

The Law on Adult Education

POLICY DEVELOPMENT**REGULATION/LEGISLATION** CROATIA

Timeline

2021 Approved/Agreed**2022 Implementation****2023 Implementation****2024 Implementation****ID number 42773**

Background

In December 2021, the Law on Adult Education replaced the 2007 Law on Adult Education, updating the regulatory framework for adult education in line with the Strategy of education, science and technology as well as approximation with the Law on Vocational Education and with the Law on the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

Objectives

The amendment of the Law on Adult Education aims at the alignment of the regulations with the development of the national qualifications framework and to improve the quality assurance system, to ensure quality and effective education focused on the needs of the individual and the labour market.

Description

The 2021 Law on Adult Education provided guidelines for the development of a comprehensive quality assurance system and allowed for the validation of non-formal and informal learning. With the 2021 law, the adult education system has been completely aligned to the national qualification framework and based on occupation and qualification standards. The 2021 law also introduced micro credentials as units of learning outcomes designed to help individuals acquire specific sets of skills aligned to the Croatian Qualifications Framework standards.

2021 Approved/Agreed

The legislative proposal was prepared by a working group of representatives of ministries, ASOO, associations of adult education institutions, employers, and the Chambers of Commerce. Public consultations on the Law were opened between 13 May and 12 June 2021. The Law on Adult Education was adopted by the Croatian Parliament on 15 December 2021.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, based on the Law on Adult Education, ASOO also published the Methodology

for developing adult education programmes for acquiring micro-qualifications, partial qualifications, and full qualifications funded through vouchers and other funding sources. Aligning all qualifications to the Croatian Qualifications Framework in line with the Adult Education Act, for the first time, the methodology defined micro- and partial qualifications in detail, awarded for the completion of professional development programmes (EQF 4), short training programmes (EQF 2, 3, and 4), and VET specialist development programmes (EQF 5). The workload for partial qualifications is defined at least 10 CSVET and up to 9 CSVET credits for micro-qualifications; this is adjusted to the complexity of learning outcomes. Expanding VET programmes beyond EQF level 4 for the first time, the National curriculum for VET introduced EQF level 5 qualifications in 2018. Following the adoption of the 2021 Law on Adult Education, adult education (CVET) providers developed VET specialist development programmes (EQF 5) at the post-secondary level in the form of micro-credentials, partial and full qualifications, awarding CVET specialist development and training certificates. Typically, programmes leading to full qualifications last 1-2 years. This specialisation pathway is labour-market-oriented, with a recommended WBL share of at least 50% in schools or companies. Entry requirements involve the completion of VET programmes at the upper-secondary level (EQF 4).

To encourage participation in lifelong learning, micro-credentials ('micro-qualifications' according to national terminology) and vouchers for upskilling and reskilling of the unemployed and employed were introduced in 2022, in line with the Law on Adult Education.

2023 Implementation

Based on the Law on Adult Education, the ministry responsible for education adopted the Regulation on the procedure of external evaluation of adult education institutions and units of learning outcomes, including the procedure for appointing and operation of the Commission for appeals on the external evaluation reports (Official Gazette, No. 19/2023), which provides the legal framework for conducting external evaluation of adult education institutions and units of learning outcomes. In line with the regulation, the Agency for VET and Adult Education adopted the protocols for external evaluation of adult education institutions and units of learning outcomes, the Ethical code for external evaluation of adult education institutions and Guidelines for external evaluation of adult education providers, further defining the procedures of external evaluation. According to the regulation, ASOO conducts external evaluations every 5-7 years, based on an annual plan or at the request of an institution. External evaluation is conducted by an independent Commission for external evaluation, appointed by ASOO and composed of adult education professionals. The Commission for appeals on the external evaluation reports is appointed by the ministry in charge of education and intervenes in case of objections of adult education providers to the reports issued by ASOO. In preparation for the external evaluation, adult education providers submit self-assessment reports, and the Commission also considers prior external evaluations, inspections or professional supervision procedures. During site visits, the Commission rates quality areas and standards, as well as the overall performance of the providers, in line with the assessment areas and criteria described in the Guidelines for external evaluation of adult education providers (read more in the related policy development: Development of a quality assurance system in adult education). The Commission report also includes suggestions for improvement. ASOO publishes the report on external evaluation and the decision on quality level of the provider on its website. The recommendations for quality improvements are advisory, unless the quality level is unsatisfactory, in which case they become mandatory for providers. The extreme consequence of unsatisfactory level of quality may also entail permanent closure of the adult education provider.

