



Office for Dual Education and  
National Qualifications Framework

Qualifications Agency

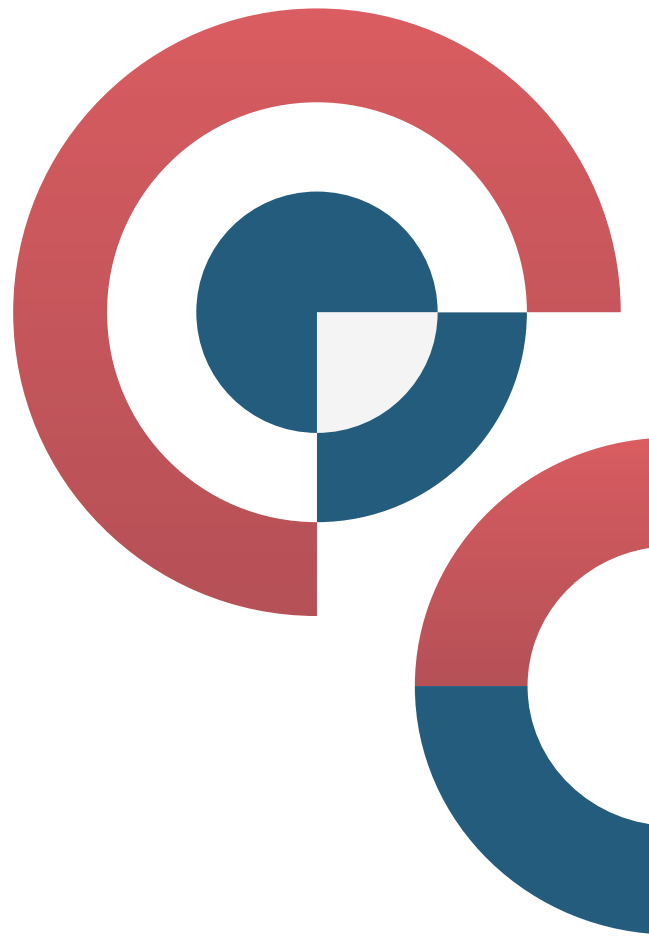
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**NATIONAL  
QUALIFICATIONS  
FRAMEWORK**

# **REFERENCING THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA TO THE EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK**





**Publisher**

Office for Dual Education and National Qualifications Framework

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## Introduction

the referencing of the National Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications Framework is an official process that the Republic of Serbia has undertaken as part of its preparations for accession to the European Union. This process aims to establish a correlation between the levels of national qualifications in Serbia and the corresponding levels within the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Throughout this procedure, state bodies, institutions, and organizations responsible for Serbia's qualifications system collaborate with key stakeholders involved in qualifications development and the implementation of quality assurance mechanisms. Together, they define the relationship between Serbia's national qualifications system and the eight levels of the European Qualifications Framework.

In February 2020, at the 52nd meeting of the EQF Advisory Group, the Report on the referencing of the National Qualifications Framework of the Republic of Serbia (NQFS) with the European Qualifications Framework was adopted. This report also encompassed a self-assessment of the NQF in the realm of higher education concerning the Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA). It was compiled according to criteria and procedures set by the EQF Advisory Group and was the result of extensive expert consultations involving national and EU partners.

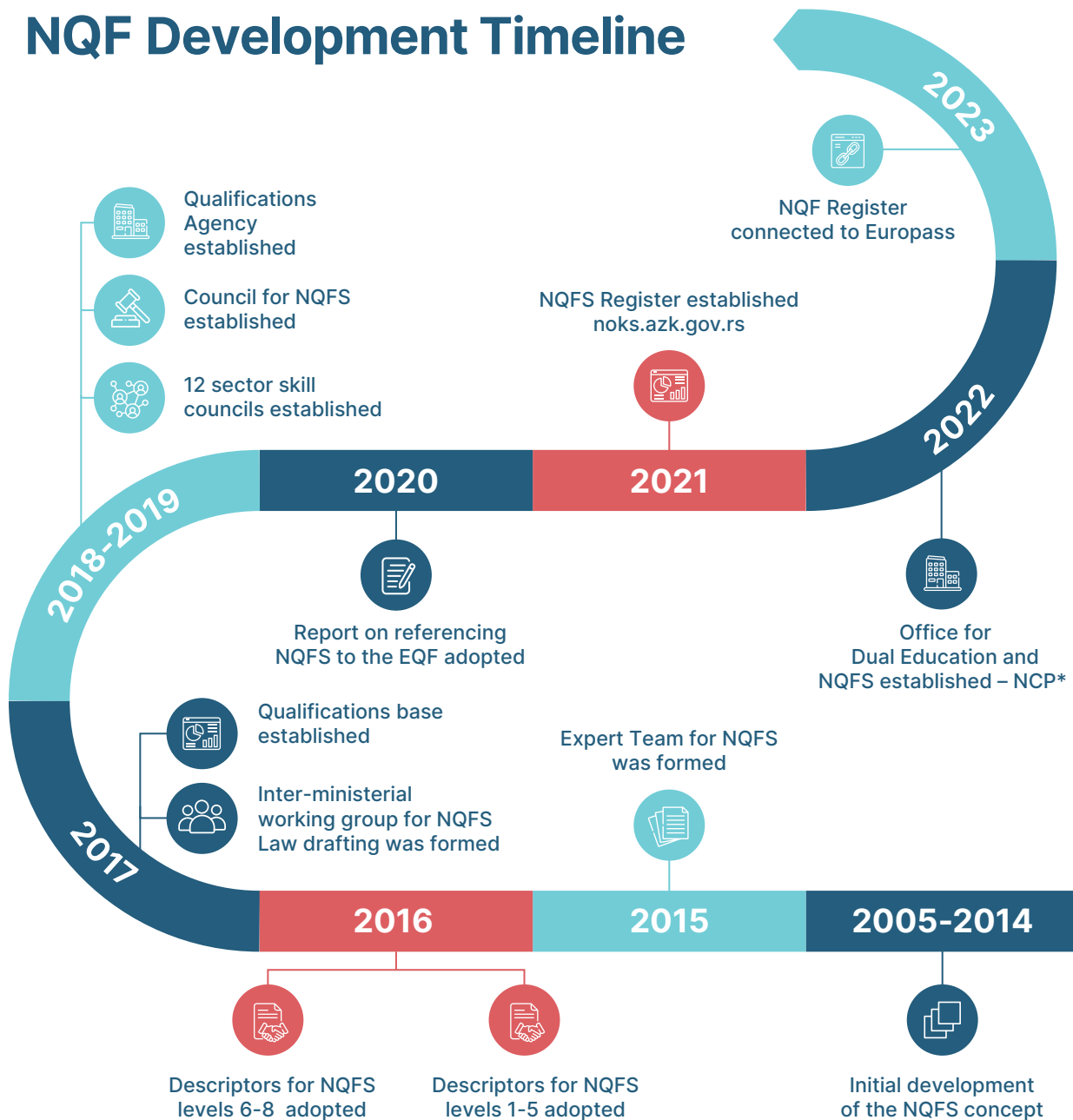
**With the adoption of the Report on the referencing of the NQF to the EQF, the qualifications framework of the Republic of Serbia is now aligned with the European Qualifications Framework. This alignment signifies the establishment of a transparent and distinct connection between the eight levels of qualifications in the Republic of Serbia and the eight levels of qualifications outlined in the European Qualifications Framework.**

The European Qualifications Framework was created for several reasons. Its primary aim is to facilitate citizen learning and career development. Moreover, the EQF supports various stakeholders in education, training, and employment by enhancing policies and practices. As a comprehensive reference framework, the EQF enables employers to better assess foreign qualifications, comprehend candidates' qualification levels,

compare these qualifications with national standards, and assess their relevance. Through the EQF, employers can perceive Europe as a unified area for qualifications. This approach minimizes obstacles to labour mobility, promotes optimal utilization of existing knowledge, skills, and competences, and enhances the alignment between labour market demand and supply. For students and individuals seeking to learn, the EQF offers easily accessible information about qualifications and their attainment.

This publication provides a concise overview of the journey so far, starting from the establishment of the NQFS to its alignment with EQF, and outlines the future steps for further development.

# NQF Development Timeline



## National Coordination Point (NCP)

\*The National Coordination Point (NCP) was established to oversee the implementation of the process of referencing NQFS to the EQF and EHEA. The responsibilities of the NCP include:

- Preparation of a report for the referencing of the NQFS to the EQF
- Submission of the report to the EQF Advisory Group
- Maintaining communication with the EQF Advisory Group.

The NCP operates within the Office for Dual Education and the National Qualifications Framework.







# National Qualifications Framework of the Republic of Serbia

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01

# National Qualifications Framework

NQFS is an instrument for implementing the system for the identification, development and classification of qualifications, in accordance with the requirements of the labour market, continued education, scientific progress and broader societal needs. It encompasses the processes and institutions (bodies, organisations) responsible for defining qualifications and qualification standards, criteria for acquiring, comparing and recognizing qualifications, while also implementing other mechanisms for quality assurance.

Qualifications regulated by the NQFS are nationally recognized and recorded within the NQFS Register.

## Development of the NQFS

The development of the NQFS is the result of many years of activities and efforts aimed at enhancing and modernizing the education system and fostering the implementation the concept of lifelong learning concepts.

The process of establishing the NQFS traces back to 2005, aligning with comprehensive educational reform initiatives.

With the adoption of the Law on National Qualifications Framework, a legal basis for establishing organizations and entities responsible for its implementation was created. Subsequently, in 2018, members of the NQFS Council were appointed. Additionally, the establishment of the Qualifications Agency and the formation of 12 sector skills councils reinforced the framework's structure and functionality.

