NQF state of play

Türkiye 2020

Table of contents

Overview

Stage of development: Activation stage

NQF linked to EQF: ✓

Scope of the framework:
Designed as a comprehensive NQF; it will include all levels and types of qualification from formal education and training and from the national vocational qualification system.

Number of levels:
Eight

Legal basis/stage of development:
Regulation on the procedures and principles of its implementation (TQF Regulation) (2015, updated in 2019) (in Turkish) (in English) Regulation on the quality assurance of qualifications to be included in the Turkish qualifications framework (2018) (in Turkish) (in English)

NQF/EQF website:
⤢ Website

Qualifications register/database:
⤢ TQF qualifications database

Introduction and context

NQF snapshot

Turkey adopted its NQF in 2015. The TQF has eight levels and includes all types and levels of qualifications and certificates.

The Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA), the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) jointly developed and are implementing the framework.

Turkey is a member of the EQF advisory group and participates in the European higher education area (the Bologna process). The framework was referenced to the European qualifications framework (EQF) and self-certified to the framework of qualifications for the European higher education area (QF-EHEA) in 2017.

Implementation structures, main working methods and instruments are established and the TQF is a reference point for the use of learning outcomes, for the continuous revision and renewal of qualifications, and the allocation of qualifications to levels. There are nearly 29 000 qualifications, the great majority outcomes-based, already placed in the TQF database. Inclusion of qualifications in the TQF itself started in 2020 ([1]).

The implementation of the TQF is progressing at different speeds in the different subsectors of the qualifications system. While some aspects of the TQF, such as the levels, level descriptors, learning outcomes and quality assurance approaches, are operational, the TQF overall is in the activation stage.

Policy context

Turkey signed an association agreement with the EU in 1964 and a customs union was established in 1995. The European Council granted Turkey candidate country status in 1999, leading to the opening of accession negotiations in 2005. However, the EU has now paused Turkey's accession negotiations.

The economy had experienced a sustained boom, with growth rates of GDP 8.5% in 2010 and 6% in 2015, but this has dropped dramatically with growth of 0.9% in 2019.

Employment rates are lower than for most OECD countries, at 45.7% for those aged 15 and upwards in 2019. Unemployment remains high: in 2019, it stood at 13.7% for the 15 and up population.

Turkey's economic reform programme 2020-22 specifies measures for VET reform, notably updating curricula, including digital content. The *Education vision 2030* strategy aims to raise the VET sector's performance by measures including establishing new centres of excellence, enhancing VET's responsiveness to support innovation, modernising teacher training and increasing access and inclusiveness.

Almost half of students at upper secondary attend vocational education.

Covid-19 compelled the government to close all schools, including VET institutions, in March 2020. Distance learning and academic, pedagogical, and psychological support were made available via online teaching, radio, television, and other media. Assessments were carried out through online exams or projects. However, as in other countries, the pandemic also exposed inequities in the Turkish education system, including in access to broadband for online education, the supportive environments needed to focus on learning and the wider misalignment between resources and needs.

An issue of direct relevance to the TQF is the presence of circa 3.6 million Syrian refugees, whom the authorities are seeking to integrate into local society. Their successful settlement in part depends on their absorption into the workforce; that, in turn, requires, among other measures, Turkey to adapt and apply effective recognition and validation practices.

NQF legal basis

The TQF was formally established by the regulation on the procedures and principles on the implementation of the Turkish qualifications framework, adopted by the Council of Ministers via Decision 2015/8213, and published in the *Official Journal* of 19 November 2015.

A second key legal act is the regulation on the quality assurance of qualifications to be included in the TQF, adopted in 2018.

Some institutional arrangements predate the TQF legislation. The vocational qualifications authority Law No 5544 (2006) was amended in 2011 to adapt it to NQF developments, notably designating VQA the responsible body for developing and maintaining the NQF.

Quality assurance of qualifications and consistency in the use of the TQF

and the placement of qualifications in the framework are key objectives of recent legislation ([2]). A number of legislative arrangements were in the approval process at the time of writing, reflecting new developments.

Policy objectives

Education and training reforms

The Ministry of National Education's strategic plan (2015-19), the vocational and technical education strategy paper and action plan (2014-18), the national lifelong learning strategy (2014-18) and the national employment strategy of Turkey (2014-23) comprise the framework within which Turkey pursues VET reform, including the implementation of the TQF.

