Referencing of the Kosovo Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications Framework

Teuta Danuza
Republic of Kosova

- 1,804,944 million inhabitants
- Labor market indicators 2014
  - Activity rate: 41.60.3%
  - Employment rate: 47.2%
  - Unemployment rate: 26.9%
  - Unemployment rate of youth (aged 15-24): 61.0%
- 81,671 students in upper secondary education
- 33,153 HE students in private institutions
- 75,196 HE students in public institutions.
General Structure of the Education System in Kosovo (Source: Draft Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021)
Educational System

Formal Provision

- 43 Pre-School
- 985 Primary education
- 119 Secondary education
  - 49 gymnasium
  - 70 VET school
  - 7 Competence Centre
- 6 Special school

Institutions in Higher Education

- 10 Public HE
- 29 Private HE

General education in Kosovo
Pre-primary and pre-school education: Age 0-6
- Pre-Primary
  - 21,383 Students;
- Pre-School
  - 5,389 Students

Primary education
Grade 1-5, Age: 6-10
- 288,378 Students

Lower secondary education
Grade 6-9, Age: 11-14
- Primary Lower Secondary
  - 280,596 Students

Upper secondary education - Gymnasium
Grade 10-12, Age: 15-17
- 102,213 students
Educational System

Non-Formal Provision

- 36 accredited institutions
- 27 qualification validated
- 56 verified occupational standards
National Qualification Framework – NQF

• 2005 Working Group

The Qualifications Law (2008) defines the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as the national mechanism for classifying qualifications awarded within the National Qualification System according to a set of criteria defining levels and types of outcomes of learning.

• Published 2011
Governance of the NQF

Strategic Management of NQF - Governing Board of NQA - Representatives of ministries, universities, VET providers, social partners, student representatives & NGOs

Operational Management of NQF from the Authorized Bodies

- MEST General Education
- NQA VET Qualifications
- KAA Higher Education
Objectives of NQF

- Provide a basis for co-operation and mutual recognition between NQF and EQF.
- Provide transparency by making clear the nature of qualifications and relationship between qualifications and providing a basis for comparison of achievements across all parts of the training system.
- Stimulate development of lifelong learning, including continuing skills development for adults.
- Increasing access to assessment and certification, encouraging flexible and individualized learning process.
- Establish a system for the accumulation and transfer of credit.
- Improve employability and learning opportunities for individuals by providing a basis for recognition and certification of learning and achievements.
- Support the continuation and sustainability of demand-led education and training system reforms.
- Ensure that qualifications are relevant to employment and learning, and meet the needs of learners, the economy and education and training institutions.
- Increasing quality and relevance of education and training by stimulating the development of qualifications, based on internationally comparable standards of knowledge, skills and competences and supported by rigorous quality assurance.
National Qualifications Framework is built on the principles of "learning outcomes"

The 8 levels of the NQF are defined by LO
Types of qualifications

• Higher Education Qualifications
• General Educational Qualifications.
• National Combined Qualifications
• National Vocational Qualifications.
• Qualifications based on International Standards.
• Tailored Qualifications
Types of qualifications

External requirements (eg the rules of the Bologna Framework, the Kosovo Curriculum Framework)

Purpose (eg acquiring new skills or knowledge, achieving professional competence)

Content (eg content based on academic disciplines, educational subjects, an occupational profile, a skillset related to a work role)

Kinds of outcome to be achieved and assessed (eg generic knowledge or skills, subject-specific or profile specific knowledge or skills)

Level of difficulty (where the qualification fits into the NQF, based on a comparison between the outcomes of the qualification and the level descriptors of the NQF)

Size (expressed in a credit value)

Entry recommendations and/or requirements (the previous qualifications and/or experience which is recommended or required as a basis for undertaking the qualification)

Quality assurance arrangements (the agencies responsible for validation, accreditation, assessment and the processes and criteria used in quality assurance)