## Purpose and Goals of the NQFS

The goals of establishing the NQFS are:

- ensuring the readability and transparency of qualifications, and their interconnection;
- developing qualification standards based on the labour market and societal needs;
- aligning the entire educational system with learning outcomes that build the competencies outlined in the qualification standards;
- improving access, flexibility of paths and accessibility within system of formal and non-formal education;
- ensuring identification and recognition of non-formal education and informal learning;
- enhancing cooperation among relevant stakeholders and social partners;
- ensuring a quality system throughout the development and acquisition of qualifications;
- ensuring comparability and recognition of qualifications acquired in the Republic of Serbia with those obtained in other countries.

### A qualification

signifies the formal acknowledgment of acquired competencies. It is attained when an individual demonstrates the achievement of specific learning outcomes at a designated level, as outlined in the established qualification standard. This accomplishment is verified and confirmed through the issuance of a public document, such as a diploma or certificate.

The National Qualifications Framework is a comprehensive system in which all activities are carried out with the whole in mind, implying a unified system of qualifications encompassing national standards, linking formal and informal education, and informal learning through a unified concept of learning outcomes. In this sense, the NQF has its institutional framework, processes, and mechanisms for quality assurance involved in the development, implementation, evaluation, and awarding of qualifications.

## Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are clear statements of what an individual involved in the educational process is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate, or do after completing a particular education level. These outcomes are delineated within the realms of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes. As such, learning outcomes play an essential role in bridging the gap between education and the labour market needs. They form a central part of the standardization process in education, both in terms of programme development and in the field of achievement evaluation.

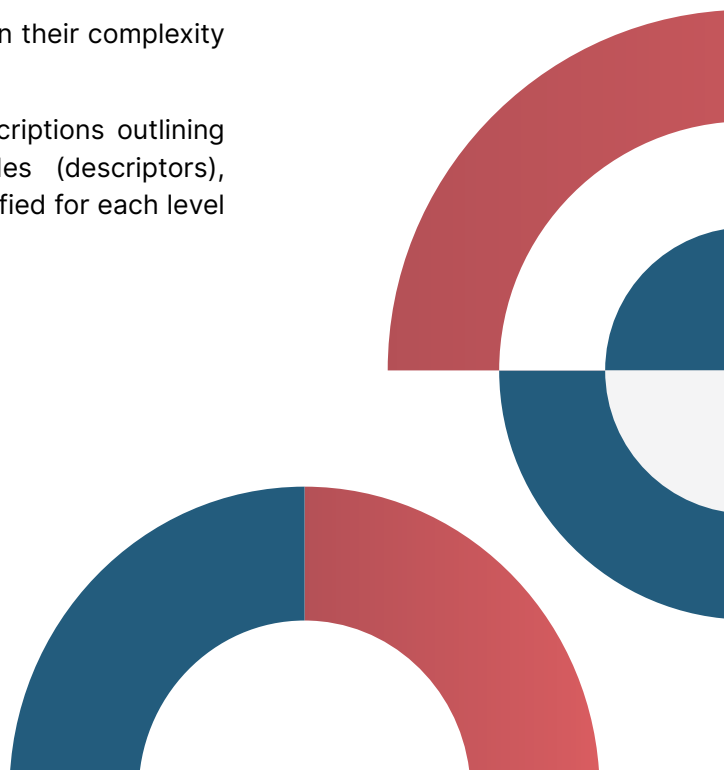
The principle of the NQFS is that **every achievement can be measured and valued**, regardless of how it was acquired. Learning outcomes enable all achievements to be defined and linked within the system.

Correlation of descriptors – descriptors of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes – across the levels defined by the NQFS and applied hierarchical organisation of learning outcomes by the same categories within qualification standards should enable clear classification and comparison of qualifications. This approach enables the creation of a coherent and transparent system of qualifications.

## Qualification levels and descriptors

Qualifications within the NQFS are organised based on their complexity into levels and sublevels.

The NQFS has eight levels with four sublevels. Descriptions outlining necessary knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes (descriptors), required for employment or further learning, are specified for each level of qualifications.



## NQF Descriptors

Level	Knowledge	Skills	Abilities and attitudes
Person with acquired level of qualification			
1.	Possesses basic general knowledge that allows further learning	Applies the skills needed to perform simple predictable tasks	Performs tasks or learns according to simple oral and written instructions, with direct supervision
2.	Possesses general and vocational knowledge of facts and basic principles required for work and/or learning	Applies the skills required to perform routine, predetermined operational tasks;  Handles tools and machines following detailed technical instructions using prescribed work materials	Performs tasks in accordance with established technical and technological procedures, with supervision;  Is responsible for the implementation of established procedures, means and organisation of own work
3.	Possesses general and vocational knowledge of facts, basic principles and processes required for work and/or learning	Applies the skills required to perform less-complex, varied, occasionally nonstandard operational tasks;  Collects and selects relevant information;  Operates specialised equipment, machinery and plants using a variety of materials	Performs tasks independently in accordance with technical and technological procedures with periodic consultations;  Organises own work;  Is responsible for implementing procedures and means of his own work;  Is enterprising in work
4.	Possesses systematic and theoretical knowledge required for work and/or learning	Applies the skills needed to perform complex, diverse, often non-standard tasks using different methods and techniques;  Performs selection of relevant information gathered from various sources for use in work or learning  Handles various equipment, machinery and plants using different materials	Performs tasks independently in accordance with technical and technological procedures;  Organises and controls own work and/or small group work;  Identifies problems and participates in solving them;  Is responsible for choosing procedures and method of his own work, and for operative work of others

Level	Knowledge	Skills	Abilities and attitudes
Person with acquired level of qualification			
5.	Possesses the specialised professional knowledge required to work and/or learning	<p>Applies the skills needed to perform complex, specific and mostly non-standard tasks that require participation in the creation of new solutions;</p> <p>Operates specialised equipment, machinery and plants using a variety of materials</p>	<p>Performs jobs with great autonomy in decision making;</p> <p>Organises, controls and evaluates the personal and/or the work of others, and trains others for work;</p> <p>Takes responsibility for determining own methods of work, as well as for the operational work of others;</p> <p>Shows entrepreneurialism to improve workflows and solve the problems in unpredictable situations</p>
6.1	Possesses advanced academic and/or professional knowledge related to theories, principles and processes including their evaluation, critical understanding and application in the field of learning and/or work	<p>Solves complex problems in the field of learning and/or working in non-standard conditions;</p> <p>Applies skills of successful communication in interaction and collaboration with others from different social groups;</p> <p>Uses equipment, instruments and devices relevant to the field of learning and/or work</p>	<p>Is enterprising in solving problems under non-standard conditions;</p> <p>Manages complex projects independently and with full responsibility;</p> <p>Applies the ethical standards of his profession;</p> <p>Organises, controls, and trains others to work;</p> <p>Analyses and evaluates different concepts, models and principles of theory and practice;</p> <p>Expresses a positive attitude towards the importance of lifelong learning in personal and professional development</p>

Level	Knowledge	Skills	Abilities and attitudes
Person with acquired level of qualification			
6.2	Possesses advanced academic and/or professional knowledge related to theories, principles and processes including evaluation, critical understanding and application in the narrow specialist field of learning and/or work	<p>Solves complex problems in the narrow specialized field of learning and / or working in non-standard conditions;</p> <p>Applies skills of successful communication in interaction and collaboration with others from different social groups;</p> <p>Uses specialised equipment, instruments and devices relevant to the field of learning and/or work</p>	<p>Is enterprising in solving problems under non-standard conditions;</p> <p>Manage complex projects on independently and with full responsibility; Applies the ethical standards of his profession;</p> <p>Organises, controls, and trains others to work;</p> <p>Analyses and evaluates different concepts, models and principles of theory and practise by advancing existing practice;</p> <p>Expresses a positive attitude towards the importance of lifelong learning in personal and professional development</p>
7.1	Possesses highly specialised academic and/or professional knowledge related to theories, principles and processes including evaluation, critical understanding and application in the field of study and/or work as a basis for scientific and applied research	<p>Solves complex problems in an innovative way that contributes to the development in the field of learning and/or work;</p> <p>Manages and runs complex communication, interaction and collaboration with others from different social groups;</p> <p>Applies complex methods, instruments and devices relevant to the field of learning and/or work as a basis for scientific and applied research</p>	<p>Acts entrepreneurial and undertakes managerial task;</p> <p>Runs the most complex projects on his own and with full responsibility;</p> <p>Plans and implements scientific and/or applied research;</p> <p>Controls work and evaluates the results of others to advance existing practice</p>

Level	Knowledge	Skills	Abilities and attitudes
Person with acquired level of qualification			
7.2	Possesses narrowly specialised academic knowledge related to theories, principles and processes including evaluation, critical understanding and application in the field of study and/or work as a basis for scientific and applied research.	<p>Solves complex problems in an innovative way that contributes to the development in the field of learning and/or work;</p> <p>Manages and runs complex communication, interaction and collaboration with others from different social groups;</p> <p>Applies complex methods, instruments and devices relevant to the field of learning and/or work as a basis for scientific and applied research.</p>	<p>Acts entrepreneurial and undertakes managerial tasks;</p> <p>Runs the most complex projects on his own and with full responsibility;</p> <p>Controls work and evaluates the results of others to advance existing practices</p>
8	Possesses superior theoretical and practical knowledge needed for critical analysis and original research in fundamental and applied fields of science with the purpose of expanding and redefining existing knowledge, science or field of work	<p>Applies advanced and specialised skills and techniques needed to solve key research problems and to expand and redefine existing knowledge or field of work;</p> <p>Applies communication skills to explain and critique of theories, methodologies and conclusions, as well as to present research findings in relation to international standards and the scientific community;</p> <p>Develops new tools, instruments and devices relevant to science and work</p>	<p>Independently evaluates contemporary results and achievements in order to advance existing ones, and to create new models, concepts, ideas and theories;</p> <p>Demonstrates innovation, scientific and professional integrity and commitment to developing new ideas and / or processes that are at the centre of the work or science context, through the principle of self-evaluation of own work and achievements;</p> <p>Designs, analyses and implements researches that make a significant and original contribution to general knowledge and / or professional practice;</p> <p>Manages interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary projects;</p> <p>Is able to initiate national and international science and development cooperation on his own</p>

## Types of qualifications



## Acquisition of qualifications

The Law on the National Qualifications Framework introduced flexible pathways for acquiring qualifications. Within the NQFS, qualifications can be attained:

**Formally** – qualifications are acquired in the system of formal primary, secondary or higher education, after which a diploma or a certificate is issued as a public document;

**Non-formally** – qualifications are acquired in the adult education system, in various forms, mainly through training or professional development, after which as a public document is issued- a certificate or testimonial;

**Validation of non-formal education or informal learning** – qualifications are acquired based on the work or life experience, or through a recognition of prior learning procedure, after which a public document is issued – a certificate or testimonial.

