



Thessaloniki, 27 June 2013

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Report: European countries make real progress toward greater transparency for qualifications

Over the past year, progress in developing and implementing national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) has allowed more countries to link these to the common reference framework for qualifications, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

How far each country has progressed along this road can now easily be seen by [clicking on country chapters in Cedefop's working paper](#), *Analysis and overview of NQF developments in European countries*, the fourth annual report Cedefop has prepared on this topic.

This linking process makes it easier for countries to understand one another's qualifications. As a result, it also eases citizens' lifelong transitions between learning and working, across sectors, and within the entire European labour market. Some countries also see qualifications frameworks as tools for education reform and institutional change.

Nineteen countries have linked their national qualification systems to the EQF

At the end of the period covered by the working paper (December 2012), 16 out of 36 countries working together on the [European Qualifications Framework](#) (EQF) - Austria, Belgium (FL), Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal and the UK - had linked their national qualification levels to EQF levels. By late May 2013, this number had gone up to 19, with the addition of Italy, Poland and Slovenia.

Moreover, some countries, including the **Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Lithuania and Portugal**, have started featuring NQF and EQF levels on new certificates, diplomas or Europass documents.

Most of the 36 countries working together on the European Qualifications Framework – the 27 EU Member States, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey - have now agreed on the overall structure of their national frameworks.

In addition to fully operational qualifications frameworks in France, Ireland, Malta and the UK, ten more countries - **Belgium (Flanders), Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Portugal** - are now entering an early operational phase of their NQFs.

National qualifications frameworks also increasingly link to arrangements for validating non-formal and informal learning.

The recent (December 2012) [Council recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning](#) invites Member States to put in place validation arrangements which are linked to NQFs and in line with the European Qualifications Framework by 2018.

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About Cedefop

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), an agency of the European Union based in Thessaloniki, Greece, supports European policy-making in the field of vocational education and training. www.cedefop.europa.eu

