

EQF AG PROJECT GROUP ON HORIZONTAL COMPARISON: Initial results

Riga, 20 February 2020

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Horizontal comparison – context

- **Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020')**
 - „...increased transparency and recognition of learning outcomes“
- **New Skills Agenda (2016)**
 - Improving transparency and comparability of qualifications
- **COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 22 May 2017 on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning**
 - „Encourage the use of EQF ...to support the comparison of qualifications and transparency of the learning outcomes.“
 - ANNEX VI - Elements for data fields for the electronic publication of information on qualifications with an EQF level

Horizontal comparison – context

- **DECISION (EU) 2018/646 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 April 2018 on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass)**
 - European framework to **support the transparency and understanding** of skills and qualifications acquired in formal, non-formal and informal settings, including through practical experiences, mobility and volunteering
 - **Europass Portfolio**
 - **Digitally Signed Credentials**
 - **Europass Certificate Supplement**

Horizontal comparison – PHASE 1

- 2015 – 2017 – pilot project supported by EC
- **Goal: to fine-tune and test a methodology for the comparison of levelling decisions and sharing experiences**
- Norway, Latvia, Poland, Hungary, Italy, Sweden and UK-Scotland + CEDEFOP
 - CNC machine operator
 - Mechanical engineer
- PLA on the horizontal comparison (Warsaw, May 2017)
 - Hotel receptionist

Results and conclusions:

- **technical fiche** for comparison of levelled qualifications
- comparability of levelled qualifications **≠** simple match of sets of learning outcomes, **context information** is important
- **no standardisation**, but making core information available,
- **language for the description of qualifications** on the basis of the EQF Recommendation
- 2 main rules for levelling:
 - »» the learning outcomes referred to the **level descriptors**,
 - »» **quality assurance systems**.

Horizontal comparison – PHASE 2

- 2019 – 2020 – working group chaired by EC
- Belgium (FL), Luxemburg, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia + CEDEFOP, Business Europe
- EQF levels 4-6: ICT, Social Work
- **Goal: test consistency of levelling qualifications** based on learning outcomes across countries in order to achieve transparency and comparability of qualifications
- **strengthen the overall consistency of the EQF and trust** in the levelling of qualifications

Criteria for analysing and comparing qualifications

- **Step 1 – Analysing separate national qualifications** (basic structure of learning outcomes statements)
- **Step 2 – Comparing national qualifications with reference to the learning outcomes descriptions and the context**
 - *perspective of the learner (K-S-C/R/A)*
 - *action verbs (indication of a level)*
 - *taxonomy (Bloom, EQF descriptors)*
 - *the occupational and/or social and/or educational context*

The initial analysis showed:

- In LO, the perspective of the learner is addressed, structured according to KSC/R/A, well defined
- Lists of LOs are long and detailed, action verbs are used (but not always)
- contextual information is needed to assess the allocated levels to qualifications

Draft fiche for horizontal comparisons

Country:	Source of information	Country	Country ...	Results of the horizontal comparison of qualifications and their levelling – similarities and differences
1. Title of the qualification (official and English)				
2. NQF and EQF levels				
3. Summary of the qualification				
4. Development, updating, renewal				
<u>5. Context information</u>				
5.1 Access requirements				
5.2 Delivery mode of the qualification				
5.3 Purpose of the qualification in education and training				
5.4 Purpose of the qualification in the labour market				
5.5 International standards (if applicable)				
5.6 Competent/awarding/certifying body				
5.7 Assessment of student/learner				
5.8 Quality assurance				
5.9 Information on the hierarchy of national official documents describing qualifications				
5.10 Other relevant context information (if any)				
6. Extract or full text of learning outcomes describing the qualification				
7. Analysis of the organization of the learning outcomes				
7.1 Definition and description of the learning outcomes				
7.2 Strengths and weakness of the				

particular approach				
8. Alignment between learning outcomes and NQF level descriptor				
9. Method of allocating levels to qualifications				

Context analysis

- crucial for the broader understanding of the qualification within the national system

- **Access** requirements
- **Delivery** mode
- **Purpose** of the qualification - education and training
- **Purpose of the** qualification - labour market
- **International standards**
- **Competent/awarding/certifying body**
- **Assessment** of student/learner
- **Quality assurance**
- Hierarchy of **national official documents**
- Method of **allocating levels** to qualifications
- **Other** relevant context information (if any)

LOs analysis

- **Organisation of LOs**
- **Definition and description of LOs**
- **Strengths and weaknesses of the particular approach**
- **Alignment between LOs and NQF level descriptors**
- **Method of allocating levels to qualifications**

Some findings of the interim analysis

- **Similarities between qualifications**
 - Address the perspective of the learner
 - Quite long and detailed
 - Use of professional jargon
- **No indication of differences in levelling** (level 4)
- The **focus** of the learning outcome statements **differ** (different labour markets)
- **Use of action verbs** varies
- **Not always clear link between LO statements and NQF descriptors and taxonomies**
- **Context analysis is important** - justification for levelling cannot be easily made from the LO statements, since these only to a very limited extent reflect the level descriptors.

Expected impacts

- **Improved learning outcomes** (structure, guidelines)
- **Quality assurance** (LOs, qualifications, data, contexts, ..)
- **Improving the transparency** of the contents of the qualifications
- **Better and accessible data** for comparing qualifications
- **Mutual learning** (between Member States, stakeholders, ...)

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION**

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