According to the Law on the NQFS, through non-formal education and the recognition of prior learning process only qualifications at levels 2, 3, and 5 of the NQFS can be acquired



## Qualification standard

The qualification standard is a comprehensive document that contains a set of data outlining details about the qualification, including information on its correlation with the occupational standard (or job description).

Qualification standards are developed for all types and levels of qualifications, following the procedure mandated by the NQFS Law. The development process adheres to the Methodology for the development of qualification standards, which defines all elements of the qualification standards.

A well-structured qualification standard facilitates the integration of data from the education system and labour market information. It also allows for the utilisation of diverse relevant data sources during its formulation.

## Register of National Qualifications Framework of the Republic of Serbia (NQFS Register)

The List of qualifications, as a relevant source of information on attainable qualifications within the Republic of Serbia, was published in 2020. One year subsequent to this publication, the NQF Register was established. The Register functions as a systematic and comprehensive database encompassing all qualifications achievable through formal, non-formal or informal learning pathways. The Register consists of the Sub-register of national qualifications, the Sub-register of qualification standards, and the Sub-register of publicly recognized organizers of adult education activities (PROAEA), with employers where practical work under these activities is conducted.

The NQF Register is a part of the Unified Information System in Education (UIES) and is administered electronically by the Qualifications Agency. The Register is interconnected with other national databases housing qualification-related information; national institutions and bodies that maintain records on citizens' qualifications (NES, CRCSI, SORS among others), rely on data sourced from the NQFS Register.

Data from the Register are open and accessible through:  
<https://noks.azk.gov.rs/>.

The screenshot displays the 'Регистар НОКС-а' (NQFS Register) website. The header includes the logo of the 'АГЕНЦИЈА ЗА КВАЛИФИКАЦИЈЕ' (Qualifications Agency) and contact information. The main section is titled 'Претрага националних квалификација' (Search for national qualifications). It features several search filters: 'Избор квалификације' (Select qualification) with radio buttons for 'Училишна' (School), 'Професионална' (Professional), and 'Друга' (Other); 'Статус квалификације' (Qualification status) with radio buttons for 'Активна' (Active), 'Архивирана' (Archived), and 'Бива' (Former); 'НОКС ниво' (NQFS level) with a dropdown menu; 'Друга 1347 нивоа Класификације' (Other 1347 levels of classification) with a dropdown menu; 'Врста квалификације' (Type of qualification) with a dropdown menu; and 'Месна квалификација' (Local qualification) with a dropdown menu. There are also input fields for 'Слободан текст' (Free text) and a search button labeled 'ПОИШЉИ' (Search).

The qualification classification system within the NQFS, CLASSNQFS (KLASNOKS) is based on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2013-F).

## Quality assurance of qualifications

Achieving the objectives and principles of NQFS relies on ensuring the quality across the entire system and each of its elements. The transparency of the offer of qualifications and institutions, along with the relevant information on the learning programme, is ensured through the qualification registration system. The availability of data on the content of the qualification and its purpose, contributes to the implementation of the concept of lifelong learning, and consequently to raising the qualification structure of the population. Standardisation of qualifications in alignment with occupational standards and learning outcomes, and the establishment of sector skills councils, allows relevance in identifying and improving qualifications, as well as the involvement of key partners in that process. The development of education/training programmes based on qualification standards and learning outcomes enhances the quality of learning processes, monitoring mechanisms and the assessment/validation of acquired knowledge and skills (competencies).

The establishment of quality within the National Qualifications Framework is achieved through defined standards, procedures, methodologies, assigned competencies and participation of relevant institutions and bodies. This collective effort aims to develop a credible system that will be trusted by citizens, employers and society at large. Quality standards are established at different levels, depending on the types of qualifications and the cycle of qualification development.



# Referencing NQFS to EQF

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02

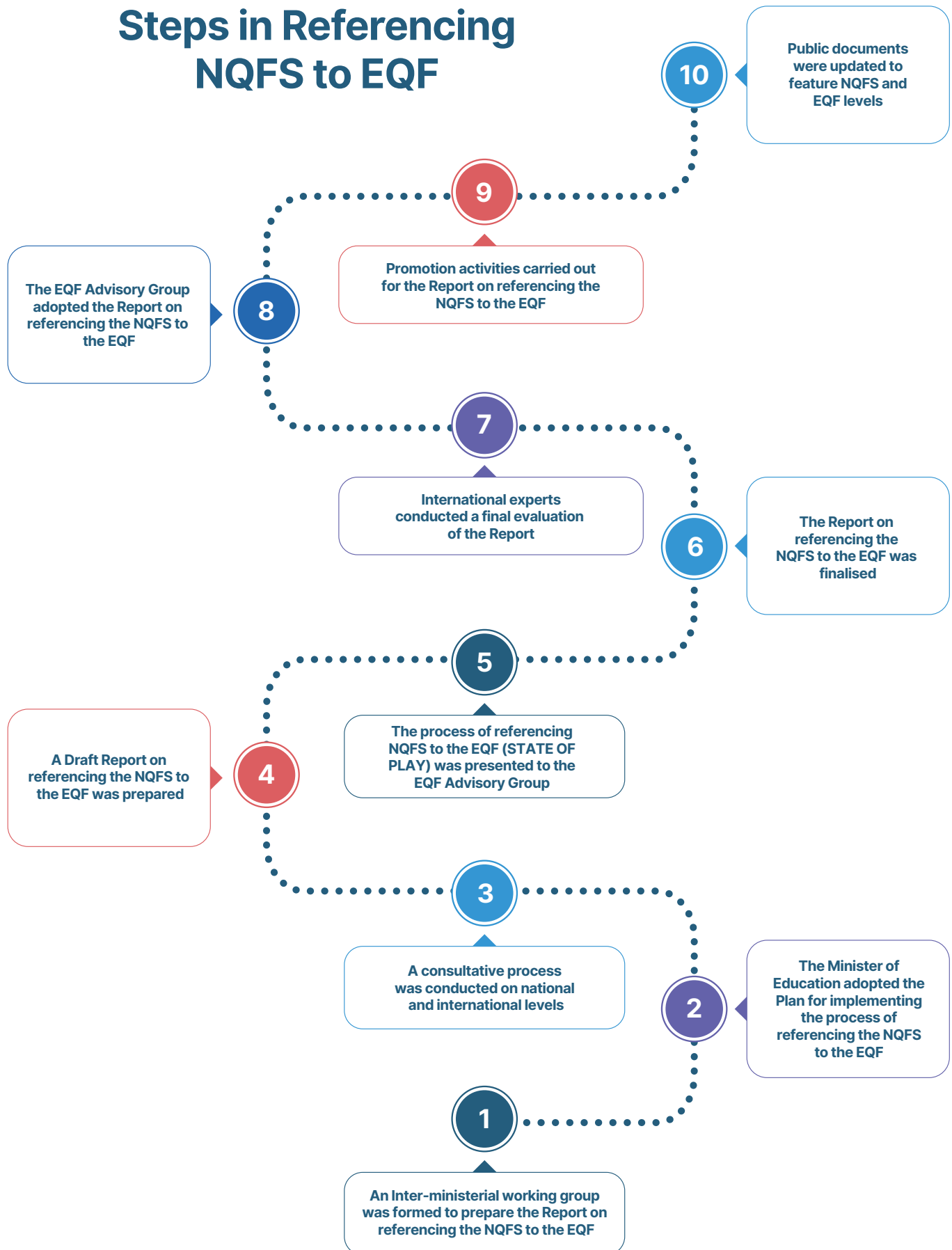
## Referencing NQFS to EQF and QF-EHEA

In order to create the best conditions for establishing mutual trust among countries that have developed their qualification frameworks and are linked to the EQF, the criteria and procedures for referencing national qualification levels to the EQF were established in 2009, undergoing revisions in 2013 and 2019.

In 2019, the Republic of Serbia prepared a comprehensive Report on referencing National Qualifications Framework of the Republic of Serbia to the European Qualifications Framework, a document that describes how the NQFS is aligned to the EQF, and how the procedures and criteria set by the European Commission are met.

In February 2020, at the 52nd meeting of the Advisory Group for the European Qualifications Framework, held in Brussels, the Report on referencing National Qualifications Framework of the Republic of Serbia to the European Qualifications Framework was adopted, including the additional Report on the self-assessment of the NQFS in the field of higher education in relation to on the Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area.