The employment strategy and its action plan attribute a core role to the Turkish qualifications framework in strengthening the link between education and employment and the quality of the VET system.

Turkey's lifelong learning strategy and action plan (2014-18) paid particular attention to improving access to lifelong learning beyond the formal education system and promoted validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL). However, there is not yet a new strategy for lifelong learning, while *Education vision 2023* does not allocate much space to lifelong learning.

Aims of the NQF

The TQF has been designed as a single integrated structure for the classification of qualifications. It includes all quality-assured qualifications achieved through all education and training programmes, including primary, secondary, and higher education, special needs education and continuing training. It also recognises outcomes achieved through experience in the workplace or other non-formal and informal environments.

The TQF's objectives are to:

a. provide a clear and consistent means of describing, classifying and comparing qualifications;
b. provide one integrated framework, including all quality-assured qualifications achieved in general, vocational and academic education and training programmes and in other learning environments;
c. improve qualifications continuously so that the system can provide appropriate recognition of qualifications achieved in formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts;

d. contribute to training so that individuals are employable and equipped with defined and measurable qualifications, and so help reduce unemployment;
e. strengthen institutional cooperation among all parties, primarily awarding bodies, industry and social partners;
f. provide a benchmark for recognition in Turkey of foreign qualifications and for recognition of Turkish qualifications abroad, and serve as an instrument of comparison.

Levels, learning outcomes and qualifications

NQF scope and structure

The TQF has eight levels and includes all types and levels of qualifications and certification. Its level descriptors are described in terms of learning outcomes and use the domains knowledge, skills and competence.

Knowledge is defined as theoretical and/or factual knowledge requiring comprehension of facts, principles, theories, and practices related to an area of work or learning.

Skill is defined as 'utilisation of knowledge' and 'problem solving', which requires the ability to use logical, intuitive, and creative thinking and dexterity, methods, materials, tools, and instruments acquired in an area of work or learning.

Competence is defined as use of knowledge and skills in an area of work or learning by taking responsibility and/or displaying autonomy, determination, and satisfaction of learning requirements.

The TQF primarily includes:

a. qualifications awarded under the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), spanning its respective Directorates for basic education, special education and guidance services, secondary education, vocational and technical education, lifelong learning, and religious education;
b. qualifications awarded under the mandate of the Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA) by the 239 authorised certification bodies (frequently called by their acronym ACBs);
c. higher education qualifications awarded under the coordination and supervision of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE).

In time, the TQF will include other qualifications awarded under the mandate of certain responsible institutions. Currently, the TQF database includes 51 other qualifications types which are not yet formally included in the TQF; many qualifications are developed and used but not counted for the NQF. Currently the number of qualifications in the database but not in the NQF approaches 29 000.

The inclusion of micro-credentials has not been proposed yet.

Types of qualifications

Qualification types enable the categorisation of different qualifications placed at the same level but differing significantly in terms of their functions, learning outcomes, volume and/or orientations.

An example of a qualification type is the level 5 associate degree, offered in post-secondary or higher VET, where Turkey has significant provision. Universities and colleges (MYOs) offer level 5 associate degrees, which may be academic or more vocational in orientation. These fall within the remit of the Council of Higher Education.

Another qualification type at level 5 is the vocational qualification certificate, awarded by the industry-linked authorised certification bodies.

A type at level 4 is the vocational upper secondary education diploma, usually awarded to successful students after four years at upper secondary vocational or technical high school, or sometimes at vocational education centres, multi-programme high schools and private vocational schools.

The mastery certificate is awarded to those successfully completing an apprenticeship programme.

The skilled worker certificate also appears at level 4.

There are several qualification types in the TQF which were updated recently after discussions with the responsible bodies. Types have been identified with qualification type descriptors ([3]); interpretation of them is continuing.

Quality assurance of qualifications

All qualifications that are part of the TQF must be quality-assured and expressed in learning outcomes.

