

**Qualifications frameworks  
and  
the bridging of institutions and sectors:  
the Polish experience**

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Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland  
Warsaw University of Technology



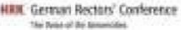
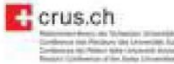
## Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland

- founded in 1997 by rectors representing academic HEIs (public or private), i.e. HEIs eligible to award doctoral degrees
- part of HE system - basic rights and obligations defined in the Law on Higher Education (2005)
- major opinion body for HE sector
- 108 members (including 12 private HEIs)
- ca. 70% of student population



## NRCs regularly commenting on European policies

- CPU
- swissuniversities
- **CRASP**
- HRK
- UUK
- VSNU



Joint declaration on Doctoral Training in Europe

...14...

### Protect Horizon 2020 from the EU investment package

Published on 14 December 2020

The European Commission is planning a new investment programme financed with guaranteed from the EU budget. We urge the European Council at its meeting on the 18th December to decide not to take the money from the Horizon 2020 budget. European research needs long-term, reliable and adequate funding of excellent research to the EU to deliver sustainable growth and jobs.

While we welcome the additional infrastructure investments set out in the further investment plan, we are concerned that, according to the European Commission, a substantial portion of the EU guarantee should be taken from the budget of Horizon 2020. This would affect the budgets of the European Research Council (ERC), one of the most important funders of excellent basic research, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions for the support of early-career researchers, as well as researcher fellowships to research infrastructure across Europe.

An EU investment guarantee is expected to be of great benefit to the real economy. However, research is a prerequisite for innovation, without basic research the pipeline to innovation will cut off. Research must be publicly funded in an appropriate way and any cuts to the Horizon 2020 budget will result in a performance loss for the whole European research and innovation system.

We therefore urge the EU policy makers to refrain from using the allocated Horizon 2020 budget to finance the investment package.

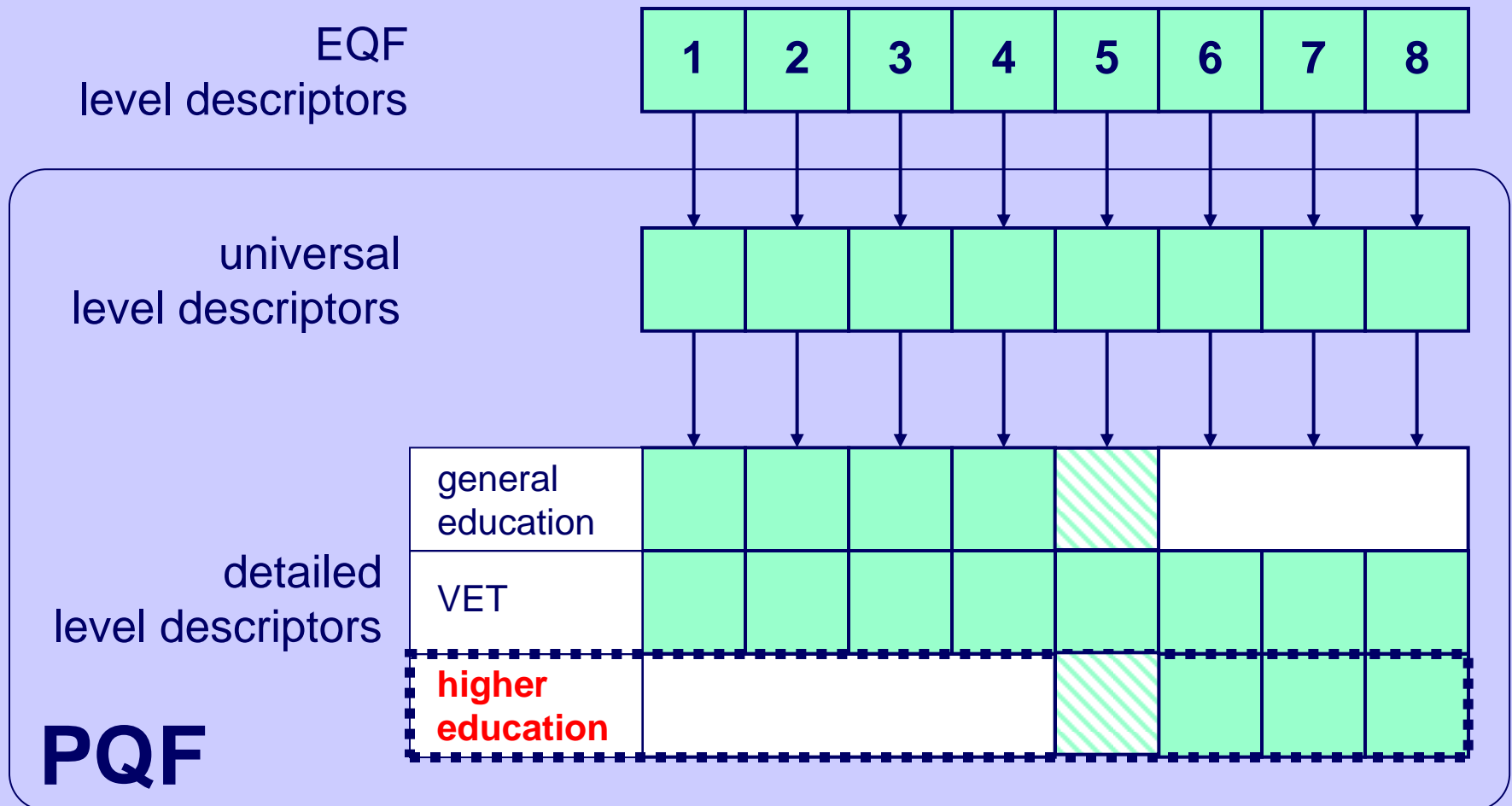


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**National Qualifications Framework:  
higher education perspective  
(not limited to NQF for HE)**