## Steps in Referencing NQFS to EQF




## Criterion

**01**

**The responsibilities and/or legal competence of all relevant national bodies involved in the referencing process are clearly determined and published by the competent authorities**

 When undertaking the referencing process, it is essential to consider all relevant bodies that play a legitimate role in this process and explain their roles or functions. Every stakeholder must be engaged in this process - from the Ministry of Education, responsible for policy creation, to specially established governing bodies managing the processes, advisory and consultative entities, educational institutions and social partners. This inclusive approach enables the incorporation of diverse perspectives from various key stakeholders.

 In 2017, an Inter-ministerial working group was established, composed of representatives from 21 social partners within the public policy, economy, and employment sectors. Their primary aim was to deliberate on activities and recommend participating bodies for the referencing process. With the implementation of the Law on the National Qualifications Framework, the Ministry of Education assumed control of the referencing process, acting as the National Coordination Point. As of 2023, the Sector for NQFS within the Office for Dual Education and NQFS assumed pivotal role in managing this process.

As stipulated by the Law on NQFS, pivotal bodies and institutions responsible for NQFS development and implementation contributed expert insights during the consultative process, specifically focusing on quality assurance aspects integrated into the referencing process. The national coordination point was responsible for engaging these key bodies and institutions in the referencing process and ensuring timely dissemination of information to both professional and general public..

# NQFS Institutional Framework



## Ministry of Education

**The Ministry of Education** establishes the normative framework for NQFS, adopts qualification standards, and actively advocates for and promotes NQFS, fostering diverse pathways for learning and achieving qualification standards.



## Office for Dual Education and National Qualifications Framework

**The Office for Dual Education and NQFS** (Sector for National Qualifications Framework), drafts recommendations for regulations within the NQFS system, oversees law implementation, and assesses the NQFS impact in line with strategic documents. The Office actively facilitates developmental initiatives and operates as the National Coordination Point for referencing NQFS with the European Qualifications Framework.



## Qualifications Agency

**The Qualifications Agency** is responsible for ensuring quality and offering professional support to relevant organizations in all aspects of NQFS development and implementation. The management board of the Qualifications Agency consists of representatives from the economy, education, and employment sectors.



## Council for NQFS

**The Council for NQFS** offers guidance on planning and developing human potential in alignment with public policies concerning lifelong learning, employment, career guidance, and counselling. Comprised of 23 members representing diverse institutions and bodies, the Council plays a key advisory role in these domains.




## Sector skill councils

**Sector skill councils** operate on the principle of social partnership. Councils comprise over 250 representatives from diverse institutions and bodies. These councils are tasked with analysing and defining qualifications within their respective sectors, identifying knowledge and skills needs, and fostering direct collaboration and dialogue between the realms of education and the workforce.


## Criterion

**02**

**There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications frameworks or systems and the level descriptors of the EQF**

 To prove the existence of a “clear” and “demonstrable” link, a comprehensive understanding of the EQF levels and the NQFS levels is necessary, along with their interrelations. When this understanding is established the procedure for matching levels needs to be described: this procedure should be robust and transparent, probably including a careful application of a “best-fit” process.

The EQF levels need to be appreciated as a generalised model of learning described through three categories - knowledge, skills and competences, which are referenced to the NQFS levels, described through knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes.

 NQFS has eight levels that correspond to the levels of the European Qualifications Framework, while four sub-levels reflect the specificities of the education system in the Republic of Serbia. The NQFS structure aligns with the EQF, featuring descriptors for each qualification level, based on the concept of learning outcomes.

For referencing purposes, the definitions of outcomes of knowledge, skills and abilities and attitudes in NQFS were compared with the definitions of outcomes of knowledge, skills and responsibility and independence from EQF.

The conducted analysis revealed a correlation in language and the concepts on which the descriptions of the levels of both frameworks are based. The analysis of the learning outcomes statements indicated substantial correspondence between NQFS levels 1 to 8, including their respective sub-levels, and the equivalent levels of the EQF, allowing for a feasible linkage.

NQFS	EQF
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6.1	6
6.2	
7.1	7
7.2	
8	8


*Referencing NQFS levels  
with EQF levels*




## Criterion

## 03

**The national qualifications frameworks or systems and their qualifications are based on the principle and objective of learning outcomes and related to arrangements for validation of non-formal and informal learning and, where appropriate, to credit systems**

 All European level tools for supporting mobility and transparency of qualifications and learning achievements encourage the use of learning outcomes. Describing qualifications through learning outcomes is the basis for reforming educational programmes at all levels. The conditions that need to be met in terms of standards and quality assurance will need to be included in referencing reports so that they reassure others that the country is moving towards a generalised use of learning outcomes.

 As part of the reform processes initiated in the early 2000s, the introduction of competency-based education and the concept of learning outcomes into all parts of the education system began, spanning from preschool to higher education. The implementation of this approach was first reflected in the process of developing education/training programmes, aiming to establish a system of qualifications aligned with the labour market demands. With the adoption of the Law on NQFS, the entire educational trajectory was oriented towards learning outcomes that foster competences defined by the qualification standard. Learning outcomes serve as an instrument for connecting education, the needs of the labour market and the development of society, constituting the part of the standardization process in education, both in terms of programme development and in the area of achievement evaluation.

Qualification in NQFS is shaped by two fundamental concepts: competences and learning outcomes. Competences required for different types of qualifications are described within the qualification standards, delineating a list of required learning outcomes.

The Law on NQFS and regulations in adult education have introduced more flexible pathways to attain qualifications by enabling the recognition (validation) of prior learning, in accordance with the European recommendations for the validation of non-formal and informal learning. The principles, assumptions, guidelines and standards for the implementation of recognition of prior learning are outlined in the Concept of Recognition of Prior Learning, initially developed in 2015 and updated in 2021. Specifically, the recognition of prior learning, facilitates the attainment of qualifications for NQFS levels 2, 3 and 5 through non-formal and informal learning. The process of recognition of prior learning uses the concept of competency-based assessment, employed in final exams in primary and secondary vocational education.




*Ways of acquiring qualifications*


## Criterion

## 04

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

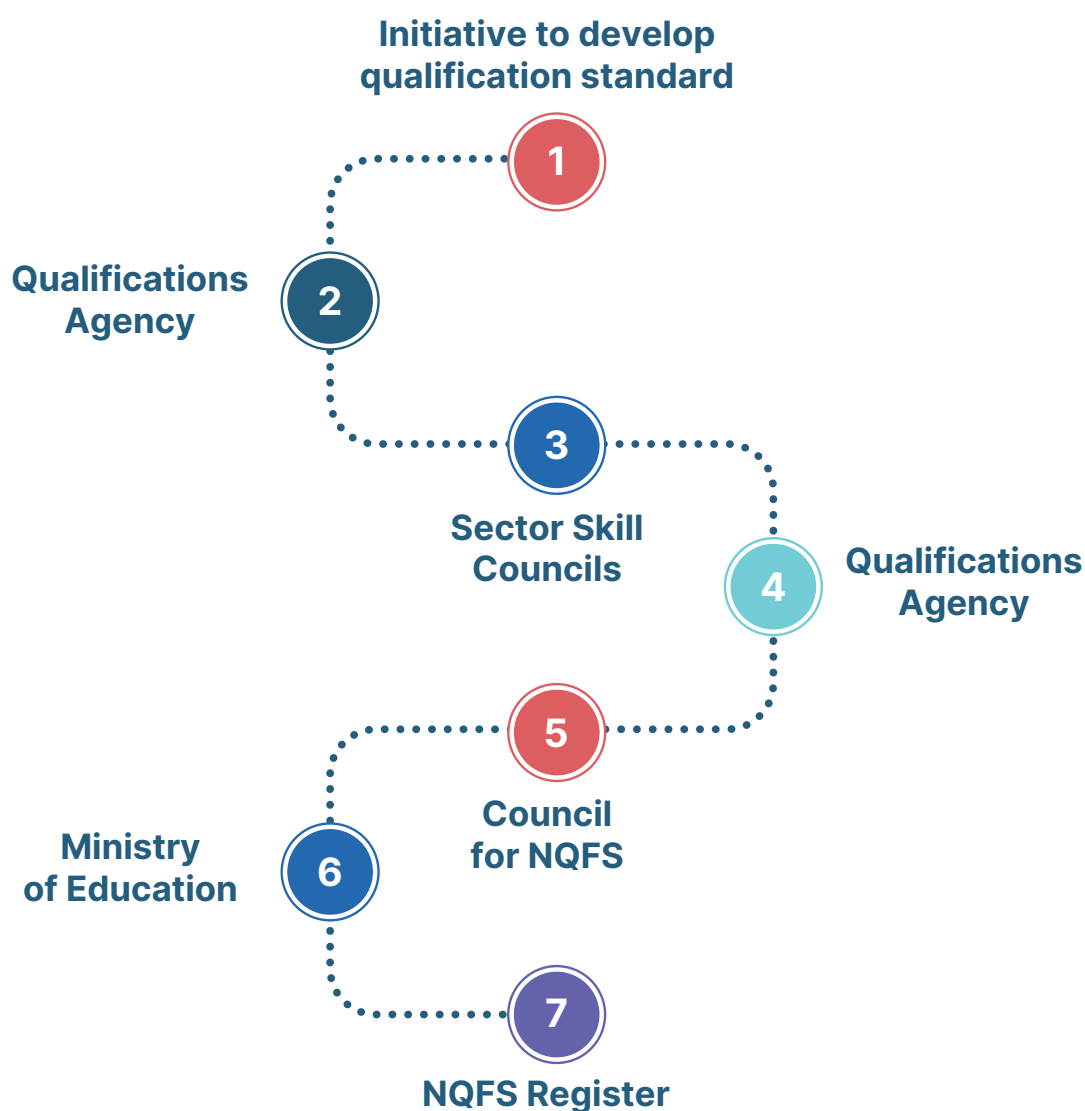
 Allocating specific qualifications to an NQF level brings meaning to the NQF level for citizens and, through the referencing process, to the EQF level. It is, therefore, critically important for the referencing process that the way a qualification is located at an NQF level is described in full and examples are provided that illustrate how the rules governing the process are applied. The referencing report also needs to provide information on what criteria and procedures were used to make decisions on the inclusion and the level of individual qualifications (whether from the formal education and training sector or outside this) in the NQF, and what kind of methodology was used to assign a level to an individual qualification.