In 2018, the regulation on the quality assurance of qualifications to be included in the TQF was adopted. It stipulates that quality assurance systems shall meet the following criteria:

  a. a qualification form is prepared and approved;
  b. valid and reliable assessment and evaluation processes are carried out;
  c. certification processes are conducted in a transparent and

impartial way;

d. processes related to the qualifications are subject to self-assessment and external evaluation;

e. units, teams or bodies conducting the external evaluation are subject to regular review;

f. improvement activities are carried out in line with the findings of self-assessment and external evaluation;

g. involvement of stakeholders is maintained in the processes related to the qualifications;

h. processes related to qualifications are implemented based on explicit and measurable objectives, criteria and guidelines;

i. allocation of sufficient and appropriate resources for all processes is maintained;

j. feedback mechanisms are established and implemented;

k. electronic accessibility to the outcomes of all processes is maintained.

The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) is responsible for development of qualifications under its mandate. MoNE has launched curriculum reform in secondary education, for both general and vocational and technical schools. Vocational curricula are modularised and MoNE has a database of more than 3 500 modules that are also used for the licensing and certification of adult learning.

Although curricula are advanced, most initial vocational qualifications are not yet utilised and fully learning outcomes-based. Modules based on learning outcomes are used for learning, but they are not separately assessed and often lack an assessment component.

VQA accredits the authorised certification bodies (ACBs), which conduct assessment, evaluation and certification of candidates for the vocational qualification certificate type mentioned above. These ACBs are first accredited by Türkak, the Turkish accreditation agency that deals with accrediting conformity with international industry and service standards, using the ISO 17024 standard on personnel certification.

The Council of Higher Education (CoHE) coordinates and supervises development of higher education qualifications awarded by higher education institutes. The higher education qualifications framework is a sub-framework within the TQF that is already functioning. National working groups for different fields of learning define common outcomes as a guideline for qualification and curriculum developers.

Use of learning outcomes and standards

Learning outcomes are the underpinning principle of the TQF. According to the TQF regulation, the TQF must ensure that qualifications are based on learning outcomes to make qualifications transparent and comparable.

Modules of the VET training programmes of MoNE are all defined by learning outcomes. However, MoNE VET programmes do not yet have separate qualification specifications defined by learning outcomes. This situation has created a challenge in populating the qualifications database with qualifications.

VQA is the competent authority for preparing national occupational standards and national qualifications. Qualifications under VQA's mandate are based on occupational standards and learning outcomes.

General education qualifications developed under MoNE's mandate are not always defined by learning outcomes.

In higher education, all qualifications are based on learning outcomes. There are precise outcome statements for specific programme types by level and academic or professional orientation in the Turkish qualifications database.

Credit systems

A credit system should support TQF aims of facilitating learner access to, and progress between, qualifications by using credit-rated learning outcomes to compare and link qualifications and transfer outcomes.

Turkey seeks to apply both the European systems: ECTS in higher education and ECVET for VET.

ECTS is used in higher education in accordance with the principles of the ECTS user guide ([4]). Turkey has also actively explored the possibilities of ECVET.

The TQF Council proposes an evaluation and credit system associated with workload that will allow credit accumulation and transfer. The proposed metric for the qualifications to be included in the TQF is 60 credits as the value ascribed to a learning period of 1 500 to 1 800 hours. This approach complies with both ECTS and ECVET. The regulating bodies will determine the credit range of the qualification types and the credit values of the qualifications.

Although the principles and procedures for the credit transfer systems were planned to be developed by mid-2019, they have not yet been

published. The withdrawal of the ECVET recommendation regarding the use of ECVET points may require Turkey to reposition its own approach to allocation of credits.

Institutional arrangements and stakeholder involvement

Governance and institutional arrangements for the NQF

The Ministry of National Education initiated TQF development in 2005, responding to the first EQF consultation. Since the VQA was established, it has managed and coordinated the framework, cooperating most closely with the Ministry of National Education and the Council of Higher Education.

Each of these three entities is responsible for the quality assurance of the qualifications under its authority.

The Turkish Higher Education Quality Council of Turkey (THEQC) was founded in 2015 as a public legal entity with administrative and financial autonomy for higher education; its aim is evaluating the quality levels of higher education institutions' education and research activities and administrative services in accordance with national and international quality standards. THEQC is actively using the European standards and guidelines (ESG) in higher education. TQF quality assurance criteria are fully compatible with the ESG and EQF quality assurance principles.

Quality assurance for qualifications outside the scope of MoNE, CoHE, higher education institutions and VQA responsibility will be ensured by the other institutions and organisations specified in related legislation.