# NQF for HE – part of PQF

## Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF) for LLL



Development of NQF for HE – pilot for PQF

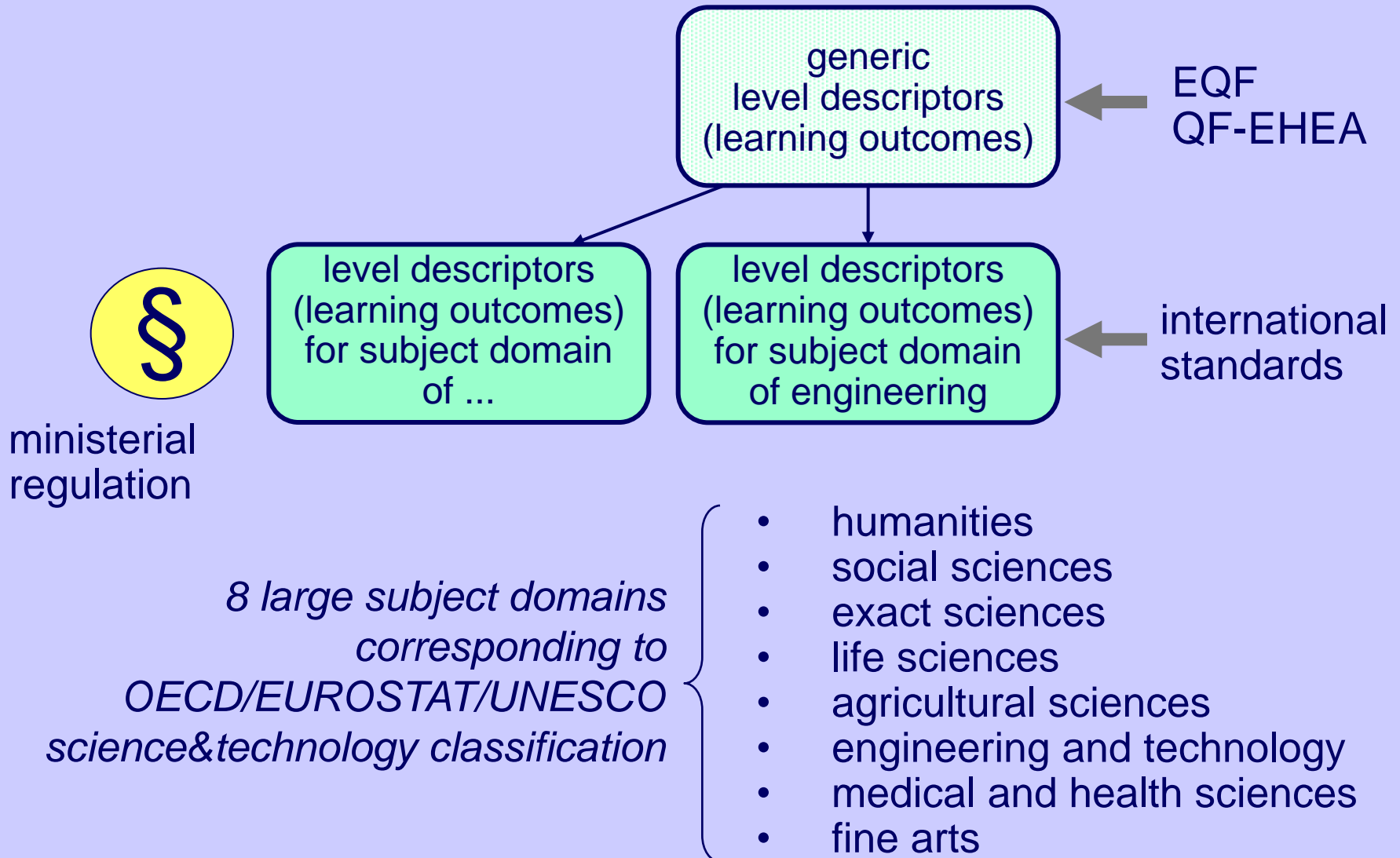
# NQF for HE – introduction

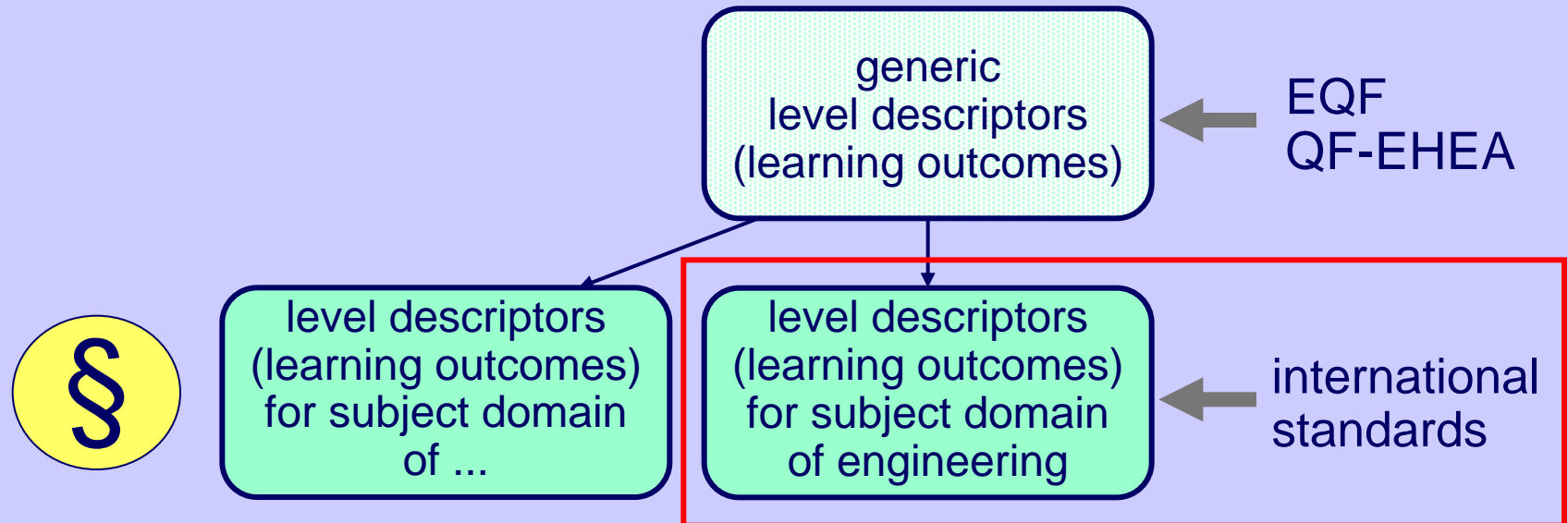
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## Amendments to *Law on Higher Education* (2011)