The referencing report must address how the principle of “best-fit” was utilized in establishing the level of specific qualifications and if the methodology was tailored concerning individual educational sectors, considering the applied concepts of learning outcomes

 The Law on NQFS regulates the alignment of existing qualifications with NQFS levels, and all existing qualifications are analysed in the context of learning outcomes, in order to link them to qualifications in NQFS and EQF. The analysis of existing qualifications and the identification of qualifications that need to be updated are the responsibility of the sector skill councils. For qualifications in need of modernisation, sector skill councils submit an initiative for the updated qualification standard that will replace the outdated qualification.

The inclusion of the qualification into NQFS follows a defined process outlined in the Law on NQFS. Initiatives for the development and adoption of qualification standards can be proposed by various entities - sector skill councils, state institutions, PROAEA or other legal entities. Upon acceptance of the proposal by the sector skill council, the Qualifications Agency drafts a qualification standard based on the proposal. The suggested NQFS level for the qualification is initially recommended by the applicant, and the decision is made comparing the learning outcomes with NQFS level descriptors. Once the qualification standard is approved, it is entered into the NQFS Register.


The description of the procedure for entering the qualification into the NQFS Register and the principles established in the Law on NQFS are part of the transparent system which ensures the quality of qualification development and acquisition. It actively engages relevant stakeholders, bridges formal and informal education sectors, and centralises data on qualifications and occupations.




## Criterion

## 05

**The national quality assurance system(s) for education and training refer(s) to the national qualifications frameworks or system and are consistent with the relevant European principles and guidelines**

 The success of the referencing process, and the mutual trust it generates, is closely linked to this criterion that addresses quality assurance. Referencing report need to explain national quality assurance systems and demonstrate the links between them. Particularly important here is the ways quality assurance procedures influence the design and award of qualifications. These procedures are powerful influences on trust and confidence in qualifications in the country and internationally.

 Ensuring the quality of the qualifications system in the Republic of Serbia is established through predefined standards, procedures, methodologies, assigned responsibilities and the involvement of relevant institutions and bodies. Quality standards are set at different levels, tailored to different types of qualifications and the qualification development cycle. Quality assurance procedures and policies are formulated through regulations and methodological documents endorsed by the relevant authorities and governing bodies.

At all levels, the national quality assurance system aligns with European policies and relies on several key mechanisms: accreditation of education/training programme implementers, monitoring the quality of education/training programme implementation, and the certification process.

Standards and procedures for accreditation of programmes and institutions in pre-university formal education and of study programmes and institutions in higher education, as well as adult education programmes and providers (PROAEA) are specified by pertinent laws and regulations.


The Ministry of Education oversees the accreditation of providers of pre-university formal education, while the National Entity for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education manages the accreditation of higher education institutions. The Qualifications Agency is in charge of accrediting non-formal education providers in accordance with standards and prescribed conditions, while the Ministry of Education overseeing primary and secondary schools for non-formal education.

The quality of implementation of education programmes in pre-university and university education is monitored through the self-evaluation and external evaluation processes.

## Criterion

**06**


**Критеријум 6: The referencing process shall include the stated agreement of the relevant quality assurance bodies that the referencing report is consistent with the relevant national quality assurance arrangements, provisions and practice**

 Bodies responsible for quality assurance are the most important actors in the referencing process and their consent is required for “level to level” alignment. The term “stated agreement”, as defined in this criterion, means the description of the quality assurance system via laws, regulations and procedures. The contribution of the bodies responsible for quality assurance in the process of development of the referencing report and their positive attitude are a guarantee of fulfilment of this criterion.

(6)

**Professor Mile Dželaliја, PhD**, is a member of numerous professional and expert bodies relevant for the qualifications systems. In the past decade he has actively participated in the implementation of national qualifications frameworks in many countries, as well as provided professional support and assistance in drawing up reports on referencing National Qualifications Frameworks to the EQF.


**Eduard Staudecker** has extensive experience in developing strategic documents, particularly in the field of learning outcomes, and in the recent past has actively participated in the implementation of national qualifications frameworks in many countries, as well as provided professional support and assistance in drawing up reports on referencing National Qualifications Frameworks to the EQF.


 The Referencing Report was presented to relevant national institutions and bodies responsible for quality assurance (Council for NQFS, Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation, Institute for the Improvement of Education, Ministry of Education, Qualifications Agency, National Entity for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education), and their agreement with the report’s statements was formally confirmed in writing.

## Criterion

**07**

**The referencing process shall involve international experts and the referencing reports shall contain the written statement of at least two international experts from two different countries on the referencing process**


 The EQF aims to improve international understanding of qualifications. The referencing process should clarify the relationship between the EQF and the national qualifications systems for a person without particular understanding of the qualifications system in the Republic of Serbia. International experts have a role in making sure that this expectation is met.


 The referencing process was actively monitored by two international experts with experience in the implementation of national qualification frameworks, prof. Dr. Mile Dželaliја and Eduard Staudecker. Their positive professional assessments of the implemented process are documented in written reports available as annexes to the Referencing Report.

## Criterion

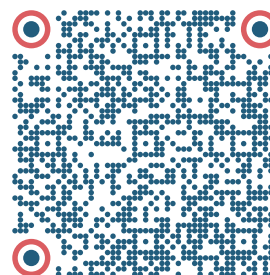
08

**The competent authority or authorities shall certify the referencing of the national qualifications frameworks or systems with the EQF. One comprehensive report, setting out the referencing, and the evidence supporting it, shall be published by the competent authorities, including the EQF National Coordination Points, and shall address separately each of the criteria. The same report can be used for self-certification to the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area, in accordance with the self-certification criteria of the latter**

 The aim of this criterion is to ensure that countries cover the entire range of qualifications levels (and types) in their framework or system, thus reflecting the overarching, lifelong learning character of the EQF. The expectation of a single report means that whatever the scope of the referencing process, this report should be written in consultation with stakeholders and agreed by them. A single report should contain all relevant information on the results of the referencing of national qualifications levels to the EQF and refer to further resources for evidence, if necessary.

 Report was prepared following consultations and obtaining consent from all relevant national bodies. It adheres rigorously to EQF and QF-EHEA criteria, supported by comprehensive evidence.


Report on referencing  
NQFS to EQF



## Criterion


09

**Within 6 months from having referenced or updated the referencing report, Member States and other participating countries shall publish the referencing report and provide relevant information for comparison purposes on the relevant European portal**

 The official EQF portal serves as a platform to disseminate information about the referencing process and its outcomes to a wider public. It also allows direct comparison of qualifications levels across the EU countries, using EQF levels. For a better understanding of national qualification levels, the portal furnishes examples of primary qualifications or qualification types associated with each national qualifications level.

Ministry of Education  
and Office for Dual  
Education and NQFS:  
Report on referencing  
NQFS to EQF


Qualifications Agency:  
Report on referencing  
NQFS to EQF


 The Referencing Report is published on various platforms, including the European Commission's website, the Ministry of Education's official webpage, the Office for Dual Education and the National Qualifications Framework and Qualifications Agency platforms, and on the webpages of other pertinent institutions and bodies involved in the process.

## Criterion

10

**Further to the referencing process, all newly issued documents related to qualifications that are part of the national qualifications frameworks or systems (e.g. certificates, diplomas, certificate supplements, diploma supplements) and/or qualification registers issued by the competent authorities should contain a clear reference, by way of national qualifications frameworks or systems, to the appropriate EQF level**

 Indicating an EQF level on a certificate helps stakeholders to judge the level of national qualifications and facilitate comparison of qualifications from different systems. Once the level-to-level agreements are in place and qualifications are linked, through national qualifications systems to the EQF levels, the EQF can be seen as adding international currency to national qualifications and facilitate the recognition of foreign qualifications.

 Public documents verifying qualifications up to NQFS level 5, including documents from the adult education system, currently include information regarding the attained NQFS and EQF levels. However, the process pertaining to higher education system is nearing completion. Information on the referencing of NQFS to EQF are documented alongside qualifications in the NQFS Register.

<https://europa.eu/europass/en/eqf-referencing-reports>




# Self-certification of NQFS in relation to QF-EHEA

## Criterion

01


**National qualifications framework for higher education qualifications and the body or bodies responsible for its development are determined by the ministry responsible for higher education**

 As already stated, the development of NQFS, including qualifications in higher education, stems from collaborative efforts among stakeholders in the education sector and the labor market. The primary responsibility for this lies with the Ministry of Education and the Sector for NQFS within the Office for Dual Education and NQFS, operating as the National Coordination Point. The Qualifications Agency offers professional support to the Office in its efforts to reference to EQF and EHEA.

## Criterion

02

**There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications in the national framework and the cycle qualification descriptors of the European framework**

 In order to confirm a clear and demonstrable link between qualifications within the national framework and QF-EHEA descriptors, a comprehensive comparative analysis was made. This involved a structural comparison of NQFS, EQF and QF-EHEA, along with a linguistic analysis focusing on the NQFS descriptors and Dublin descriptors.