There are two bodies which oversee and determine implementation of the TQF: the TQF Coordination Council and the TQF Council. VQA houses the TQF Secretariat that supports both councils.

The TQF Coordination Council is the highest decision-making body. It consists of the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of National Education, the President of the Council of Higher Education, and the Director of the Vocational Qualifications Authority. The TQF Coordination Council evaluates and approves proposals for procedures, principles, and decisions submitted by the TQF Council.

The TQF Council is a technical body which consists of 22 members, including:

    a. five members from MoNE, all of whom are heads of the Ministry's

Directorates;

b. four members assigned from CoHE, one Executive Board member, one university dean by rotation, two THEQC board members, and one member representing the National Student Council;
c. three members from VQA, one of whom is the vice president;
d. one member from the Union of Chambers and Exchange Commodities of Turkey;
e. one member from the Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen;
f. one member each from the three largest confederations of trades unions;
g. one member each from the education unions within the trade union confederations;
h. one member from the largest employers' confederation.

The TQF Council prepares the action plans for TQF implementation and a communication strategy to raise awareness about the TQF. It prepares principles, procedures, and criteria for issues such as quality assurance of the TQF, the qualifications database, progress routes, credit accumulation and transfer, validation of non-formal and informal learning, updating, modification and withdrawal of qualifications.

The Turkish Qualifications Framework Department within MoNE has acted as the TQF Secretariat since 2016, in line with the Vocational Qualifications Authority act. The Secretariat comprises the head of unit, four experts and a secretary, who are VQA staff. The staff of the Secretariat is supported by temporary national and international experts.

The Secretariat:

a. assists the technical and administrative tasks of the Coordination Council and TQF Council;
b. drafts action plans, annual work plans and activity reports under the management of the Council;
c. ensures the implementation of the communication strategy;
d. develops and maintains the qualifications database;
e. prepares or performs background research, draft procedures;
f. carries out other tasks requested by the Chairman of the Council.

According to the TQF regulation, a TQF consultation committee with broad participation of relevant stakeholders should convene annually as a negotiation platform to evaluate the issues regarding the TQF and for stakeholders to present their views. The members of the committee are identified and invited by the TQF Council.

The committee has met once to date, at Ankara in late 2019, with the participation of more than 100 representatives from ministries, public institutions, professional organisations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations. Due to the Covid-19 crisis, the meeting planned for 2020 was postponed.

Roles and functions of actors and stakeholders

Labour market stakeholders – employers, trade unions, and employment services – have strong representation in TQF management structures. They play an active role in all TQF activities, participate in all decision-making processes, and have contributed to setting the criteria for the inclusion of qualifications in the TQF and other quality assurance criteria.

However, the use of the TQF by labour market stakeholders can be strengthened further, particularly at grassroots levels. Turkey has a system of sectoral committees ([5]) that play an important role in the national vocational qualifications system under VQA. Sectoral committees perform tasks related to development and maintenance of occupational standards and qualifications for their sector. Sectoral committees are tripartite structures with State, employer, and trades union representation.

Education and training institutions and providers are developing or updating their quality assurance mechanisms in line with the TQF quality assurance criteria. They are also updating existing curricula based on the TQF level descriptors and TQF qualification type specifications. They are developing mechanisms for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in line with the TQF.

Recognising and validating non-formal and informal learning and learning pathways

VNFIL arrangements

The TQF regulation includes provision for validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL), stipulating that all qualifications included in the TQF can be obtained through VNFIL. Learners should be able to use validation of non-formal and informal learning to access programmes, sit exams, obtain exemptions, obtain certification of units, and accumulate and transfer credits.

VNFIL legislation has been updated, notably the October 2017 regulation on principles and implementation of VNFIL regarding accreditation, measurement and evaluation, and the March 2018 revisions to the regulation on secondary education, which allow for use of validation in the sector.

The 2014-18 lifelong learning strategy document promoted extensive use of VNFIL, including via EU projects. A new lifelong learning project is planned to start in 2021. Piloting is also advancing through Erasmus projects such as the EQF-oriented assessment tools for prior learning in adult education, coordinated by the Çorum Public Education Centre.

In January 2019, VQA published a Turkish version of the European guidelines on validation ([6]). VQA plans to develop a procedure for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in line with the TQF regulation by the end of 2021. The responsible bodies – VQA, MoNE and the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) – will be responsible for applying these general principles and procedures for the qualifications within their respective remits.