- ❑ shift to Learning Outcomes (LOs) as a means to describe study programmes and resulting qualifications
- ❑ formal introduction of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (NQF for HE)

all study programmes offered in academic year 2012/2013 and later required to comply with the NQF for HE





*developed by teams of  
subject domain experts  
(work started in 2008)*

for each subject domain,

LOs (knowledge, skills and social competences) for

- two cycles (Bachelor, Master)
- two profiles (academically- and practically-oriented)



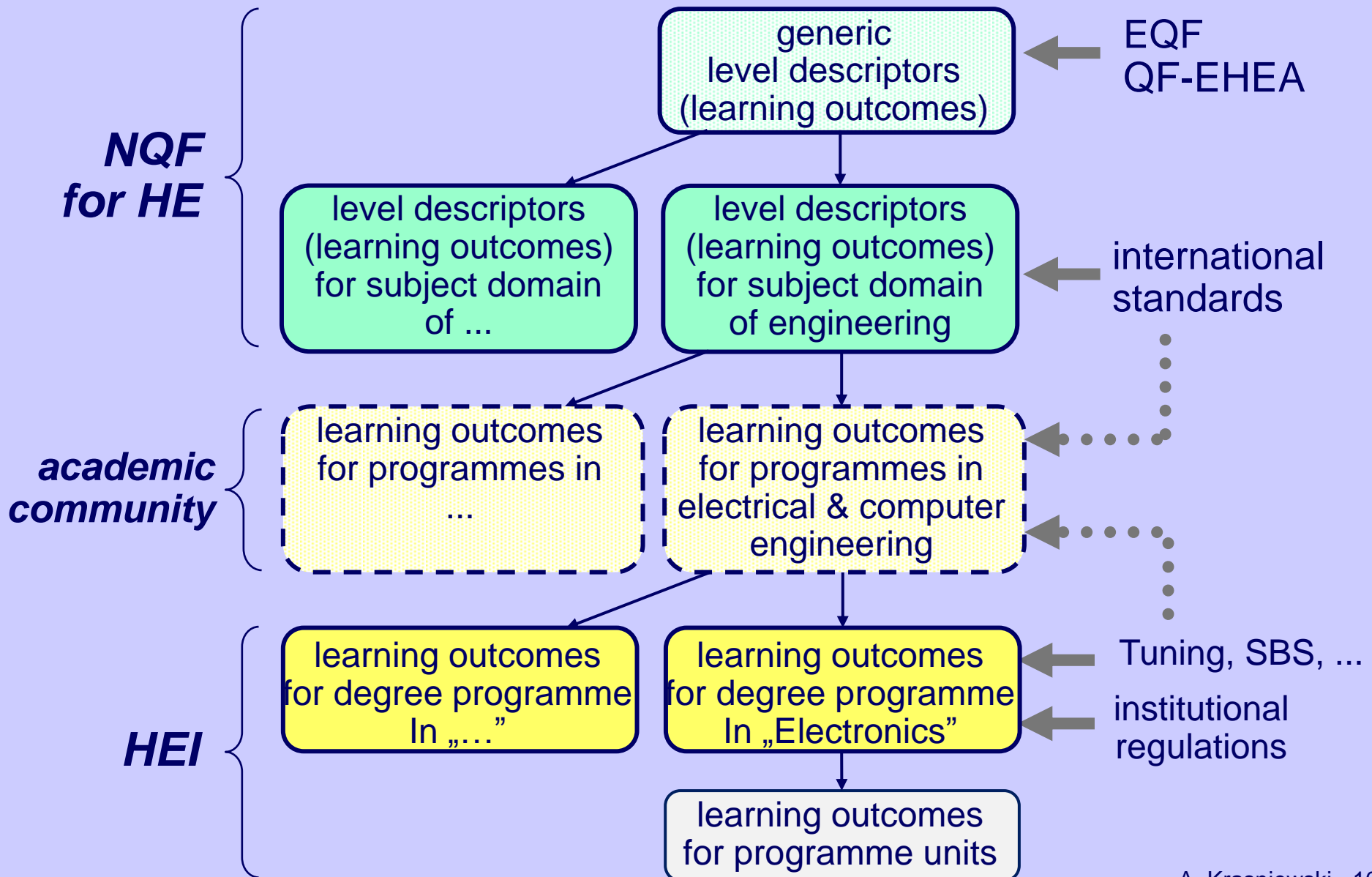
# Defining LOs for a subject domain

## Example ENGINEERING



- ❑ ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, USA)
- ❑ JABEE (Japan Accreditation Board for Engineering Education)
- ❑ SBS (Subject Benchmark Statements, UK)
- ❑ IEA (International Engineering Alliance)
- ❑ EUR-ACE (European Accredited Engineer project)
- ❑ CDIO (Conceive-Design-Implement-Operate initiative)