Linguistic comparison between NQFS descriptors and Dublin descriptors revealed a high level of correspondence between NQFS levels 6-8 and QF-EHEA. NQFS descriptors displayed slightly more detailed compared to generic Dublin descriptors.

NQFS level	NQFS sublevel	Study level	EQF level	QF-EHEA level	QF-EHEA ECTS credit range
6	6.1	Bachelor academic studies of 180 ECTS Bachelor applied studies of 180 ECTS	6	First cycle	180- 240 ECTS credits
	6.2	Bachelor academic studies of 240 ECTS Specialised applied studies of 60 ECTS (after 180 ECTS of bachelor applied studies)			
7	7.1	Integrated academic studies (300 or 360 ECTS) Master academic studies (120 ECTS after 180 ECTS from bachelor academic studies, i.e. 60 ECTS after 240 ECTS from bachelor academic studies) Master applied studies (120 ECTS after 180 ECTS from bachelor studies)	7	Second cycle	60-120 ECTS credits
	7.2	Specialised academic studies (60 ECTS after at least 300 ECTS from academic studies)			
8	8	Doctoral studies in the duration of at least 180 ECTS after master academic or integrated academic studies	8	Third cycle	Not specified

*Structural comparison of NQFS, EQF and QF-EHEA*

## Criterion

## 03

**The national framework and its qualifications are demonstrably based on learning outcomes and the qualifications are linked to ECTS or ECTS compatible credits**



As in the case of pre-university, and in the case of higher education, explicit learning outcomes are clearly stated in all legal and sub-legal acts (Law on Higher Education, Standards for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions). These defined descriptors of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes for each level of higher education are aligned with the Dublin descriptors.


The credit system of higher education in Serbia is aligned with the EHEA good practice standards. Each subject within a study programme and the overall programme scope are expressed through ECTS points, determining the workload for students during mastering the expected learning outcomes. Learning outcomes obtained in this way can be transferred between different study programmes of the same degree and type of study. Moreover, for students engaged in international mobility programmes, these learning outcomes can be transferred across different study programmes of all degrees and types of study.

Recognition of foreign higher education qualifications, based on learning outcomes acquired in foreign study programmes is based on the type and level of competences achieved at the end of the study programme or its part. The evaluation of a foreign study programme for the purpose of continuing education is performed by the higher education institution to which the request for recognition was submitted, and the evaluation of the foreign study programme for the purpose of employment is performed by the National Centre for the Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Documents (ENIC/NARIC Centre) within the Qualifications Agency.

## Criterion

04

### **The procedures for inclusion of qualifications in the national framework are transparent**


 Procedures for inclusion of higher education qualifications in the NQFS are outlined in the Law on the National Qualifications Framework which, in addition to the procedures, details the methodology and entities responsible for the development of qualification standards, the submission of initiatives for the development and adoption of qualification standards, the development of proposals for qualification standards, the adoption of qualification standards and entering the qualification in the NQFS Register.

Higher education programmes are developed in accordance with the qualification standards, following the rules for study programme accreditation. Upon recommendation from the National Entity for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education, the Council for Higher Education establishes standards for initial accreditation of institutions and study programmes, standards and procedures for accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes, and standards for self-evaluation and quality assessment of higher education institutions.

## Criterion

05


### **The national quality assurance system for higher education refer to the national framework of qualifications and are consistent with the Berlin Communiqué and any subsequent communiqué agreed by ministers in the Bologna Process**

 European standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, developed by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), serve as the basis of the higher education quality assurance system in Serbia. Oversight activities, including accreditation, quality control of higher education institutions, evaluation of study programmes, and overall quality assurance in higher education, are conducted by the National Entity for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NAT). Since April 2020, NAT is an associate member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

## Criterion

06


**The national framework, and any alignment with the European framework, is referenced in all Diploma Supplements**

 After the referencing process is finalised, the necessary elements such as the NQFS level and the corresponding EQF level are entered in the Diploma Supplement, a public document whose format is prescribed by the Minister of Education, and which is issued by an independent higher education institution. Information regarding the alignment of NQFS levels with EQF levels is documented for all qualifications across various NQFS levels. These specifics are entered and maintained within the NQFS Register.

## Criterion

07

**The responsibilities of the domestic parties to the national framework are clearly determined and published**

 A key role in the development and implementation of NQFS is played by the Ministry of Education and the Sector for NQFS within the Office for Dual Education and NQFS, which is also the National Coordination Point responsible for the alignment between NQFS and EQF. Apart from the mentioned institutions, the Qualifications Agency assumes a significant role in managing the National Qualifications Framework and cooperation with the EQF Advisory Group. The Qualification Agency performs quality assurance work and provide professional support to competent organisations in all aspects of the development and implementation of NQFS, including support to the Office in the process of referencing NQFS to the EQF and EHEA. In addition to these primary institutions, other competent bodies - the Council for the NQFS and the sector skill councils - actively participate in shaping and ensuring the effectiveness of the qualifications framework.

## Future Challenges and Further Development of NQFS

The development of NQFS has facilitated a fundamental reform of the education system, enabling a more effective alignment with the needs of individuals, the economy, and society at large. During the preceding period, several by-laws were enacted, addressing various concerns such as the methodology governing the development of qualification standards, the management of the NQFS Register, and the procedures for recognizing prior learning. Presently, the competent institutions are prioritizing the enforcement of these regulations, enhancing the quality of sector skill council and other stakeholders operations, fortifying social partnerships, and encouraging active, responsible, and committed engagement from all institutions and bodies involved in these processes.

Moving forward, additional endeavors aimed at establishing a fully operational qualification system that remains closely linked to the labor market entail the development of a methodological and conceptual framework for occupational standards that uphold relevance in shaping qualification standards. The utilization of learning outcomes is an enduring process that fosters change; however, the customary resistance accompanying such changes poses an additional challenge to the system. Building trust and acceptance of this approach is imperative, requiring concerted efforts to bolster the capacities of all stakeholders to effectively implement this systemic change.

During the upcoming period, the focus of NQFS development will encompass several key areas:

- Using all national resources, international projects and past experiences to enhance the capacities of sector skill councils, including empowering them to effectively perform tasks on identification qualifications that align with the needs of the labour market;
- Managing the NQFS system with the cross-sectoral approach, by efficient use of the capacities of newly established institutions and bodies, so the main tools on occupation and qualification development could be synchronized;
- Continuing the consultative process initiated during the integration of NQFS with EQF, on issues pertinent to mobility within the higher education system, as well as international recognition of those qualifications;
- Facilitating and guiding discussions among stakeholders regarding the feasibility of sub-levels within NQFS levels 6 and 7;
- Further promotion of the significance of qualification standards, especially its fundamental element - learning outcomes, to all partners and stakeholders. This entails making examples of good practices, resulting from the application of the Methodology for the development of qualification standards (linking occupations and qualifications, enabling employment and lifelong learning, etc.), as a result of its application in the new institutional framework.

# Application of NQFS and EQF: Benefits For Various Target Groups

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03

# Application of EQF and benefits for various target groups<sup>1</sup>

The EQF was created for a number of purposes. While its key purpose is to help individual citizens pursue their learning and employment careers, the framework also supports stakeholders in education, training and employment to improve policies and practices. As a comprehensive and inclusive reference framework for qualifications, addressing all types and levels, the EQF has many users, varying from individuals, employers, trade unions, education and training providers, qualification recognition bodies to government authorities and international organisations.

Some experienced and expected benefits for different target audiences are summarised below.

## The EQF supports careers in the labour market

Qualifications give access to jobs and provide the basis on which careers are built. Getting a job, or moving between jobs, requires qualifications to be understood, fairly judged and correctly valued by employers and other labour market stakeholders. The ability of a qualification to signal what its holder knows, understands and is able to do is therefore essential.

The use of learning outcomes to describe qualifications – and the inclusion of European and national qualifications levels on them – makes it easier for employers to interpret applicants' qualifications.

The EQF also enables employers to better assess qualifications from other countries and institutions not known to them. They can better understand the level of each candidate, compare their qualifications with national qualifications, understand the relevance of those qualifications and see how the learning outcomes match the needs of the company or sector.

Through the EQF, employers can treat Europe as one single qualification area. This reduces the barriers to labour mobility, supports a better use of existing knowledge, skills and competence, and improves the match between labour demand and supply.

(1)

This chapter has been adapted and derived from the EU publication *The European Qualifications Framework: supporting learning, work and cross-border mobility* (<https://europa.eu/europass/system/files/2020-05/EQF%20Brochure-EN.pdf>)

## The EQF promotes a common language between education and training and the labour market

By promoting the shift to learning outcomes, the EQF can also facilitate dialogue on the needs of the labour market and the provisions of the education and training systems. Structured dialogue using learning outcomes as a common language helps to strengthen the relevance and increase the attractiveness of qualifications.



## **The EQF and NQFs as a map helping learners make decisions on further education and training**

The EQF, being closely linked to NQFs in 39 European countries<sup>2</sup>, provides a comprehensive map of all types and levels of qualifications in Europe. Increasingly accessible through national qualification databases, learners can use the frameworks to identify the level of a particular qualification and how it is related to other qualifications. As a map linking together different NQFs, the EQF is relevant to different groups of learners and provides an easily accessible overview of qualifications and qualifications pathways. Individuals who seek further education or training can use the frameworks as an entry point to information on relevant courses and programmes.

## **The EQF and NQFs are a facilitator of lifelong learning**

Opening up qualifications to a wider variety of learning experiences, for example from work and leisure time, is essential for promoting lifelong learning. The learning outcomes approach makes it possible to take into account experiences from outside formal education.

