

## **NQF state of play**

 **Estonia 2022**

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# Overview

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**Stage of development:** Operational stage

**NQF linked to EQF:** ✓

**Scope of the framework:**

The framework includes all national qualifications, awarded within or outside formal education and training by nationally accredited institutions. There are two main types of levelled qualifications: formal education qualifications and professional qualifications.

**Number of levels:**

Eight

**Legal basis/stage of development:**

Professions Act (2008)

(in Estonian)

(in English)

**NQF/EQF website:**

[Website 1](#)

[Website 2](#)

**Qualifications register/database:**

[Professional qualifications register](#)

[Estonian education infosystem \(EHIS\)](#)

# Introduction and context

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## 1.1. Policy context

In Estonia in 2020, public expenditure on education as a percentage of gross domestic product (6.6 %) was well above the EU average (5.0 %). Participation in early childhood education and care (91.9 % in 2020) and the rate of early leaving from education and training (9.8 % in 2021) are close to the EU average. In 2021, tertiary education attainment (age 25-34) (43.2 %) was slightly above the EU-27 average (41.2 %). In 2020, participation in upper secondary VET was rather low (39.9 %). In 2019, the share of adults that had participated in learning in the last month was 20 % (European Commission. DG Education Youth Sport and Culture, 2022).

EstQF developments cover all education and training sectors, including general, vocational and higher education, along with professional qualifications. The overall aim of strategic documents and laws is to ensure the consistent development of sectors and a smooth transition between them. According to the [Education strategy 2021-2035](#), the EstQF should support flexible learning and career pathways for all learners, through the implementation of learning-outcome-based education and training. The [reform of the professional qualifications system](#) is in the design phase. The aims of the reform are to transform professional qualification standards into skills profiles and to develop the basic principles for creating skills profiles in connection with the education system. The review of the EstQF will be a central part of the reform, as skills profiles will be linked to EstQF levels. They will also be used to develop curricula leading to microcredentials (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

## 1.2. NQF legal basis

The EstQF was adopted in 2008 through the [professional qualifications act](#) (with subsequent amendments). The act provides the basis for the comprehensive eight-level framework and for the organisation of the professional qualifications system; it regulates the activities of awarding authorities and sectoral councils, the adoption of professional qualification standards and the award of professional qualifications. The framework also forms part of the legislation and regulatory documents of the education and training system and the system for the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

The education ministry (Ministry of Education and Research) is preparing amendments to the primary and upper secondary school act, the vocational education institution act and the secondary education standard, aiming to further integrate general and vocational education and deepen the implementation of outcome-based learning. These amendments will contribute to the better implementation of the EstQF. The revision of the [higher education standard](#) is going through the legislative process; the focus is primarily on developing and changing learning outcomes and their descriptions. The [adult education act](#) is also being revised, regulating microcredentials and defining the term 'micro-qualification' and its characteristic features (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

## **Policy objectives**

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The policy objectives relating to the EstQF include:

- a. improving links between education/training and the labour market;
- b. increasing the consistency of the education offer and the qualification system;
- c. enhancing the transparency and understanding of qualifications within Estonia and abroad;
- d. introducing common quality assurance criteria;
- e. supporting the validation of non-formal and informal learning;
- f. monitoring supply and demand for learning.

The EstQF function in Estonia is twofold: to be a tool for transparency and communication and to support lifelong learning (European Commission and Cedefop, 2020 and 2022).

# Levels, learning outcomes and qualifications

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## 3.1. NQF structure and level descriptors

The EstQF has eight qualification levels. Its level descriptors are similar to those of the EQF, and are defined in terms of learning outcomes, as knowledge (theoretical and factual), skills (cognitive – use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking; and practical – manual dexterity and use of methods, materials, tools and instruments) and degree of responsibility and autonomy. More detailed descriptors have been developed in the four sub-frameworks for general education, initial vocational education, higher education and professional qualifications, as defined in the corresponding national educational standards underpinning quality assurance activities.

## 3.2. NQF scope and coverage

The framework includes all national qualifications, which should be defined in learning-outcome-based qualification standards (curricula or professional standards) awarded within or outside formal education and training by nationally accredited institutions. There are two main types of levelled qualifications:

- a. formal education qualifications, awarded after the completion of programmes at all levels and in all sectors (general, vocational and higher education);
- b. professional qualifications ([1]), leading to a professional certificate testifying that the required knowledge, skills and competences for working in a specific occupation or profession have been achieved.

