Multilingual display

Lifelong learning – European qualifications

SUMMARY OF:

Recommendation – European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning

WHAT IS THE AIM OF THE RECOMMENDATION?

- In **revising** the common reference framework for national qualifications systems – the **European Qualifications Framework (EQF)** for lifelong learning[1], the recommendation aims to improve the transparency, comparability and portability of people's qualifications in Europe.
- The wider aim is to contribute to modernising education and training systems and to increase the employability, mobility and social integration of workers and learners.

KEY POINTS

The revision of the EQF makes sure that all types and levels of qualifications are covered, including qualifications from higher education, vocational education[2] and training and general education, as well as qualifications awarded by the private sector and international sector organisations.

Recommendations to the EU countries:

- to **use the EQF as reference for their national qualifications** – namely by referring to the levels of the EQF set out in Annex II, the criteria set out in Annex III and the common principles for quality assurance set out in Annex IV – and for comparison with national qualifications of other EU countries;

- where appropriate, to **promote links between credit systems**[3] **and national qualifications frameworks or systems** taking into account the common principles on credit systems set out in Annex V;
- to **review and update, when relevant, the referencing of their national qualifications** according to the revised EQF;
- to ensure **transparency of the referencing process** and adequate public information about it, using the data fields in accordance with Annex VI;
- to encourage the **use of the EQF by all interested parties** (social partners, public employment services, education providers, quality assurance bodies, public authorities);
- to ensure the continuation and coordination of tasks implemented by **EQF National Coordination Points**[4] (EQF NCP).

Recommendations to the European Commission:

- to coordinate with EU countries and other organisations involved in the EQF Advisory Group[5] in order to:
  - support **consistent implementation of the EQF across the EU** namely through the development of common methodologies for the levelling of qualifications and through the sharing of information and best practice between EU countries;
  - develop **guidance to communicate the EQF**; and
  - explore possible criteria and procedures for the **comparison of non-EU countries' national and regional qualifications** systems with the EQF;
- to ensure **proper EU funding** for the implementation of the recommendation and the **effective governance** of the EQF with the EQF Advisory Group;
- in cooperation with the EU countries and interested parties, to **assess and evaluate** action taken in response to this recommendation and **report to the Council by 2022**. It would be preferable to also include — if necessary — a review and revision of this recommendation.

BACKGROUND

- The EQF was originally created by the 2008 Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council, as a common reference framework of 8 European

generic levels of learning which serves as ‘translation grid’ between national qualifications systems.

- For more information, see:
  - Learning opportunities and qualifications in Europe(*European Commission*).

KEY TERMS

1. **Lifelong learning:** all purposeful learning activity, undertaken at any stage of a person’s life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence.
2. **Vocational education:** education that prepares people to work in determined professions or sectors. It can take place at different levels, from secondary education up to higher education.
3. **Credit systems:** a transparency tool for facilitating the recognition of credit(s) i.e. that a part of a qualification consisting of a coherent set of learning outcomes has been assessed and validated by a competent authority, according to an agreed standard.
4. **EQF National Coordination Points:** their main tasks are to support national authorities in referencing national qualifications frameworks or systems to the EQF and to bring the EQF closer to individuals and organisations.
5. **EQF Advisory Group:** composed of representatives of the EU countries and other participating countries, trade unions, employers’ groupings and other parties, as appropriate; its role is to ensure overall coherence and promote transparency and trust in the process of referencing national qualifications frameworks or systems to the EQF.

MAIN DOCUMENT

Council Recommendation of 22 May 2017 on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning and repealing the recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (OJ C 189, 15.6.2017, pp. 15-28)

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (OJ C 111, 6.5.2008, pp. 1-7)

last update 28.11.2017

Top