# Hierarchy of LOs



# NQF for HE – common effort

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Development and implementation:  
process controlled and „owned” to a large extent  
by academic community

- ❑ 16 000 participants at conferences, seminars, workshops, panel discussions, public debates etc.,
- ❑ leading role of members of the national team of Bologna experts as instructors, moderators and trainers at these events

but also

- ❑ external stakeholders, incl. employers, involved in defining LOs and developing curricula

# NQF for HE – benchmarking

Project (2012-2013)

*Benchmarking of NQF for HE implementation*

part of programme

**BENCHMARKING IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

coordinated by the Polish Rectors Foundation

(think-tank linked to the Polish Rectors Conference - CRASP)



participants

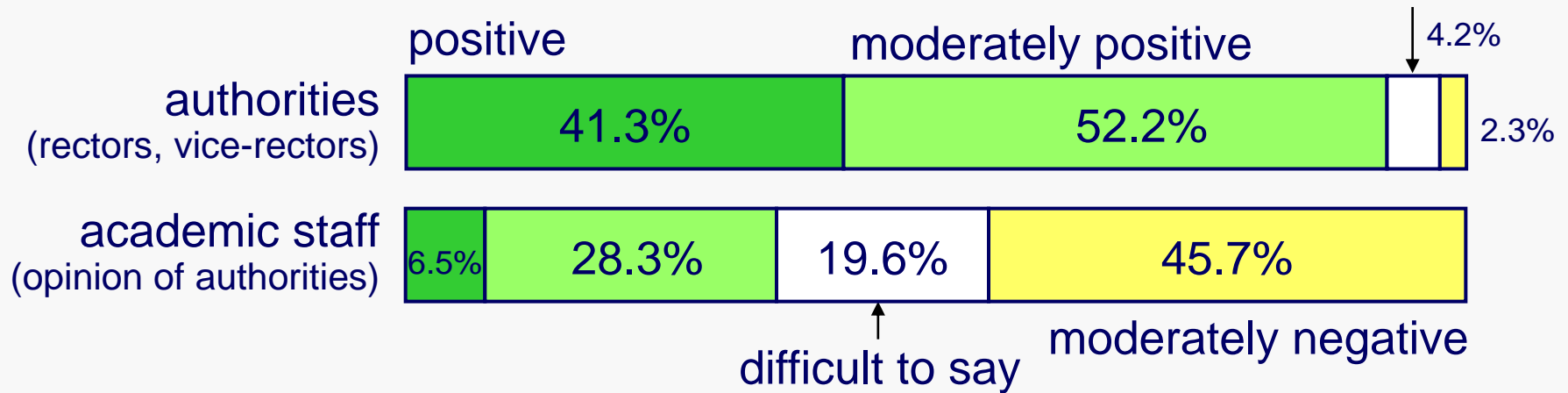
- ❑ 46 HEIs
- ❑ 327 faculties



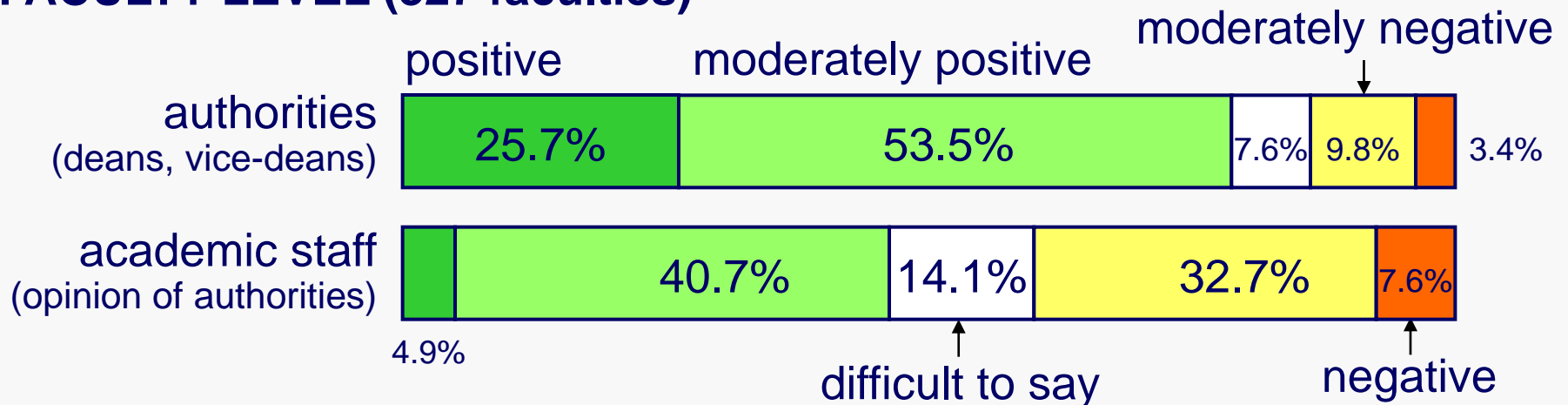
<http://www.frp.org.pl>

# Attitude towards NQF for HE

## UNIVERSITY LEVEL (46 HEIs)

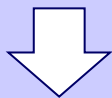


## FACULTY LEVEL (327 faculties)



## redesigned curricula

- LOs orientation
- increased flexibility (more elective courses)
- shift towards student-centred teaching (fewer lectures, more project-based learning modules, etc.)
- new, more comprehensive methods for verification of LOs achieved by students
- more active involvement of external stakeholders
- components that make it easier to obtain professional qualifications