## **Validating non-formal and informal learning in Europe**

Most European countries have now set up arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning. These arrangements make it possible for learners to have their prior learning identified, assessed and, if meeting agreed requirements and standards, recognised as a partial or full qualification. This is important for citizens as duplicate work is avoided, and diverse and rich learning experiences<sup>2</sup> are taken into account.

Flexible learning pathways are important preconditions for facilitating lifelong learning. Credit transfer and accumulation arrangements form part of this approach. The EQF and its learning outcomes approach supports credit transfer and accumulation and can, together with validation of non-formal and informal learning, directly facilitate lifelong learning.

## **Qualifications with an EQF level are a trusted currency**

Because education and training systems differ between countries, it can be difficult to appreciate the value and relevance of foreign qualifications. As a result, there is a risk that qualifications are not fairly judged and assessed. The same problem can arise when combining qualifications from different education and training sectors and institutions.

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(2)  
<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/projects/national-qualifications-framework-nqf>

The EQF levels are now increasingly being included in national certificates and diplomas across Europe, making it possible to see how a particular qualification relates to others in a wider European context. The systematic and long-term cooperation between countries through the EQF and NQFs, which act as gate-keepers of quality assured qualifications, ensure that these levels can be trusted across Europe. As a result, citizens can more easily distinguish between qualifications that can be trusted or those that cannot, or are 'fake'. This way the EQF also serves as a type of 'consumer protection'.

## The EQF makes the recognition of qualifications easier

The EQF facilitates recognition of qualifications by promoting the use of learning outcomes, allowing holders and receivers of qualifications to directly assess the content, level and profile of the qualification in question. The EQF works together with other European and international instruments supporting the recognition of qualifications. While these instruments either focus on regulated and/or academic qualifications, the EQF supports the recognition of learning for all qualifications.

## European and international instruments supporting the recognition of qualifications

- Directive 2005/36/EC addresses the recognition of professional qualifications in the EU, enabling professionals to move across borders and practise their occupation or provide services abroad<sup>3</sup>;
- The Lisbon recognition convention<sup>4</sup> is an international agreement administered by UNESCO and the Council of Europe that allows for the recognition of academic qualifications in Europe and beyond;
- The ENIC/NARIC<sup>5</sup> network is a network of national centres set up to directly support institutions and citizens with the recognition of academic qualifications.

(3)  
[https://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/services/free-movement-professionals/qualifications-recognition\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/services/free-movement-professionals/qualifications-recognition_en)

(4)  
<https://rm.coe.int/168007f2c7>

(5)  
<http://www.enic-naric.net/>

## The EQF supports other EU transparency tools

The European Commission, in close cooperation with Member States, has launched a number of tools supporting the modernisation of European education and training systems over the last decade. Focusing on the need for increased transparency and comparability of skills and qualifications, these tools support the geographical and lifelong learning

of citizens. The learning outcomes perspective can be seen as the 'glue' binding these tools together, respecting the diversity of national solutions but at the same time allowing them to work together.




Many of these tools address citizens directly, as is the case for Europass and the credit systems for higher education (ECTS) and VET (ECVET). While Europass supports individuals in their learning and careers, the credit systems facilitate flexible learning pathways and lifelong learning.

Another group of tools support the work of national authorities and institutions, and indirectly addresses the needs of individual citizens. This applies to a range of career guidance and validation of learning initiatives, where European initiatives are an incentive for setting up national arrangements and sharing practices. The tools supporting cooperation on quality assurance in higher education (ESG) and VET (EQAVET) aim to increase trust and transparency between countries. Furthermore, with the introduction of the ESCO classification, the Commission has put a terminology in place that supports a focus on learning outcomes and the strengthening of dialogue between stakeholders in education and training and the labour market.

## Find and compare national qualifications frameworks across Europe

With the help of the European Qualifications Framework it is possible to see how national qualifications frameworks and systems relate to one another.

On Europass platform (<https://europa.eu/europass/en/compare-qualifications>) it is possible to select two countries and see what types of qualifications are included in national frameworks referenced to the EQF.

 <b>Serbia</b>	 <b>EQF Levels</b>	 <b>Ireland</b>
NQF 8 Diploma - Doctoral studies (180 ECTS) – with previously completed integrated academic, or master academic studies	EQF Level 8	NQF 10 Doctoral Degree
		Higher Doctorate
NQF 7.2 Diploma - Specialised academic studies (min 60 ECTS) - with previously completed master academic studies	EQF Level 7	NQF 9 Master Degree
NQF 7.1 Diploma - Integrated academic studies (300 do 360 ECTS)		Postgraduate Diploma
Diploma - Master academic studies (min 60 ECTS) – with previously completed undergraduate (Bachelor with honours) academic studies (min 240 ECTS)		Professional Award
Diploma - Master academic studies (min 120 ECTS) – with previously completed undergraduate (Bachelor) academic studies (min 180 ECTS)		
Diploma - Master applied studies (min 120 ECTS) – with previously completed undergraduate (Bachelor) applied studies (180 ECTS)		
NQF 6.2 Diploma - Undergraduate (Bachelor with honors) academic studies (min 240 ECTS),	EQF Level 6	NQF 8 Honours Bachelor Degree
Specialized applied studies (min 60 ECTS)		Higher Diploma
NQF 6.1 Diploma - Undergraduate (Bachelor) academic studies (min 180 ECTS)		Professional Award
NQF 6.1 Diploma - Undergraduate (Bachelor) applied studies (min 180 ECTS)		NQF 7 Ordinary Bachelor Degree
		Professional Award

# Glossary

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04

# GLOSSARY

## European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is the common European reference framework that links national qualifications systems and presents a tool for comparing and easier understanding and interpretation of qualifications between different countries and education systems in Europe.

## Occupation

Occupation is a set of jobs whose main duties and tasks are interrelated. Job in the International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO-08 is defined as a set of tasks and duties that one person performs or should perform, whether they are employed or self-employed.

## Occupational Standard

Occupational standard is a document that describes duties and tasks, as well as competencies needed for an individual to be able to efficiently perform a set of jobs in a particular occupation, established in accordance with the regulations of the employment sector.

## Qualification

Qualification is a formal recognition of the acquired competencies. An individual obtains a qualification when the competent body determines that he/she has achieved learning outcomes within a certain level and according to the determined qualification standard, which is confirmed by a public document (diploma or certificate).

## Qualification Standard

Qualification standard is a document established in accordance with NQFS, that contains a description of learning objectives and outcomes and contains data that can be used as basis for determination of the level, classification and assessment of qualification.

## Key Competences for Lifelong Learning

Key competencies for lifelong learning represent the ability of the individual to use the acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for personal, social and professional development and further learning. These competencies are embedded in the objectives and standards at all levels of education as new areas, relevant to the continuous acquisition of competencies, leading a private and social life, profession and dealing with real problems and demanding situations.

## Competence

Competence is an integrated set of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes that enable an individual to efficiently perform activities in accordance with a qualification standard.

## Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are clear statements of what an individual is expected to know, understand, and be able to show, or do after completing a learning process. They enable the assessment of the level at which competencies are developed, i.e. the level on which knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities are achieved.

## National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

The National Qualifications Framework is an instrument that includes the number and the description of qualification levels, the relationship between qualifications and pathways of permeability and progress. The National Qualifications Framework encompasses the processes, bodies – organizations responsible for establishing qualifications, ways of obtaining, comparing, identifying, ensuring quality and standards by which they are implemented.

## National Qualifications Classification System (CLASSNQFS)

The National Qualifications Classification System is a qualification classification system in the NQFS, aligned with the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 13-F). The introduction of CLASSNQFS establishes an integrated classification system independently of the existing classifications of educational profiles of pre-university education in 15 fields of work, and classification of Higher Education study programmes in 5 fields (4 educational-scientific and 1 educational-artistic field) and that is 46 scientific, professional and artistic areas within these fields.

## Education/Training Programme

Education/training programme is a structural framework for organizing the learning process, whose elements are pre-regulated. It is adopted in accordance with the established principles, objectives and standards. The term in this document is equated with the term teaching and learning plan and programme (curriculum) in pre-university education and with the term study programme in tertiary education.

## Recognition of Prior Learning

An adult education activity that is implemented through the assessment of knowledge, skills and competencies gained through education, life or work experience and which enables further learning and increased competitiveness in the labour market. The term is equated with the term “validation of non-formal and informal learning”, in line with the European guidelines for validation of non-formal and informal learning.

## NQFS Register

NQFS Register consists of the sub-register of national qualifications, sub-register of qualification standards and sub-register of publicly recognized organizers of adult education activities, with a list of employers with whom the PROAEA realises practical work and/or practical teaching.

## Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area

The qualifications framework in the European Higher Education Area is defined within the Bologna Process. It consists of three main cycles (short cycle, first, second and third cycle) which are described by the Dublin Descriptors.

## Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning includes all forms of learning and participation in various forms of learning activities during individual's life time with the aim of continuous improvement of personal, civic, social and competencies required for work.

## Formal Education

Formal education implies organized learning processes that are implemented through curricula of primary and secondary education and through higher education study programmes.

## Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education implies organized adult learning processes that are implemented through specific programmes with the aim to acquire knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes focused on work, personal and social development.

## Informal Learning

Informal learning implies a process of independent acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and abilities of adults in everyday life, work and social environment.