Status (type of provision – formal, nonformal and/or progression opportunities attached to the qualification)
# Types of VET qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>National Combined Qualifications</th>
<th>National Vocational Qualifications</th>
<th>International Standards Qualifications</th>
<th>Tailored Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>External requirements</strong></td>
<td>National Occupational Standards Kosovo Curriculum Framework</td>
<td>National Occupational Standards</td>
<td>Standards from another country / internationally recognised standards</td>
<td>The operational needs of a particular organisation, agency or enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose(s)</strong></td>
<td>Professional knowledge, skills and competences based on National OS personal development</td>
<td>The professional knowledge, skills and competences associate with a specific occupation or work role.</td>
<td>General or professional knowledge, skills and competences</td>
<td>General or professional knowledge, skills and competences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>knowledge, skills and competences based on National OS cross-curricular competences, theoretical studies up to level 4, school subjects.</td>
<td>knowledge, skills and competences based on National Occupational Standards</td>
<td>knowledge, skills and competences based on international standards</td>
<td>knowledge, skills and competences based on standards identified by the organisation, agency or enterprise which requires the qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level(s)</strong></td>
<td>levels 2 - 4</td>
<td>levels 2 and above</td>
<td>any level</td>
<td>any level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit value(s)</strong></td>
<td>a range of credit values according to the modules in qualification</td>
<td>a range of credit values according to the modules in the qualification</td>
<td>a range of credit values according to the modules in the qualification</td>
<td>a range of credit values according to the modules in the qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal basis</strong></td>
<td>Law on Pre-University Education Law on VET</td>
<td>Law on VET</td>
<td>Administrative Instructions issued by the NQA</td>
<td>Administrative Instructions issued by the NQA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality assurance</strong></td>
<td>MEST and the NQA</td>
<td>NQA</td>
<td>NQA</td>
<td>NQA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Types</strong></td>
<td>National Combined Certificate and National Combined Diploma</td>
<td>National Vocational Certificate and National Vocational Diploma</td>
<td>Certificate and Diploma</td>
<td>Tailored Certificate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# National Qualifications Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NQF Level</th>
<th>Education programmes</th>
<th>Contains qualifications associated with</th>
<th>EQF ref. level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Higher education - Bologna 3\textsuperscript{rd} cycle (Doctorate)</td>
<td>Currently available qualifications (Type) Doctorate</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Higher education - Bologna 2\textsuperscript{nd} cycle (Master)</td>
<td>Master degree</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Higher education - Bologna 1\textsuperscript{st} cycle (Bachelor)</td>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bologna short cycle and/or post-secondary VET</td>
<td>Title of qualifications still unknown Certificates of non-formal providers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Preparation for progression into higher education and/or labour market entry</td>
<td>Matura diploma in general or vocational subjects, Vocational education diploma</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Preparation for labour market entry (young people and adults)</td>
<td>Vocational education certificate Certificates of non-formal VET providers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Progression from lower to upper secondary education (young people), preparation for labour market (adults)</td>
<td>No existing qualifications of formal education system identified Certificates of non-formal providers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Basic education</td>
<td>No existing qualifications of formal education system identified Certificates of non-formal providers (E)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Minimum level of basic skills, inc. literacy/numeracy, required for entry to lowest level of employment**
The Format of the Learning Module

Qualification Title: .................
Module Title: ...................
Credit value: ..................
Learning Outcomes:
1. .....................
2. .....................

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Learning outcome 1:
• Performance (assessment) criterion...
• Performance (assessment) criterion...
• Performance (assessment) criterion...
Range (of conditions, equipment, tools etc.), knowledge, skills, attitudes
Assessment strategy
• Evidence requirements (forms of evidence, quantity of evidence)
• Methods of assessment

---------------------------------
Learning outcome 2:
• Performance (assessment) criterion...
• Performance (assessment) criterion...
• Performance (assessment) criterion...
Range (of conditions, equipment, tools etc.), knowledge, skills, attitudes
Assessment strategy
• Evidence requirements (forms of evidence, quantity of evidence)
• Methods of assessment

Etc.
Development of qualifications

• Qualifications/module are developed by MEST, AVETAE, different ministries and other providers,
• Qualifications should be based in national standards, international standards or company standards (in tailored qualifications)

Translate of OS into Qualification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function Key activities</th>
<th>Module/program title LO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance Criteria</td>
<td>Performance (Assessment) criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range statement</td>
<td>Conditions of performance and assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Guide</td>
<td>Evidence requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Qualifications should have clear and be measurable learning outcomes;
• Qualifications should have credit value for each module, etc.
Format of occupational standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function: Erect masonry walls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the shape and features of the walls to be erected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erect masonry walls of different shapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verify the quality of the erected walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities (and results)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic engineering graphics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and safety norms specific for construction industry and for construction site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication (basic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Implementation of NQF

The implementation of the NQF:

• The process of Development and Verification of Occupational Standards

• The process of Development and Validation of Qualifications

• The process of Accreditation of institutions which offer vocational education and training (VET) and HE
NQF Referencing Process
Two stages:

• First stage -2012 -2014
• Second stage – 2015 (EQF advisory)

• The referencing report of NQF with EQF is built on three main pillars: 1. General Education; 2. Vocational Education & Training and Adult Learning 3. Higher Education in Kosovo;