**NQF for HE – a reform tool for Polish HE**

# Difficulties and problems

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- ❑ ambiguous statements in legal acts; unnecessary overregulations, resulting in excessive bureaucracy
- ❑ significant time pressure
- ❑ insufficient engagement of some members of academic staff

however, a shift from an openly demonstrated resistance to at least partial acceptance observed at many HEIs

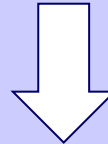
# From NQF for HE to PQF (for LLL)

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experience with the development  
and implementation of the NQF for HE

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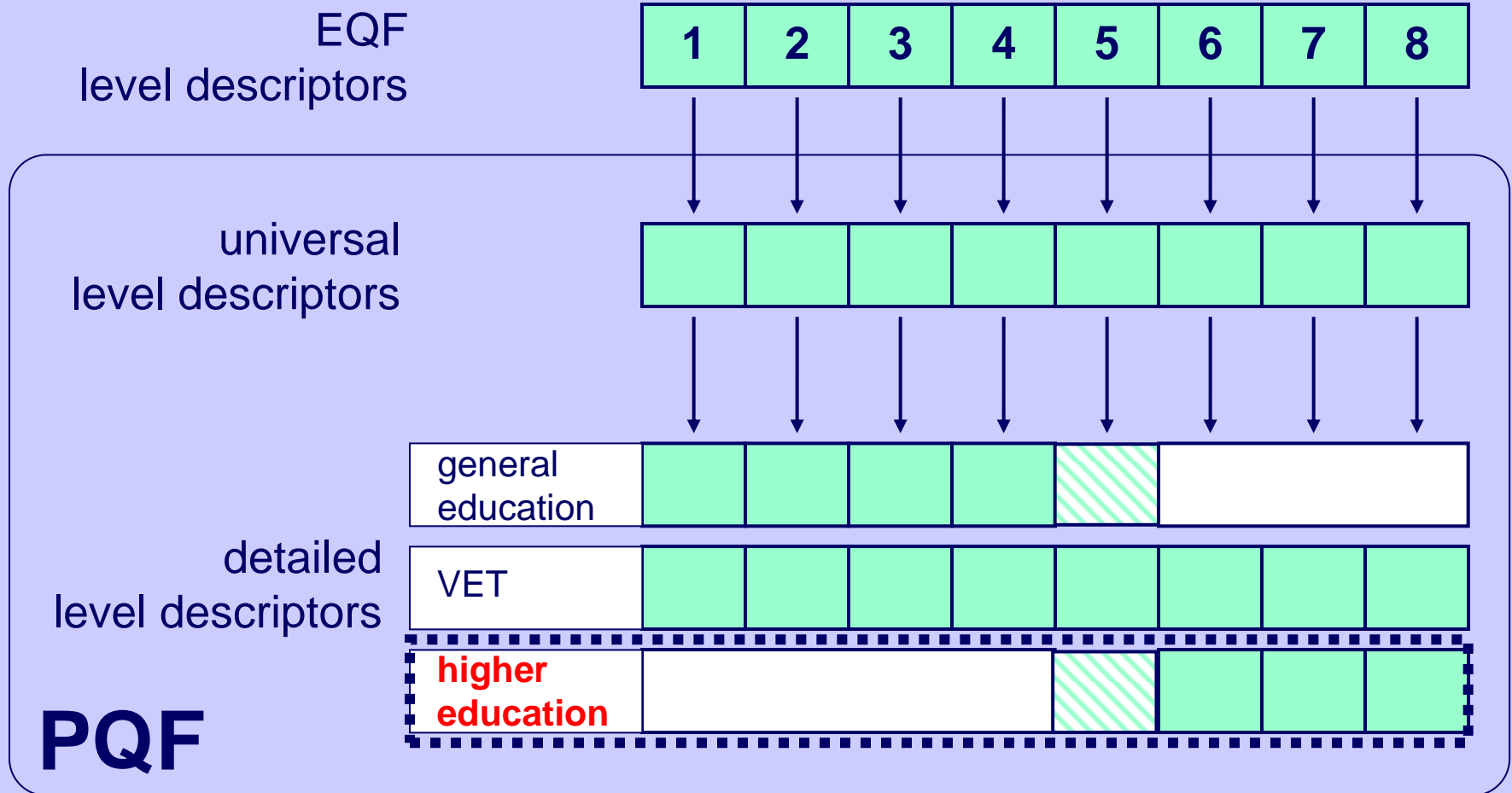
broad public debate