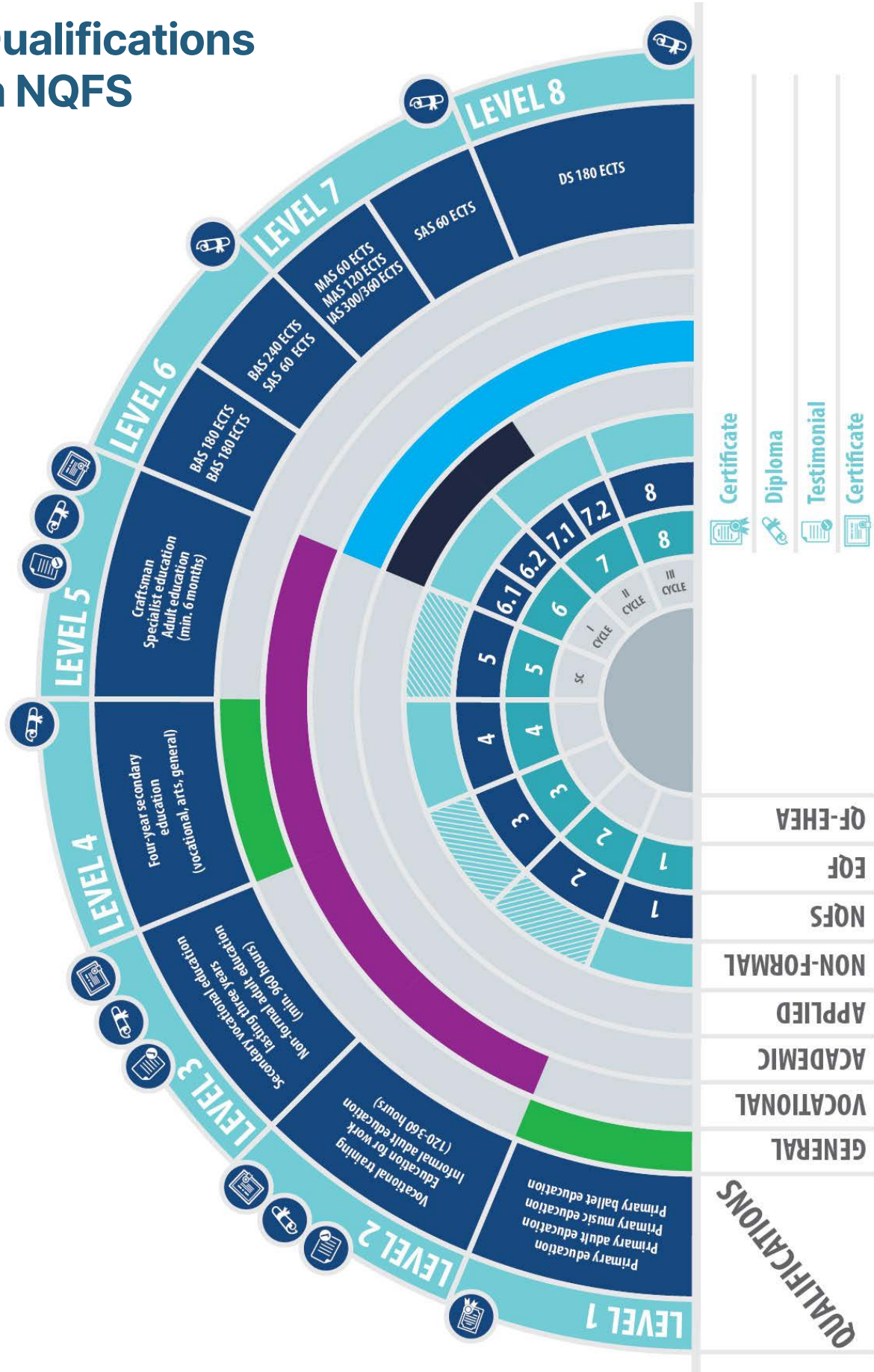
# Annexes

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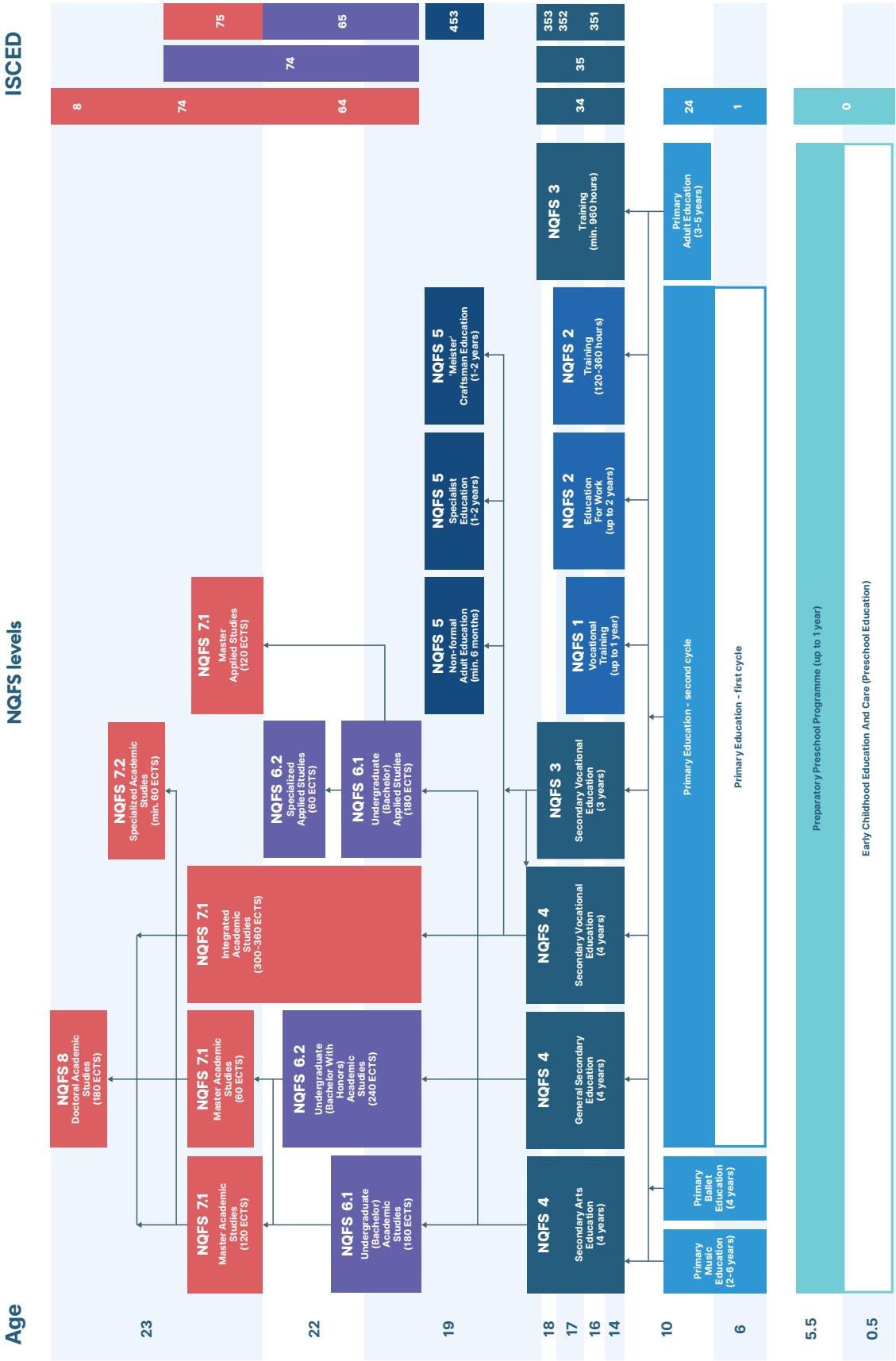


# Qualifications in NQFS



EQF level	NQFS level	NQFS sublevel	QUALIFICATIONS
1	1		primary education, primary adult education, primary music education, primary ballet education
2	2		vocational training lasting up to one year, education for work lasting up to two years, informal adult education with 120-360 hours of training
3	3		secondary vocational education lasting three years, non-formal adult education with training duration of minimum 960 hours
4	4		four-year secondary school education (vocational education, arts education, general education)
5	5		craftsman, i.e. specialist education lasting up to two or one-year, non-formal adult education lasting minimum of six months
6	6	6.1	bachelor academic studies scope of at least 180 ECTS credits bachelor applied studies scope starting from 180 ECTS credits
		6.2	bachelor academic studies scope of at least 240 ECTS credits, specialised applied studies scope of at least 60 ECTS credits
			integrated academic studies scope of 300 to 360 ECTS credits
7	7	7.1	master academic studies scope of at least 60 ECTS credits, with previously achieved bachelor academic studies scope of at least 240 ECTS credits, master academic studies scope of at least 120 ECTS credits (with previously achieved bachelor academic studies scope of 180 ECTS credits), master applied studies scope of at least 120 ECTS credits (with previously achieved bachelor applied studies scope of 180 ECTS credits)
		7.2	specialised academic studies scope of at least 60 ECTS credits (with previously completed master academic studies)
8	8		doctoral studies volume of 180 ECTS credits (with previously completed integrated academic, i.e. master academic studies)

# Structure of the Education System of Serbia



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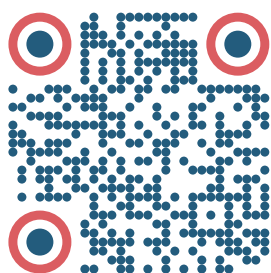


**Office for Dual Education and  
National Qualifications Framework**

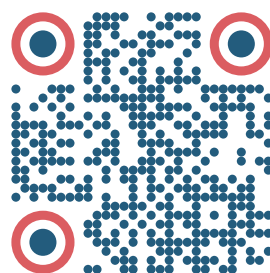
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