Qualifications in sub-frameworks are described in the corresponding national education standards, which are based on learning outcomes:

- a. [national curriculum](#) for basic schools, [simplified national curriculum](#) for basic schools and [national curriculum](#) for upper secondary schools;
- b. [standard of VET](#);
- c. [standard of higher education](#) ([2]);

d. [professional qualifications act](#).

The EstQF is well established, especially the sub-frameworks for VET, higher education and professional qualifications. General education is formally connected to the overarching framework through relevant state programmes, but common awareness about learning outcomes and qualification levels is rather weak in this subsystem. Adult training courses have not been assigned to NQF levels and are not included in a register.

### **3.3. Use of learning outcomes**

The introduction of the learning-outcomes approach has been an important part of the national reform programme for general education, VET and higher education. There is also an increased focus on the recognition of prior learning. Higher and vocational education are more advanced in implementing the learning-outcomes approach. The role of employers is active and constructive ([3]). The 2021–2035 education strategy further supports the use of the learning-outcomes approach, as its general objective is to ease the transition between education levels and sectors.

The learning outcomes of VET programmes (EstQF levels 2 to 5) are described in the vocational education standard. The standard defines the requirements for national and school curricula, including the objectives, expected learning outcomes, volumes of study and graduation requirements for initial and continuing VET programmes, along with the requirements for pedagogical professionals. Learning outcomes are defined both as occupation-specific knowledge and skills, and as transversal skills: communication; learning, social and entrepreneurial skills; self-awareness; independence and responsibility. Both national and school VET curricula have been reformed, starting in 2013 ([4]). In 2019, the VET standard was amended, changing school leaving conditions by emphasising achieved learning outcomes. In 2015, the adult education act introduced the learning-outcomes approach to this sector; a new continuing education standard was introduced, specifying quality criteria for adult education curricula (Cedefop, 2020).

The current national curricula in general education were introduced in 2011 (the last amendment was in 2020). They set out goals and objectives, expected learning outcomes, assessment criteria and requirements for the learning and teaching environment, graduation and school curriculum. General education programmes should be aligned with the objectives and learning outcomes of the national curricula.

Since 2009, learning-outcome-based study programmes have been implemented in higher education. The standard of higher education refers to learning outcomes at the basic level (outcomes that any graduate must achieve); the achievement of learning outcomes above the minimum level is differentiated by grading.

Professional qualification standards describe expected competences in terms of learning outcomes (performance indicators and knowledge). They are the basis for national VET curricula, higher education curricula and other training programmes, and for the assessment of individuals' competences. The Estonian Qualifications Authority (*Kutsekoda*) is responsible for implementing the quality assurance system in the professional qualifications system.

### **3.4. Quality assurance arrangements**

In higher education, there are two quality assurance bodies: the Estonian Quality Agency for Education (HAKA) and the Quality Assessment of Study Programme Groups, which offer recommendations to institutions on the internal evaluation and self-development. Only government-recognised institutions can offer programmes leading to EstQF levelled qualifications. To get recognised, institutions should also prove that the learning outcomes of the programmes correspond to the proposed EstQF level.

The external quality assurance of VET is regulated by the vocational educational institutions act. The quality assurance activities are delegated to the Estonian Quality Agency for Education (HAKA). The external quality assessment of study programmes in VET and higher education assesses whether the intended learning outcomes correspond to the EstQF/EQF level or the respective professional qualification standard. External quality assurance in general education is coordinated by the external evaluation department of the education ministry.

In the professional qualifications system, the sector skills councils are responsible for ensuring that each professional qualification standard added to the EstQF is assigned the correct level, i.e. the competences correspond to the EstQF level description. Then, the councils submit a proposal to the body of chairmen of sectoral councils for approval of the relevant EstQF level. They also supervise awarding bodies, assessing whether they comply with all quality requirements. The assessment criteria for awarding professional qualifications are described in the evaluation standards; they should be aligned with the EstQF level descriptors (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

# Institutional arrangements and stakeholder involvement

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The education ministry and the Estonian Qualifications Authority (*Kutsekoda*) are the main bodies in charge of developing and implementing the EstQF. The ministry has the overall responsibility for developing and overseeing the framework, while the EstQF secretariat, responsible for the day-to-day running of the framework, functions under the Estonian Qualifications Authority (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022). The authority was set up in 2001 to develop a competence-based professional qualifications system, operating in parallel with the formal education system under the education ministry. In 2010, the authority was [nominated as the EQF national coordination point](#) (EQF NCP). The EQF NCP is staffed by five part-time employees (two full-time equivalents) and financed from the state budget and the EQF NCP grant. Since 2022, a department of skills and qualifications has been set up in the education ministry with 3.5 full-time-equivalent positions; its responsibilities include developing the EstQF and recognising foreign qualifications.