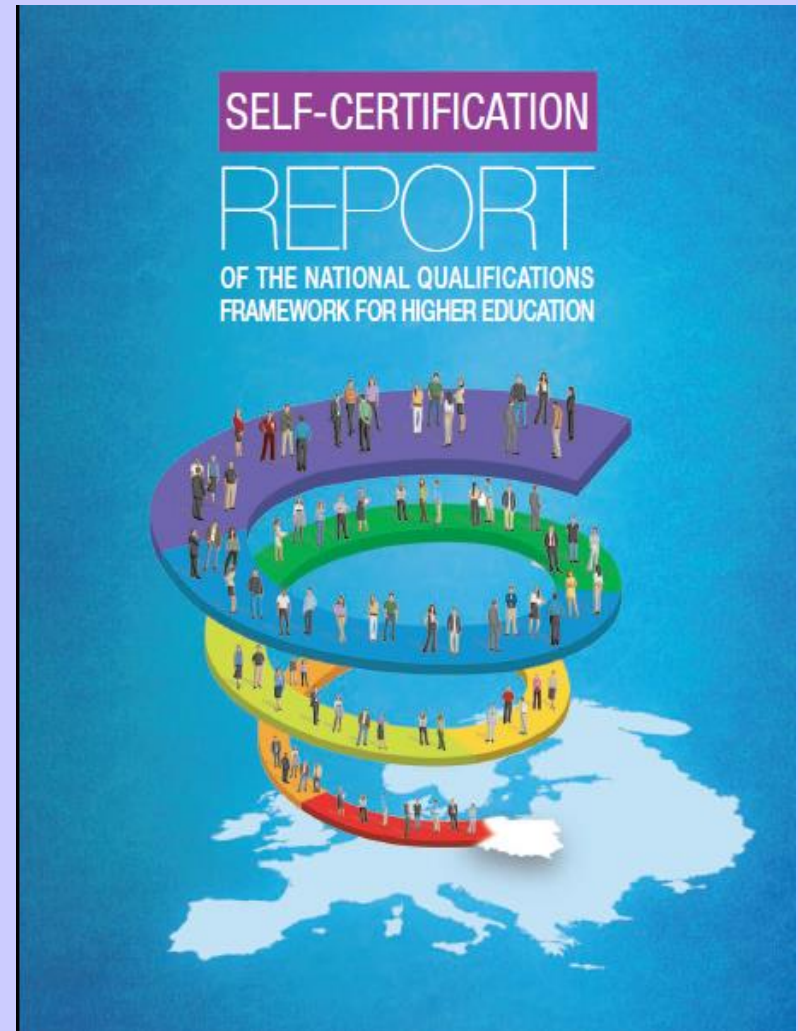
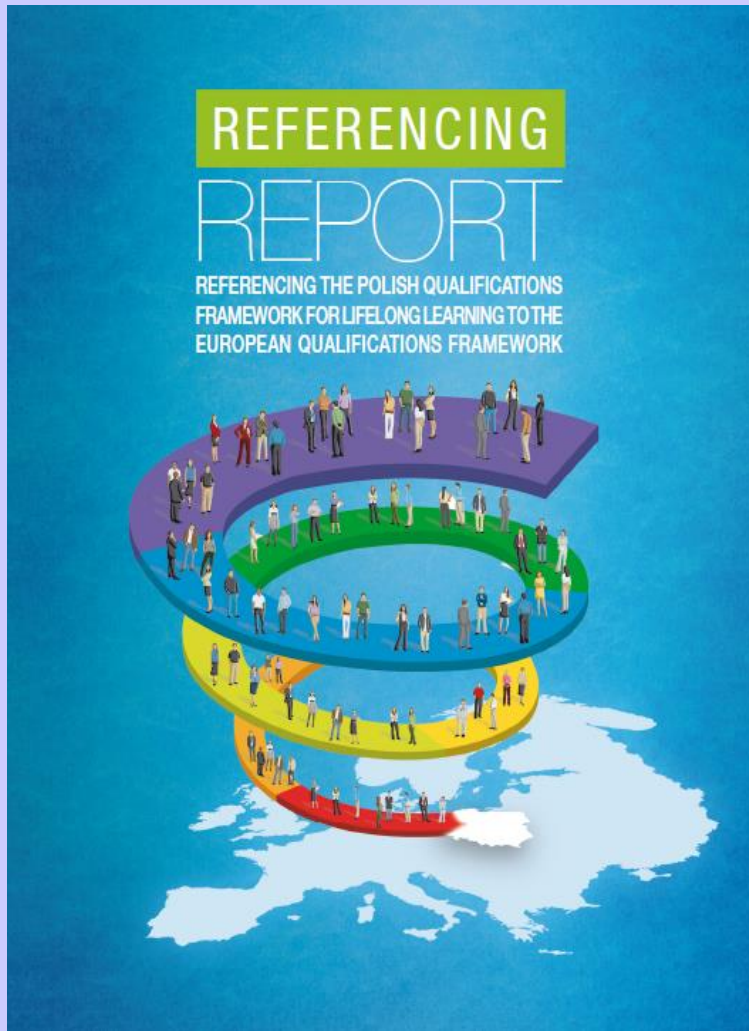
development of the NQF for LLL:  
Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF)



# Polish Qualifications Framework



# Referencing and self-certification (2013)



*submitted for approval  
by EQF Advisory Group*

# Formal introduction of PQF

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## *Act on the Integrated Qualifications System*

(adopted in December 2015)

### **Integrated Qualifications System (IQS)**

elements functioning in Polish society and economy, and new instruments, to effectively integrate the entire system

- Polish Qualifications Framework
- Integrated Qualifications Register (IQR), containing all qualifications included in the integrated system
- rules concerning quality assurance of qualifications awarded outside the system of formal education to be included in IQR

# Formal introduction of PQF



# Introduction of PQF – HE perspective

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*Act on the Integrated Qualifications System*

- opportunity to improve/simplify the NQF for HE  
(being part of the PQF)

# Refinement of NQF for HE



Rada Główna  
Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego

Raport nr 1/2015

Rady Głównej Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego

*„Problematyka odbiurokratyzowania systemu kształcenia,  
w tym KRK, z uwzględnieniem treści  
regulacji i stosowanych praktyk”*

pod redakcją prof. Zbigniewa Marciniaka

Warszawa, luty 2015

report of Council for Science  
and Higher Education  
(February 2015)

recommendations

- simplification of legal regulations
- de-bureaucratisation of implementation process at HEIs
- de-bureaucratisation of accreditation procedures

Recommendations reflected in  
the Act on IQS and subsequent  
ministerial regulations

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# **PQF as a tool for bridging of institutions and sectors: examples**

# IQS Stakeholders Council

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## Stakeholders Council for the Integrated Qualifications System (IQS)

- ❑ established according to regulations in *Act on the IQS*
- ❑ advisory body to the minister – IQS coordinator
- ❑ composed of representatives of
  - educational institutions (formal and non-formal), incl. two representatives of CRASP
  - employers organisations
  - trade unions
  - local governments, ...

