

## European qualifications framework (EQF)

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The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is a common European reference framework whose purpose is to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different countries and systems. Covering qualifications at all levels and in all sub-systems of education and training, the EQF provides a comprehensive overview over qualifications in the 39 European countries

currently involved in its implementation. In close cooperation with the European Commission, Cedefop provides analytical and coordination support for the implementation of the EQF and carries out a number of comparative studies and analysis on issues related to the implementation of the framework at EU, national and sectoral level.

### European Qualifications Framework - a bridge between national qualifications systems

The core of the EQF is its [eight reference levels](#) defined in terms of [learning outcomes](#), i.e. knowledge, skills and autonomy-responsibility. Learning outcomes express what individuals know, understand and are able to do at the end of a learning process. Countries develop [national qualifications frameworks](#) (NQFs) to implement the EQF.

### Why the EQF is important

The main purpose of the EQF is to make qualifications more readable and understandable across countries and systems. This is important to support cross-border mobility of learners and workers and lifelong learning across Europe. In the '[Find and Compare Qualifications Frameworks](#)' webpage it is possible to see how national qualifications levels of countries that have already finalised their referencing process have been linked to the EQF.

### How Cedefop supports EQF implementation

Cedefop has played a key role in all EQF activities since initial work started in 2004. It has carried out a number of comparative studies and analysis on issues related to the implementation of the framework at EU, national and sectoral level. It cooperates closely with the European Commission and the Member States and provides technical and analytical support to the EQF Advisory Group - the main body at European level, responsible for providing coherence and transparency of the process of relating national qualifications systems to the EQF.

### The legal basis of the EQF

The implementation of the EQF was based on [the Recommendation on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning](#), adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 23 April 2008.



### [10 years of the European Qualifications Framework](#)



### [Analysis and overview](#)

### [of NQF level descriptors in European countries 2018](#)



### [Overview of NQF](#)

### [developments in Europe 2017](#)

Reflecting the success in implementing the 2008 recommendation, **a revised and strengthened Recommendation on the EQF was adopted on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017 by the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council.** The purpose of this revised recommendation is to ensure the continuity as well as a further deepening of the EQF.

## EQF implementation

The EQF has been the catalyst for development of comprehensive **national qualification frameworks based on learning outcomes.** All countries committed to the EQF consider such national frameworks necessary to make their qualifications comparable across sectors and countries.

By April 2018, **35 countries** had formally linked ('referenced') their national qualifications frameworks to the EQF: Austria, Belgium (Flanders and Wallonia), Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom (England, Scotland and Wales). The remaining countries are expected to follow in 2018, which means that the first stage of EQF referencing is nearly finished.

The EQF has been a source of inspiration for the development of national and regional qualifications frameworks throughout the world. An increasing number of countries and regions are seeking closer links between their qualifications framework and the EQF.

Pilots comparing third country qualifications frameworks with the EQF have been carried out with the **Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)**, the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) and the **Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF).**

**More information:** [EQF documentation](#)

## Downloads

 **EQF celebrates 10th anniversary - Slave Povel Grm (Cedefop Skillset and Match May 2018)**

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## Links



[Infograph - 10 years of the European Qualifications Framework \(EQF\)](#)



[Brochure - The European Qualifications Framework: supporting learning, work and cross-border mobility - 10th year anniversary.](#)



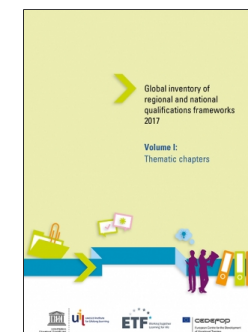
**National**

[qualifications framework developments in Europe 2017](#)



**Briefing note -**

[Qualifications frameworks in Europe 2017 developments](#)



**Global inventory of**

[regional and national qualifications 2017 vol. 1 and vol. 2](#)



[Find and compare Qualifications Frameworks](#)



[Levels in the European Qualifications Framework \(EQF\)](#)



[Reports on the referencing of national qualifications frameworks to the EQF](#)



[Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualification](#)



[Video European Qualifications Framework - lifelong learning](#)



[Video European Qualifications Framework – working and learning abroad](#)



[Video European Qualifications Framework – entry into the labour market](#)



[NQF developments in](#)

[European countries: Analysis and overview 2015-16](#)

[European Inventory NQFs 2016](#)

## Related project

[National qualifications framework \(EQF\)](#)

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## Project details

**Related Country:**



[Europe](#)

**Related Theme:**

[Understanding qualifications](#)

**Tags:**

Competence

EQE

Qualification

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