Furthermore, the Regulation on the procedure of external evaluation of adult education institutions and units of learning outcomes defines the procedure for assessing learning outcomes during final examinations or defence of final practical assignments for the completion of adult education programmes, including for the validation of prior learning. Adult education providers are required to report their arrangements for the final assessment of candidates to ASOO. For providers selected to undergo external evaluation of learning outcomes, ASOO sets up a Commission that conducts final

examination or defence, composed of independent assessors and a representative of the provider undergoing external evaluation. In case of irregularities, ASOO may initiate professional supervision procedure or request from the provider to repeat the final assessment of candidates.

In 2023, the Regulation on standards and norms for the delivery of adult education programmes was also adopted (reflecting the 2021 Law on Adult Education). This details general technical, material and professional staff requirements for adult education providers, teaching and learning modalities for adults, restrictions on class size and workload for learners, as well as general arrangements for the final assessment of learning outcomes.

2024 Implementation

Based on the 2021 Law on Adult Education, the Regulation on the procedures of application for and the process of evaluation of prior learning (Official Gazette, No. 79/2024) was adopted in 2024. See Validation arrangements for full details.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Science, Education and Youth (MZOM)

Target group

Learners

Adult learners

Education professionals

Adult educators

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Further developing national quality assurance systems

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Developing and applying qualifications smaller/shorter than full

Learners' possibilities of accumulation, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired non-formally and informally

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

VET underpinned by a culture of quality assurance

Subsystem

CVET

Further reading

[The Law on Adult Education \(Official Gazette, No 144/2021\)](#)

[Agency for VET and Adult Education \(2022\). Methodology for developing adult education programmes for microqualifications and qualifications funded by vouchers.\[Metodologija za obrazovne programe za mikrokvalifikacije i kvalifikacije financirane vaucerima\]](#)

[Agency for VET and Adult Education \(2023\). Ethical code for external evaluation of adult education institutions \[Eticki kodeks vanjskog vrednovanja ustanova za obrazovanje odraslih\]](#)

[Agency for VET and Adult Education \(2023\). Protocol for external evaluation of adult education institutions \[Protokol vanjskog vrednovanja ustanova za obrazovanje odraslih\]](#)

[Agency for VET and Adult Education \(2023\). Protocol for external evaluation of units of learning outcomes \[Protokol vanjskog vrednovanja skupova ishoda ucenja\]](#)

[Ministry of Science and Education \(2023\). Regulation on standards and norms for the delivery of adult education programmes \[Pravilnik o standardima i normativima za izvodenje programa obrazovanja odraslih\]. Official Gazette 14/2023](#)

[Ministry of Science and Education \(2023\). Regulation on external evaluation of adult education institutions and appeals. \[Pravilnik o vanjskom vrednovanju ustanova za obrazovanje i prigovorima\]. Official Gazette, No. 19/2023.](#)

[Ministry of Science, Education and Youth \(2024\). Regulation on the procedures of application for and the process of evaluation of prior learning \[Pravilnik o nacinu prijave i provođenju vrednovanja prethodnog ucenja\]. Official Gazette, No. 79/2024](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

Development of a quality assurance system in adult education

The project Development of a quality assurance system in adult education is financed under ESF Operational programme Effective human resources 2014-20. The implementation period of the project is 40 months beginning from January 2019.



Type of development

Practical measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

Validation arrangements

Adopted in 2024, the Regulation on the application and procedure for the validation of prior learning governs the validation of prior learning for qualifications at NQF/EQF levels 2-5 (excluding higher education qualifications), which involves the recognition of units of learning outcomes based on



CROATIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/42773>