Ideas and interests of different institutions and sectors are presented and consensual solutions are sought



# Sectoral qualifications frameworks

developed in cooperation with external stakeholders, incl. HE experts



library of Educational Research Institute

<http://www.kwalifikacje.edu.pl/en/publications>

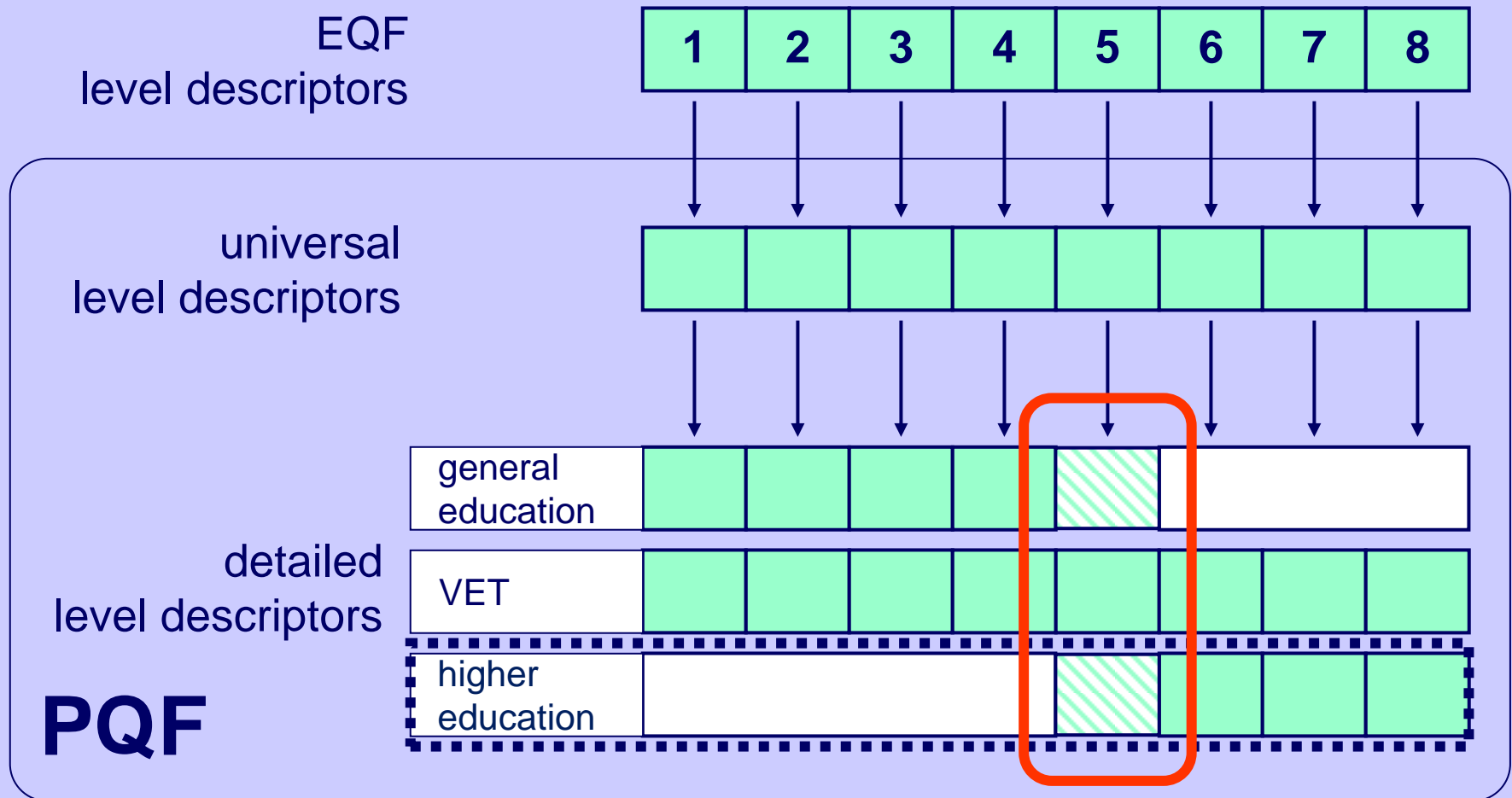
# Recognition of work-based learning in HE

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## New regulation in Law on HE (2014)

- ❑ alternative way for entering HE system (bachelor and master degree programmes) for people with relevant work experience
- ❑ admission based on validation (recognition) of work-based learning outcomes by an institution of HE sector

