

EQF referencing process and reports – some results from the EQF-Ref project

Peer-learning seminar
Sofia, BG
31 March 2011

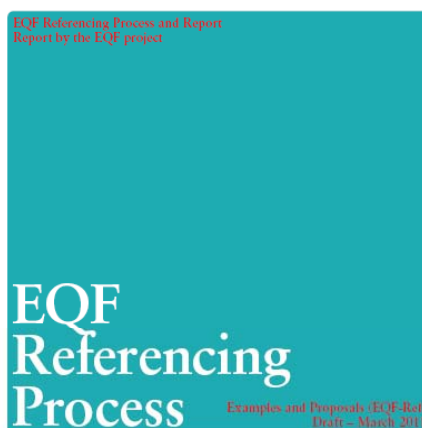


Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme



EQF-Ref publication

Draft report –
March 2011



bmauk

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Content of the **EQF-Ref** publication

Part I

Introduction, background, partnership

Part II

EQF referencing process (responsibilities, stakeholder involvement, timeframe, international experts and international cooperation, role of the EQF Advisory Group, update of EQF referencing reports)

Part III

Structure and content of the referencing report

Criterion 2 (linking national qualifications levels to the EQF levels)

Criterion 4 (transparent criteria and procedures for classifying qualifications in an NQF)



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EQF referencing process – responsibility

Responsible body

It needs to be clear who is in charge of the process and who actually makes the final decisions.

Nature of the referencing process

In some countries highly political, in other countries very technical.

Reflected in the decision on who is the responsible body in this context and in the organisation of the whole process.

Ownership

Importance of developing ownership on a national level, not just for the NQF, but also for the result of the EQF referencing process (i.e. the EQF referencing report).



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EQF referencing process – responsibility:

Example DE

Key actors: Ministry of Education and Research and the *Kultusministerkonferenz*

Federal/*Länder* Co-ordination Group: formed by representatives from these authorities – sets the agenda for:

National Working Group German Qualifications Framework:

- __the Federal and *Länder* authorities (4+4),
- __the social partners (employers 4 + unions 4),
- __HE: Science Council, Universities Rectors Conference, Accreditation Council, Students Organisation,
- __free, training providers organisations (continuing education, private schools, NGOs),
- __Federal Employment Agency,
- __two professors (for VET and HE) and an expert from the Federal Institute for Vocational Training.



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EQF referencing process - organisation

Closely linked to the question on who is responsible

- __in some cases, the report is solely written by representatives of national bodies (for example, in the Czech Republic or in Finland)
- __in other cases, external experts are directly involved (for example, in Austria or in the Netherlands)



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EQF referencing process – organisation:

Example NL

- __Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW):
organising the process and writing the report
- __Expert group of stakeholders – consulting
- __Independent committee (*Committee Leijnse*): four
professors in the area of lifelong learning – consulting and
advising:
 - 1) A proposal for an NLQF;
 - 2) A proposal for the way to link the NLQF to the EQF;
 - 3) A proposal for the way the NCP can be designed, what
its tasks would be, and how the quality of the NLQF
will be guaranteed.



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EQF referencing process – international experts (Criterion 7)

Profile of experts

- __from countries with similar or different structures
- __existing or future cooperation
- __expertise in all areas of the qualifications system
- __institutional background
- __experience in working on European level, well known, good
reputation, represent certain groups
- __language skills
- __attitude: open-minded, critical friend

When and how to involve them

- __Early or later stage
- __Written statements, meetings
- Depends on expectations!



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EQF referencing process – international cooperation

Peer-learning meetings or seminars

exchanging information on intended approaches or experiences
discussing open questions, critical points as well as good practices

EQF pilot projects

e.g. EQF-Ref, TransEQFrame, ZOOM

Informal context

e.g. exchange of experience and discussion of crucial issues in the context of meetings not directly related to the referencing process or during breaks of meetings



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EQF referencing process – international cooperation: **Example FI**

EQF pilot projects

FNBE (NCP) has been involved in NQF/EQF projects:
EQF-Ref, TransEQFrame, partnership project

Nordic Countries

cooperation among NCPs in the Nordic countries
meetings in each Nordic country covering topics related to the EQF project on post-secondary qualifications in Nordic countries

Other activities

Seminars and workshops
International experts in other countries' referencing processes



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EQF referencing process – Updating EQF referencing reports

Minor changes – no need for updating the referencing report
Change of name of one particular qualification (without changing the content or the classification of this qualification)

Major changes – require update
number of levels of the NQF
placement of qualifications
inclusion of new (types of) qualifications or additional segments of the qualifications system



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EQF referencing process – Updating EQF referencing reports: **Example AT**

General aim of NQF

Comprising all qualifications – irrespective of the focus (general education qualifications and VET qualifications) and the learning context (for example, formal, non-formal or informal learning)

However...

different working structures and time frame for 'formal qualification area' (comprising qualifications based on legal regulations, for example, laws, directives, etc.) and the 'non-formal qualification area'

EQF referencing report

will present the plans for the 'non-formal area' (should be added at a later stage, based on same principles and criteria), but will focus on the 'formal qualification area'.