VQA has organised and supported the implementation of a VNFIL system to award national vocational qualifications to adults; the ACBs conduct the assessment, evaluation, and certification of such candidates. The involvement in VNFIL of stakeholders such as employer organisations, through their presence in the ACBs, has created visibility and trust in the VQA qualifications and the validation process.

Validation has been given a huge quantitative boost by the law requiring certification for 143 designated occupations. More than 1.3 million certificates have been issued thus far, of which 1.2 million have been

awarded for qualifications in occupations defined hazardous ([7]). However, this use of validation as a compulsory measure differentiates Turkish practice from the generally voluntary European approach to VNFIL, in which it is the learner who initiates the process and seeks certification or other validation ([8]).

Despite the huge number of people certified so far, female participation in validation is only 2% ([9]). This is because most validation has been of workers employed in the 143 occupations defined in the regulation, which are male-dominated. Steps to improve access for women, and other categories such as migrants, are being taken by VQA, the ACBs and MONE, which are developing new validation arrangements.

The MoNE Department of Lifelong Learning has established a database of modular programmes to support non-formal learning, which are also used for the certification of adult learning ([10]). Ensuring that these modularised programmes are obtainable through validation will widen the possibilities for lifelong learning, as it will allow for recognising part qualifications.

VNFIL was legally introduced to the Turkish higher education system in 2011 but there has been only slow progress in that sector. To realise a fully national system for VNFIL, CoHE is expected to align with the initiatives pursued by the VQA and MoNE.

NQF implementation and impact

Key achievements and main findings

VQA qualifications are all based on occupational standards and expressed in learning outcomes. They are subject to a levelling process, in accordance with the TQF level descriptors.

However, there is no common approach between those VET qualifications issued under MoNE, higher education qualifications and national vocational qualifications. Some qualifications are described in detail, while others are described more broadly. The next step is development of a common approach.

Almost all qualifications awarded in Turkey appear in the vast TQF qualifications database. Numbers currently included in the NQF itself remain small. This is because the TQF Council is currently required to conduct the laborious process of verifying every single qualification to ensure it meets requirements. The Council acknowledges the bottleneck and is looking for a more practical way to evaluate the inclusion of individual qualifications.

The inclusion of qualifications in the TQF is also important for the indication of TQF and EQF levels on new certificates and diplomas. TQF and/or EQF levels are already indicated on the Europass supplements.

Vocational curricula are modularised, and the Ministry of National Education has a database of approximately 3 500 modules that are also used for the certification of adult learning. It is important, however, to ensure modular approaches are extended to validating all formal qualifications.

Qualifications registers and databases

As of early 2021, the TQF database http://portal.tyc.gov.tr contains almost 29 000 entries of which:

a. 27 373 are higher education qualifications covering Levels 5-8;
b. 930 are qualifications issued by the Ministry of National Education, covering levels 1-4;
c. 511 are national vocational qualifications issued under the responsibility of VQA, covering levels 2-6; these span 27 sectors.

NQF and EQF qualifications levels are provisionally indicated in the database.

The TQF database does not record any associate degrees, which are at level 5, though many bachelor and master degrees are included. There are, however, 92 national vocational qualifications at level 5, and 27 at level 6, lodged in the database.

The database already offers plenty of information on qualifications to end users who can contact VQA directly with queries. The database is compatible with the Annex VI of the EQF recommendation, as it has been developed through EU grants.

Career information and guidance

Use of guidance and counselling to support learners and jobseekers in navigating the curricula and qualifications available is one aspect to be strengthened in the education and employment sectors.

Recognition of foreign qualifications

Turkey has a functioning system for the assessment and recognition of foreign academic qualifications at associate degree, and bachelor and master levels, which is supported by legislation and in line with the Lisbon Convention. The Equivalence Office of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) deals with recognition and equivalence requests in these degrees. The TQF is used for the recognition of foreign qualifications by the responsible bodies such as ENIC-NARIC Turkey and MoNE.

Pursuing a craft profession in Turkey requires a master certificate. Foreigners can establish a business or work as an employee if the equivalence of their certificate is recognised by the Ministry of Education ([11]). VQA is responsible for the confirmation of the authenticity of vocational qualifications held by foreigners who are seeking to work in Turkey.

