Estonian qualifications framework (until 2021)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT   PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE   ESTONIA

Timeline

| 2016 **Implementation** | 2017 **Implementation** | 2018 **Implementation** |
| 2019 **Implementation** | 2020 **Implementation** | 2021 **Completed** |

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Background

The Estonian qualifications framework (EstQF), established in 2008, brings together four sub-frameworks:

(a) higher education;
(b) vocational education and training;
(c) general education;
(d) professional qualifications awarded outside formal education and training (professional qualifications are those associated with a trade, occupation or profession, usually resulting from work-based learning, in-service training and adult education).

The framework has eight qualification levels, and its descriptors are identical to EQF level descriptors. All types of State-recognised qualifications are included. EstQF and EQF levels have been indicated in higher education and professional qualifications since 2012, and in general education and VET qualifications since 2013. The levels are also indicated in the database of VET curricula and the register of professional standards.

Objectives

To improve the link between education/training and the labour market, to increase consistency in the education and qualifications system, to introduce common quality assurance criteria, and to support validation of non-formal and informal learning. As the Estonian qualifications framework is linked to the European qualifications framework, it makes it possible to compare Estonian occupational qualifications with those of other European countries that have completed the process of relating their qualifications frameworks to the EQF.

Description

The EstQF was referenced to the EQF in 2011. Following the VET reform in 2013, the referencing report was revised and updated in 2016 to include developments in the education system.

2016 Implementation

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

The EstQF was fully operational and ready for implementation. The framework was open to be further amended and supplemented, in case of changes to the forms and types of VET that needed to be linked to the qualifications framework.

2020 Implementation

The implementation of the qualifications framework continued. Amendments to the Vocational Education Institutions Act and Standard of Vocational Education (a new type of VET at EstQF 2 – vocational orientation curriculum, changes to the conditions for graduating from vocational education) were linked to the qualifications framework. Events introducing Europass, the European and the Estonian qualifications framework were organised, methodological and information materials were prepared for entrepreneurship and career studies in upper secondary school and upper secondary school.

2021 Completed

The 2021 activities included the development of the occupational qualifications system and examinations, the modernisation of occupational standards, the development of new occupational standards and skills profiles, and supporting the creation, development, and implementation of a skills classification and a catalogue of competences in VET.

For developments of the Estonian qualifications framework as of 2022, see related policy developments.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Research

Target group

Entities providing VET

Companies
VET providers (all kinds)

Other stakeholders

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)

Thematic categories

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Comprehensive national qualification frameworks

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

Cedefop publication- European inventory of national qualifications frameworks 2016: Estonia

Related policy developments

2025 **Implementation**

Developing the professional qualifications system and jobs-and-skills forecasting

The following measures are foreseen:

ESTONIA

Type of development
Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem
IVET CVET

❝ ••• ❞ **Cite as**

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