li> <li>cognitive and practical skills</li> <li>competence (autonomy and responsibility)</li> </ul>	Formally adopted, under revision	
<b>Austria</b>	Designed as comprehensive NQF; currently, includes qualifications awarded in higher education and VET qualifications at levels 4, 5 and 6 from formal education.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competence</li> </ul>	Operational	2012
<b>Belgium-fl</b>	Comprehensive NQF, including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training and from the professional qualifications system.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge/skills</li> <li>context/autonomy/responsibility</li> </ul>	Operational	2011, 2014 update
<b>Belgium-fr</b>	Designed as comprehensive framework; will include all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training and from the professional qualifications system.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge/skills</li> <li>context/autonomy/responsibility</li> </ul>	Formally adopted	2013
<b>Belgium-de</b>	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>occupational competence (knowledge and skills)</li> <li>personal competence (social competence and autonomy)</li> </ul>	(Early) Operational	
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	Designed as comprehensive NQF for lifelong learning including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competence</li> </ul>	Formally adopted	
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Eight and a preparatory level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competences (personal and professional)</li> </ul>	Formally adopted	2013
<b>Croatia</b>	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training. It is a qualification and credit framework.	Eight with sublevels at levels 4 and 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>autonomy and responsibility</li> </ul>	(Early) operational stage	2012
<b>Cyprus</b>	Comprehensive NQF, including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training and from the system of vocational qualifications.	Eight with sublevels at levels 5 and 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competence</li> </ul>	(Early) operational stage	2017
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Partial national framework for vocational qualifications (the national register of vocational qualifications (NSK) and a draft of the higher education framework.	Eight in NSK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>competences (including knowledge and skills)</li> </ul>	The national register of vocational qualifications (NSK) is operational	2011
<b>Denmark</b>	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competence</li> </ul>	Operational	2011
<b>Estonia</b>	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training and from the system of occupational qualifications.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>scope of responsibility and autonomy</li> </ul>	Operational	2011, 2016 update
<b>Finland</b>	Comprehensive framework including all state recognised qualifications.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>integrated level descriptors include knowledge, skills and key competences</li> </ul>	Operational	2017
<b>former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</b>	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training and vocational qualifications.	Eight with several sublevels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competence</li> </ul>	(Early) operational	2016
<b>France</b>	NQF covers all levels and types of vocationally or professionally oriented qualification; general education qualifications are not included.	Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated learning outcomes including knowledge, skills, attitudes, autonomy and responsibility</li> </ul>	Operational	2010

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Germany	Comprehensive NQF for lifelong learning; includes qualifications from general education, VET, higher education and qualifications from regulated further training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>professional competence (knowledge and skills)</li> <li>personal competence (social competence and autonomy)</li> </ul>	Operational	2012
Greece	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competence</li> </ul>	(Early) operational stage	2015
Hungary	Comprehensive NQF for lifelong learning encompasses all state-recognised national qualifications acquired in general education, HE and those vocational qualifications registered in the national vocational qualifications register.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>attitudes</li> <li>autonomy and responsibility</li> </ul>	(Early) operational stage	2015
Iceland	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Seven with sublevels at levels 5 and 6; no descriptor or qualification linked to EQF level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>integrated level descriptors include knowledge, skills and competence</li> </ul>	(Early) operational	2013
Ireland	Comprehensive NQF including all types and levels of qualification from formal education and training; is open to those awarded by professional and international organisations.	10 and four award types: major, minor, special-purpose and supplemental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competence</li> </ul>	Operational	2009
Italy	Comprehensive framework will include all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training and regional qualifications.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>autonomy and responsibility</li> </ul>	Formally adopted	2013 major national qualifications from formal education and training linked directly to EQF
Kosovo	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training and non-formal and informal learning.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>wider competences</li> </ul>	(Early) operational stage	2016
Latvia	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competence</li> </ul>	Operational	2011
Lithuania	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>characteristics of activities (complexity, autonomy, changeability)</li> <li>types of competences (functional, cognitive and general)</li> </ul>	Operational	2011
Liechtenstein	Designed as comprehensive NQF for lifelong learning, currently includes qualifications from VET and higher education; general education qualifications are not yet included.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competences</li> </ul>	Operational	2016
Luxembourg	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>aptitudes</li> <li>attitudes</li> </ul>	Operational	2012
Malta	Comprehensive NQF, including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competences</li> </ul>	Operational	2009, 2012 and 2016 update
Montenegro	Comprehensive NQF, including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training and from the system of national vocational qualifications (NVQs).	Eight with sublevels at levels 1, 4 and 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>competence</li> </ul>	(Early) operational stage	2014
Netherlands	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training; opens up towards qualifications offered outside formal education system.	Eight levels, including a sublevel at level 4 (4+), and an entry level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>context,</li> <li>knowledge</li> <li>skills</li> <li>responsibility and independence</li> </ul>	Operational	2011