Many professions in Turkey are regulated. Requirements to pursue a regulated profession are defined in different laws. The Turkish Council of Higher Education adopted a regulation on the harmonisation of the minimum training requirements for the seven regulated professions stipulated by the EU-Directive 2013/55. The general system under the European Directive 2013/55 may be important as well for other regulated professions that are regulated in the EU Member States and those that require a VQA certificate to practise. This issue has not been addressed

yet.

Referencing to the EQF

Turkey is an EU candidate country, a member of the EQF advisory group and participates in the Bologna process in higher education. It simultaneously referenced the TQF to the EQF and self-certified against the Bologna framework in 2017. It will present an updated referencing report in 2021 to reflect progress in TQF implementation.

Turkey is at an advanced stage in implementing the Bologna process.

International cooperation

Turkey participates in the Riga process of cooperation in VET among EU, EEA, and candidate countries. It has progressed since 2015 on the Riga medium-term deliverables (MTDs) in the priority areas of work-based learning, quality assurance, access to VET, qualifications, key competences, and teacher professional development.

The Turkish Higher Education Quality Council of Turkey joined ENQA in 2020. The Council of Higher Education represents Turkey in ENIC-NARIC networks.

International donor support

The EU, UN agencies and World Bank have all been significant actors in Turkey in recent years, notably in assisting in efforts to support the Syrian refugees located in Gaziantep.

The UNHCR and the ILO piloted validation for Syrian refugees in different occupations in cooperation with the Gaziantep Chambers of Commerce. In 2017, ETF cooperated with the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in developing a tool to guide local services in recognition of Syrian qualifications and validation of their skills for formal certification.

Important lessons and future plans

VQA assesses that the TQF is in its activation stage but, in many respects, it is already operational ([12]). That almost 28 000 qualifications are outcomes-based and already placed in the TQF database tells a positive story. At the same time, an efficient mechanism needs to be developed to accelerate verification which allows qualifications in the database to be approved for entering the NQF. Current procedures appear ponderous.

Turkey is an active player in the EQF, in the Riga process in VET, in the Bologna process in higher education, and in related EU and international projects.

VQA drives the TQF forward, and there is genuine shared ownership with MoNE and CoHE. Distinguishing the TQF from many other counterparts, the governing structures such as the TQF Council and the TQF consultation committee ensure a stronger stakeholder say in the TQF's running, especially for employers.

However, there are many thousands of providers, non-governmental organisations, and companies in Turkey and it is a challenge to reach all of them. More generally, it would be useful to support all the TQF's intended beneficiaries: individual learners, parents, jobseekers and workers, providers, and companies in the practical use of the TQF and the EQF, via making strong links between the framework and information, guidance and counselling services.

While almost all qualifications are described in learning outcomes, there is no common approach between VET qualifications issued under MoNE, higher education qualifications and national vocational qualifications.

In quality assurance there are tensions between, on the one hand, quality control for conformity, and on the other, quality enhancement, among different actors in the education and training and qualifications systems. Principles such as self-assessment and external evaluation are still new to some actors in Turkey. Different expectations could create difficulties and/or delays in reforming the existing quality assurance systems in line with the TQF quality assurance principles.

Lifelong learning is gaining importance in Turkey. The country would benefit from a longer-term vision and strategy in adult learning, which

could be much more prominently positioned within a wider lifelong learning strategy and the *Education vision 2023*. More attention to adult learning will require new means of recognition that go beyond the current set of qualifications in the TQF.

Critical for an inclusive system promoting lifelong learning is wider implementation of validation, including in higher education, where progress is slower than in VET.

There is not yet an integrated credit and qualifications system.

One looming issue is the burden on VQA. The institutional arrangements for the TQF have been very much focused on the Authority, yet the people inside the VQA tasked with coordinating the framework's implementation are few for the scale of the work facing them, which comprises managing an expanding qualifications system. The numbers of authorised certification bodies, providers and qualifications is increasing. Existing or forthcoming relevant regulations, which specify compulsory certification for certain occupations and validation of certain qualifications, will add to this volume.

It is also time to start monitoring and evaluating the impact of the TQF, even if it is not yet fully operational.