• NQA had organized 7 workshops in relevant areas of Education in Kosovo taking into consideration the inputs, comments and additions by stakeholders;

• NQA established a core working group to draft the report in order of discussing, modifying and finalizing it after 7 meetings;

• Consulting with international experts / Public Discussion & Final conference
Structure of Referencing Report

1. Executive summary

2. Description of the national qualifications system: General Education; VET & Adult learning and High Education;

3. Background information of development of NQA, NQF and Referencing Process;

4. Main part of the report: addressing the “10 criteria”, for relevant areas of Education: General Education; VET & Adult learning and High Education

5. Annexes
Criterion 1

NPC: National Qualifications Authority

Other responsible bodies:

- Ministry of Education Science and Technology,
- Kosovo Accreditation Agency,
- Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare,
- Municipal Education Directorates,
- Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult learning,
- Inspectorate,
- Public and private education and training providers,
- Public and private providers of general education,
- Universities/private colleges,
- Chamber of Commerce
- Trade unions,
- NGOs and donors and donors’ projects,
- Local experts on GE, VET and HE,
- Student representatives
Criterion 2

*Structural, conceptual, and linguistic comparison of KQF and EQF*

• The structure of the frameworks, as they are both based on an level structure
• The basic underlying concepts, as they are both based Learning outcomes
• LO are described in terms of knowledge (practical and theoretical), skills (practical and cognitive) and competences (domain of autonomy and personal responsibility).
### Example of level descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF level 3 descriptors</th>
<th>Kosovo NQF level 3 descriptors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts</strong> in a field of work or study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Understands **key aspects** of educational or occupational area and is able to use this knowledge, to achieve structural learning outcomes, or at the workplace.  
- Understands and evaluates the **facts, principles, ideas and general processes** needed to carry out the structural learning or to work successfully in educational or occupational area. |
| A range of **cognitive and practical skills** required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, material and information |  
- Applies a number of **cognitive and practical skills** needed to perform tasks and solve problems in a specific educational or occupational area.  
- Solves problems by applying appropriate **methods, tools, materials** and information needed. |
| **Take responsibility** for completion of tasks in work or study |  
- Responsible for carrying out tasks, solving problems and reaching the required outcomes, without direct supervision, at this level. |
| **Adapt own behaviour** to circumstances in solving problems |  
- **Adapts behaviours for solving problems** in proactive participation in structured learning or working environment.  
- Selects structural tasks regarding this educational or professional field, and when required, can make modifications in the approach to duty.  
- Supervises the work or structured learning performed by others - these are routine tasks assigned by: teachers, trainers or managers, in order to develop autonomous responsibility for their behaviour in relation to learning and work. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF level 4 descriptors</th>
<th>Kosovo NQF level 4 descriptors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad context within a field of work or study** | - Understands extensive theoretical knowledge and analyze information regarding the relevant field of study or work.  
- Understands facts and determine the basic principles in broad context within the relevant field of study or work.  
- Selects, analyzes and implements actions and procedures within a relevant field of study or work. |
| **A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study** | - Applies a number of practical and thinking skills in order to perform tasks and solve problems in educational or occupational area.  
- Performs tasks at the level of qualified worker or structured learning at the level required for entry to higher education studies.  
- Demonstrates various practical skills to perform complex tasks. |
| **Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study context that are usually predictable but are subject to change.** | - Undertakes work or structured learning within the boundaries and normal practices of an educational or occupational area.  
| **Supervise routine work of others taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities.** | - Make changes in the planned approach, while performing activities.  
- Works independently and take full responsibility for planning and completing the work or structured learning and for the quality of the outcomes.  
- Supervises others who are carrying out routine activities, evaluate their performance and take steps to create improvements on the basis of this evaluation. |
Criterion 3
Learning outcomes are basis for the development of qualifications

• General education learning outcome have been recently introduced (2011 –piloted in 92 school). Curricula are based on learning outcomes defined for each level of education
• VET curricula's based on learning outcomes have been implement gradually. Occupational standards are the starting point for outcomes-based VET curricula and outcomes-based VET qualifications
• In Higher Education all the programs are LO based (ensured through accreditation process)
Criterion 3

Learning outcomes and credit

- **ECVET is used in VET** - 1 credit is awarded for 10 notional learning hours
- **ECTS is used in HE** - 25 notional hours

2.5 ECVET points = 1 ECTS point
Criterion 3

**Learning outcomes and Validation**

- Law on National Qualifications
- Administrative Instruction (MEST) No. 31/2014 for Prior Learning Recognition
- Policy and procedures for recognition of prior learning
- Training of Trainers modules for the RPL system