Country	Scope of the framework	Number of levels	Level descriptors	Stage of development	NQF linked to EQF
Norway	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Seven with sublevels at levels 5 and 6; no descriptor or qualification linked to EQF level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge</li> <li>• skills</li> <li>• general competence</li> </ul>	Operational	2014
Poland	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training. It is open to qualifications from the private and non-formal sectors.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge</li> <li>• skills</li> <li>• social competence</li> </ul>	(Early) operational	2013
Portugal	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training and from the national system for the recognition, validation and certification of competences.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge</li> <li>• skills</li> <li>• attitudes</li> </ul>	Operational	2011
Romania	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge</li> <li>• skills</li> <li>• competences</li> </ul>	(Early) operational stage	
Serbia	Comprehensive NQF under construction, aiming to bring together frameworks for higher education and VET.	Eight with sublevels at levels 6, 7 and 8 proposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge</li> <li>• skills</li> <li>• attitude and ability</li> </ul>	Design/development stage	
Slovakia	Comprehensive NQF, including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training. It includes also sub-framework of occupational qualifications.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge</li> <li>• skills</li> <li>• competences</li> </ul>	(Early) operational	2017
Slovenia	Comprehensive NQF, including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training, from the system of national vocational qualifications and supplementary qualifications.	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge</li> <li>• skills</li> <li>• competences</li> </ul>	Operational	2013
Spain	Designed as comprehensive NQF for lifelong learning; will include all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training. NQF for higher education in place.	Eight proposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge</li> <li>• skills and abilities</li> <li>• competence</li> </ul>	Advanced development stage	
Sweden	Comprehensive NQF, including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training; opens up towards qualifications awarded outside the formal education system.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge</li> <li>• skills</li> <li>• competence</li> </ul>	Operational	2016
Switzerland	NQF for vocational and professional qualifications (NQF-VPQ) and NQF for higher education.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge</li> <li>• skills</li> <li>• competences (professional and personal)</li> </ul>	Operational	2015
Turkey	Comprehensive NQF, including all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training and from national vocational qualification system.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge</li> <li>• skills</li> <li>• competence</li> </ul>	(Early) operational	2017
UK – England and Northern Ireland	Two frameworks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regulated qualifications framework (RQF) covers all regulated academic and vocational qualifications;</li> <li>• a higher education framework (FHEQ).</li> </ul>	Eight plus entry levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge and understanding</li> <li>• skills</li> </ul>	Operational	2010 Joined UK referencing report
UK – Scotland	Comprehensive credit and qualifications framework (SCQF) including all level and types of qualification.	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge and understanding</li> <li>• practice: applied knowledge, skills and understanding</li> <li>• generic cognitive skills communication numeracy and ICT skills</li> <li>• autonomy, accountability and working with others</li> </ul>	Operational	2010 Joined UK referencing report
UK – Wales	Comprehensive credit and qualifications framework of Wales (CQFW) including all level and types of qualification. It consists of three pillars: regulated qualifications, HE qualifications and quality-assured lifelong learning.	Eight plus entry levels	Level descriptors of the quality-assured lifelong learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge and understanding</li> <li>• application and action</li> <li>• autonomy and accountability</li> </ul>	Operational	2010 Joined UK referencing report



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**FURTHER INFORMATION**

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