Main sources of information

The VQA is the EQF NCP: www.myk.gov.tr

TQF and EQF website: http://www.tyc.gov.tr/

TQF database: http://portal.tyc.gov.tr

Main documents on TQF legislation can be found here:
https://www.tyc.gov.tr/yayinlar?kategoriId=3a44289d-519a-4745-b9fd-2e27da2813ad&search=

Report, by VQA in 2016, on referencing the TQF to the EQF and self-certification to the framework of qualifications of the European higher education area https://tyc.gov.tr/trr.pdf

Qualifications framework for higher education, information about programmes http://www.tyyc.yok.gov.tr/

Guideline on learning outcomes

http://www.tyc.gov.tr/indir/tyc-ogrenme-kazanimlari-rehberi-i85.html

Quality assurance handbook

http://www.tyc.gov.tr/indir/tqf-quality-assurance-handbook-i83.html

Guideline on validation of non-formal and informal learning
http://www.tyc.gov.tr/indir/yaygin-ve-serbest-ogrenmelerin-dogrulanmasi-rehberi-i22.html

TQF communication strategy http://www.tyc.gov.tr/indir/tyc-iletisim-stratejisi-i33.html

TQF glossary http://www.tyc.gov.tr/indir/tyc-terimler-sozlugu-i1.html

Turkish version of EQF brochure and infographic

- http://www.tyc.gov.tr/indir/ayc-10-yil-infografigi-i73.html
- http://www.tyc.gov.tr/indir/ayc-10-yil-kitapcigi-i24.html

Brochures on TQF, EQF and level descriptors

http://www.tyc.gov.tr/indir/tyc-infografigi-2019-i63.html

National qualification framework (NQF)

NQF LEVEL	QUALIFICATION TYPES	EQF LEVEL
8	**Doctoral diploma (PhD, proficiency in arts, specialty in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary)** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system	8
7	**Master diploma (with thesis)** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system **Master diploma (without thesis)** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system	7
6	**Bachelor diploma** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system **Level 6 vocational qualification certificate** **Category** NVQ	6

5	**Associate diploma (academic)** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system **Associate diploma (general)** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system **Level 5 vocational qualification certificate** **Category** NVQ	5
4	**High school diploma** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system **High school diploma (VET, fine arts and sports)** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system **Mastership certificate** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system **Level 4 course completion certificate** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system **Level 4 vocational qualification certificate** **Category** NVQ	4

| 3 | **Journeyman certificate** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system | 3 |
	Level 3 course completion certificate **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system	
	Level 3 vocational qualification certificate **Category** NVQ	
2	**Level 2 adult learning certificate** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system	2
	Level 2 course completion certificate **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system	
	Level 2 vocational qualification certificate **Category** NVQ	
1	**Literacy certificate** **Category** Qualification types awarded in formal education and training system	1

Acronyms

ACBs	Authorised certification bodies
CoHE	Council of Higher Education
ECTS	European credit transfer and accumulation system
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQF	European qualifications framework
EQAVET	European quality assurance in vocational education and training
ISCED	International standard classification of education
ISCO	International standard classification of occupations
NQF	National qualifications framework
QF-EHEA	Qualifications framework for the European higher education area
THEQC	Turkish Higher Education Quality Council of Turkey
TQF	Turkish qualifications framework
VQA	Vocational Qualifications Authority

Notes

[1] Turkey qualifications database: https://tyc.gov.tr/yeterlilikarama

[2] Regulation on the quality assurance of qualifications to be included in the Turkish qualifications framework was published in the Official Journal on 25 March 2018  Principles and procedures for the inclusion of qualifications into the Turkish qualifications framework was approved on 28 November 2019 Principles and procedures for objections to decisions relating to TQF Procedures and principles for use of TQF logo

[3] https://tyc.gov.tr/yayinlar?kategoriId=17ea6ce7-8885-4f2d-aaa4-174a0833a09c&search=

[4] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/sites/eurydice/files/ehea_bologna_2020.pdf

[5] http://www.myk.gov.tr/index.php/tr/sektor-komiteleri

[6] http://tyc.gov.tr/indir/yaygin-ve-serbest-ogrenmelerin-dogrulanmasi-rehberi-i22.html

[7] https://portal.myk.gov.tr/index.php?option=com_istatistik

[8] https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/etv/Information_resources/EuropeanInventory/publications/EC_common_principles_validation_20040303.pdf

[9] https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2019/european_inventory_validation_2018_Turkey.pdf

[10] http://hbogm.meb.gov.tr/modulerprogramlar/

[11] See Law No 3308 on vocational training (as amended by Law No 4702).