# Level 5 provision

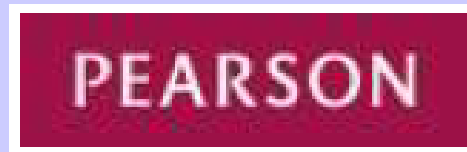


Level 5 – a bridge between

- general (secondary-level) education and HE
- general education/HE and VET

# Provision for level 5 qualifications

**Level 5 – the missing link:** 3-year project by Polish Rectors Foundation and Pearson Central Europe



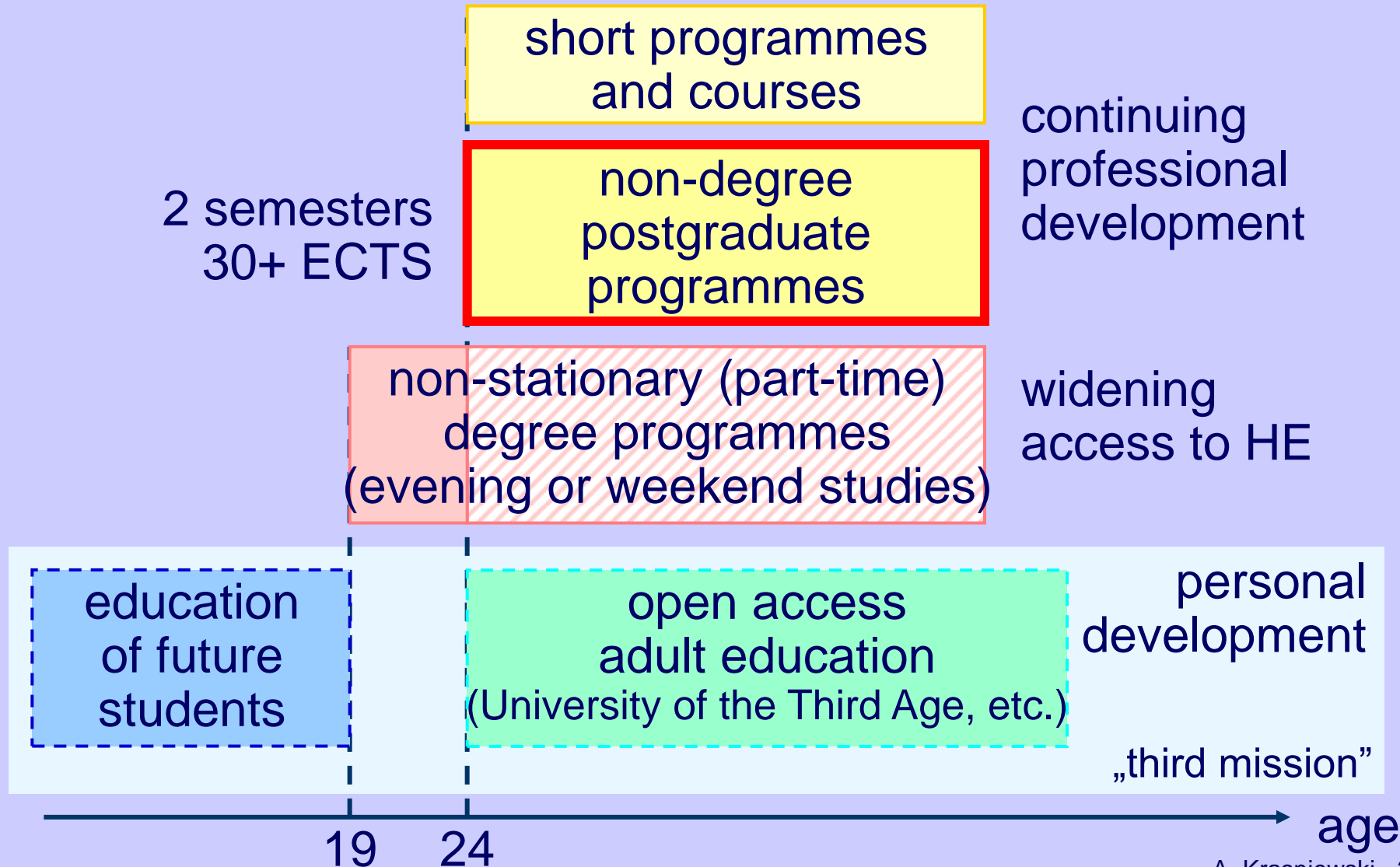
## Results

- ❑ support for the concept of level 5 qualifications by academic community (including CRASP)
- ❑ several proposals by HEIs (some already implemented) of programmes leading to qualifications at level 5 (joint certificates HEI-Pearson for better international recognition)
- ❑ proposals for transfer (and recognition) of LOs between levels 4, 5 and 6 of PQF

**Full qualification at level 5 – in the draft of a new Law on HE and Science (22 January 2018)**

# Non-degree postgraduate programmes

part of LLL provision by HEIs



# Non-degree postgraduate programmes

## *Example*

Warsaw University of Technology (2016-2017)

- 51 programmes
- 1500 participants



## **Institutional regulation (University Senate):**

Assigning levels to qualifications awarded upon completion of non-degree post-graduate programmes taking into account

- NQF for HE
- PQF „subframework” for VET
- relevant sectoral qualifications frameworks (SQFs)

At Faculty of Electronics and Information Technology, SQF for IT and SQF for Telecommunications were taken into account

- 4 programmes – qualification at level 7
- 9 programmes – qualification at level 6

# Intersectoral cooperation

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## Cooperation

### **CRASP – Polish Chamber of Training Companies**

Contribution of CRASP experts/representatives to:

- development of SQF for Training Services
- panel discussions at annual meetings/conferences of Polish Chamber of Training Companies

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# CONCLUSION



# Polish Qualifications Framework

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result of 10-year development process (2006-2015)  
with various groups of stakeholders taking part in  
hundreds of conferences, seminars, workshops, panel  
discussions, public debates, etc.

- ❑ several opportunities for people representing different levels and sectors of education and training to meet and talk to each other and to other stakeholders

thereby

- ❑ overcoming prejudices, entering into constructive dialogue and starting to cooperate for the common good

# Impact on higher education

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- ❑ development of „learning outcomes culture” – a prerequisite for a shift towards „real” student-centred learning
- ❑ more intensive cooperation with external stakeholders (discussion on what a student/graduate should know and be able to do – more attracting than discussion on the curriculum contents)

# Looking to the future

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- ❑ New legal regulations
  - refinement of the Law on Integrated Qualifications System
  - formal introduction of level 5 qualifications in the new Law on Higher Education and Science
- ❑ Filling-in the Integrated Qualifications Register, especially with high-quality qualifications offered outside the formal education system
- ❑ Enhancing the functionality of the IQS portal; entering more information into its database

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