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Referencing Report – Structure

- 1. Executive summary:** results of referencing
- 2. Description of the national qualifications system/NQF:**
Short presentation of the national qualifications system (including pathways, access to programmes, etc.) and the NQF (design features, aims and functions, stage of the development process) – the description should focus on information relevant for understanding the answers to the 10 criteria and procedures
- 3. Background information:** process for preparing the report (referencing process)
- 4. Main part of the report: addressing the “10 criteria”**
- 5. Further information:** E.g. plans, intentions and next steps regarding the NQF development and implementation, challenges expected or already met in this process, the expected impact of the EQF implementation
- 6. Annex:** e.g. examples of qualifications, statements



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Criterion 2

There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications framework or system and the level descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework.



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Criterion 2 – Best-fit principle

Number of levels in the NQF equals the number of levels in the EQF

NQF levels will be directly linked to the EQF levels

Fits current implicit hierarchies or reflects reform plans?

Technical approach

matching of the level descriptors - textual/technical analysis when NQF descriptors are based on EQF descriptors?

Social approach

e.g. consultation processes



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Criterion 2: Example CZ

No comprehensive NQF – referencing of the qualifications system to the EQF

Formal education

Levels of education from primary to higher education are classified via KKO V (Classification of Educational Programme Types) – each level is defined by various curricular and legislative documents – referencing is based on analysis of these documents and comparison with the EQF descriptors

Non-formal and informal learning

qualifications register (NSK) – eight levels with descriptors comparable to the eight EQF level descriptors



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Criterion 2: Example FI

8 levels &
own descriptors

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European Qualifications Framework(EQF)	Finnish National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
Level descriptors	Level descriptors
<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts</u>, in a field of work or study <p>Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a range of <u>cognitive and practical skills</u> required to <u>accomplish tasks and solve problems</u> by selecting and applying <u>basic methods, tools, materials and information</u> <p>Competence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>takes responsibility</u> for completion of tasks in work or study • <u>adapts own behaviour to circumstances</u> in solving problems 	<p>Understands <u>facts, principles, processes and general concepts</u> in his/her field</p> <p>and has <u>certain cognitive and practical skills</u>, which are needed for <u>performing the duties</u> and solving problems. Can choose and apply <u>basic methods, tools, materials and information</u>.</p> <p><u>Takes responsibility</u> for completing his/her duties and works safely within the work community. <u>Tailors his/her actions to the circumstances</u> and operating environment when solving problems. Can work in an entrepreneurial manner in someone else's service. Evaluates his/her own competence and actions pertaining to work or studies. Is capable of continuous learning. Knows how to communicate diversely and interactively in various situations and can produce varied texts in his/her native language. Can act in a familiar studying environment and work community. Is able to communicate and interact at an international level in one official language and at least one foreign language. Can act in a way that is consistent with sustainable development.</p>

Criterion 4

The procedures for inclusion of qualifications in the national qualifications framework or system for describing the place of qualifications in the national qualification system are transparent.



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Criterion 4 – methodology and evidence

Technical approach

Comparison of qualifications descriptors with level descriptors

But: not all qualifications are described in terms of learning outcomes

And: how do descriptions actually reflect reality?

Social approach

e.g. empirical research, analyses of available data, consulting stakeholders

‘valid evidence’ ?

input criteria (such as the time needed for acquiring a qualification)

‘value’ of a qualification on the labour market

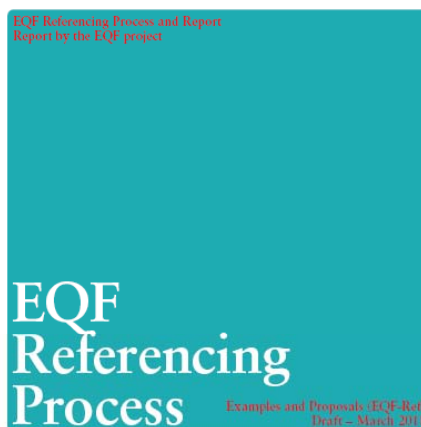
The kind of evidence used in the classification process reflects implicit or explicit values connected with the classification of qualifications / the NQF.



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Feedback to the EQF-Ref report

Please fill in the questionnaire!



bmwle

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Thank you very much for your attention!

Further information:

www.EQF-Ref.eu

Contact:

Karin Luomi-Messerer
luomi-messerer@3s.co.at
3s – Wiedner Hauptstraße 18
1040 Vienna
Austria



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