[12] Cedefop; ETF (2020). Qualification frameworks and their development stages. Presented in the 54th EQF AG meeting [unpublished].

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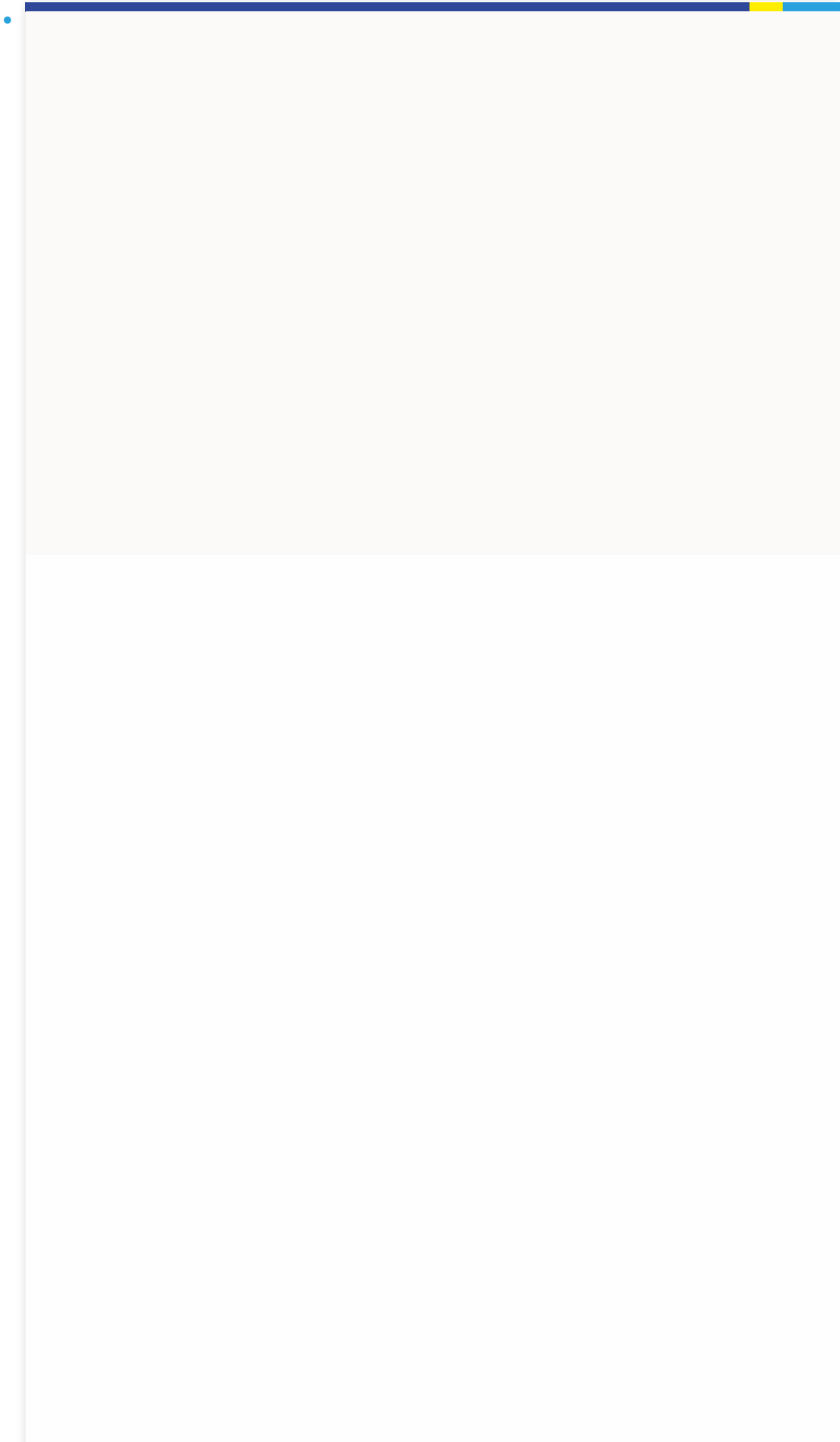
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