*to be piloted in 2017*
Criterion 4

**Learning outcomes and Validation**

- **Law on National Qualifications**
- **Administrative Instruction (MEST) No. 31/2014 for Prior Learning Recognition**
- **Policy and procedures for recognition of prior learning**
- **Training of Trainers modules for the RPL system**

*to be piloted in 2017*
Validation of qualifications

The process of validation of qualification is defined by Administrative Instruction of NQA

• Qualifications/module for validation must be measurable learning outcomes;
• Level of qualifications/module must have clearly defined LO according to the descriptors of the NQF;
• Credit value of qualifications/module which are included in the NQF, must be determined accurately according to the NQF; etc.

• NQA has validate 27 qualifications and these qualifications are put in NQF in level II, III, IV and V.
Criteria 4

Methodology for leveling and placement of the qualification is laid out in the law and bylaws and is transparent – accessible via website

Guidelines on how VET qualifications are validated (control process and qualifications evaluations according to the criteria) prior to get approved and placed in the framework and how HE study programmes are accredited.
Register of the qualifications

Based on the body responsible for the quality assurance arrangements

- VET qualification register (36 qualifications)
- HE qualification register (415 study programmes)

Only qualifications that of quality assured are placed in the framework
Criterion 5

General Education

• internal quality assurance procedures recently introduced (institution provider, Self-Assessment Report);
• external quality assurance
  approval of programs, inspection and monitoring of all schools by relevant bodies such as Ministry of Education, inspectorate and municipalities

VET and HE

• Internal quality assurance (institution provider, Self-Assessment Report);
• External quality assurance
  Validation and Accreditation by NQA (VET), KAA (HE), licensing by MEST and Inspectorate.

KAA full member of the CEENQA, EQAR and INQAAHE
NQA full member of the EQAVET
Institution decides to request accreditation for the first time

**PHASE 1**
Institution advice and documentation from NQA and became self-assessment. Institution submits this to NQA.

**PHASE 2**
NQA appoints and informs the panel of experts and the chairman of the panel. Panel of experts
Visit the applicant institution
It completes the report and make recommendations
It presents the report to the NQA and 1 copy to the applicant institution

**PHASE 3**
Governing Board of NQA decides on the recommendations and inform the panel the applicant institution, which may appeal.

**PHASE 4**
NQA publishes final decision

**Decision 1**
The institution is accredited /re-accredited for a period of set (5 years).

**Decision 2**
The institution must meet conditions (make improvements) a certain period.

**Decision 3**
The institution is not accredited. In accredited institution's case, he removed accreditation.
Stage of accreditation for HE Institutions

1. Intern Evaluation (Self-Evaluation by the Institution)
2. External Evaluation by an independent group of experts
3. The accreditation decision by the State Quality Assurance based on external evaluation
4. Follow-up procedure for quality improvement in the evaluated Institution and an agreed Action Plan
Criterion 6

• National Qualifications Authority
  external quality assurance of the VET qualifications

• Ministry of Education Science and Technology
  external quality assurance of the general qualification

• Kosovo Accreditation Agency
  external quality assurance of higher education qualifications
Criterion 7

When selecting the international experts, the following criteria were considered:

- Expert’s experience in developing and introducing NQF;
- Experience in developing referencing reports and reviewing referencing report;
- Expert’s knowledge in education field
- Expert’s knowledge concerning the Kosovo education system

**John Hart, - NQF expert**

**Michael Graham** – ETF, Specialist in Qualification Systems - Strategic Project Leader - Qualifications Operations Department

**Dr. Mike Coles** – EQF AG member
Criterion 8

It has been endorsed and adopted by the NQA governing board as a body responsible for development and maintenance of the NQF.

The report is published and is available on the website of NQA (www.akkks.net), on the website of the MEST (www.masht-gov.net) and AKA (www.akreditimi-ks.org)
Criterion 10

Diploma supplements designed in alignment with the EUROPASS are issued both for the higher and vocational education diplomas and certificates. Besides providing a clear description, level, context, content and status of the studies obtained according to the current legislation, the diploma supplements should provide a clear reference to the NQF and EQF levels.
Next steps

• Post- accreditation Monitoring,

• Further upgrading of qualification register

• Piloting and Implementation of RPL

• Accreditation of VET school

• Further development of OS and qualifications
Thank you for your attention!

Electronically signed on 16/12/2016 13:39 (UTC+01) in accordance with article 4.2 (Validity of electronic documents) of Commission Decision 2004/563