The Estonian Qualifications Authority is tasked with:

- a. organising the referencing of the EstQF to EQF levels, ensuring the involvement of stakeholders and the transparency of the process;
- b. implementing the EU principles of quality referencing;
- c. informing stakeholders and the public about EstQF-related developments;
- d. participating in the activities of the EQF [NCP's network](#).

The EQF NCP also cooperates with other institutions, disseminates information and provides guidance and advice on the application of the framework to various stakeholders. It usually cooperates with those participating in the professional qualifications system: the sectoral councils, professional examination committees, experts and working groups developing professional qualification standards. The EQF NCP also cooperates with education institutions in developing curricula and with awarding bodies in developing assessment standards (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022). The authority coordinates the 14 sectoral councils and provides technical support to the board of chairs of

these councils. Typically, the sectoral councils consist of representatives of employers, employees and professional associations in the sector; education and training institutions; and the ministries responsible. The councils prepare, amend, renew and approve professional standards, and decide on the levelling of professional qualifications to the EstQF. The board of chairs of the sectoral professional councils coordinates cross-sectoral cooperation.

Stakeholders can approach the EQF NCP through the supervisory board of the qualifications authority, while the most actively engaged stakeholder, as a country representative on Europass and EQF advisory groups, is the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. A steering committee, ensuring the involvement of all key stakeholders ([5]), was set up to support the referencing of the EstQF to the EQF and its implementation. It will be reconvened, under the Estonian Qualifications Authority, to review the upcoming referencing report (see Chapter ) (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

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

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## 5.1. Recognising and validating non-formal and informal learning and learning pathways

Validation practices are sector specific and present in all sectors, but are more developed in formal education. If an applicant meets the requirements, non-formal and informal learning can be validated to meet enrolment criteria, complete a programme or award a professional qualification.

One objective of the EstQF is to support validation. The curricula of all levelled qualifications and the relevant regulations on each subsystem ([6]) enable education providers to recognise non-formal and informal learning. One of the main principles of validation regulations and procedures is the recognition of achieved learning outcomes against a specific curriculum or occupational standard at a certain EstQF level (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

Since 2009, the [universities act](#) and the [institutions of professional higher education act](#) have enabled the accreditation of prior and experiential learning in higher education curricula. However, institutions cannot award whole diplomas or certificates based on prior and experiential learning. In practice, this means that the entire curriculum may be recognised based on prior learning, except for the thesis or final examination. Subjects and modules completed through validation must be marked as 'recognised on the basis of prior learning' in the diploma supplement.

In VET, prior learning may be recognised to fulfil admission requirements; to complete the curriculum, except the final examination; and to recognise a previously passed vocational examination. In VET, there has been a considerable increase in the recognition of previous work experience, supported by the transition to outcome-based learning (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

In general education, validation is possible, but processes and practices have not been clearly defined. Secondary education curricula for initial education and adult education are the same; evaluating prior knowledge can decrease the study duration for adults.

Although the validation of non-formal and informal learning against

occupational standards is not regulated by law, in principle full professional qualifications can be awarded through such a process.

## **5.2. Credit systems**

A credit point system that conforms to the European credit transfer and accumulation system is used in higher education, and a credit point system is used in VET.

## **5.3. Recognition of foreign qualifications**

Academic and professional recognition of foreign qualifications is conducted based on the [recognition of foreign professional qualifications act](#) and carried out by the ENIC-NARIC centre, which curates the work of the competent authorities. The Estonian Qualifications Authority is the contact point for any questions regarding qualifications, recognition, permission to work and licensing (European Commission and Cedefop, 2020). Regarding the comparability of the EstQF with frameworks from third countries, work has been done on analysing the correspondence of the qualifications held by Ukrainian refugees. More broadly, ways to compare qualifications from countries that do not participate in the EQF process have been analysed.

# **NQF implementation and impact**

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## **6.1. Stage of implementation**

The Estonian NQF has reached the operational stage.

## **6.2. Indicating EQF/NQF levels**

EstQF/EQF levels are indicated on all levelled qualifications. Indicating EstQF/EQF levels on Europass diplomas and certificate supplements is also general practice. The levels are indicated in the [Eesti Hariduse Infosüsteem](#) (Estonian education infosystem – EHIS) database and the professional qualifications register (Section ) (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

## **6.3. NQF dissemination**

The NCP develops a communication plan, which is updated every 6 months. The main target group consists of learners and young employees who need support in developing a curriculum vitae and describing their knowledge and skills. The main channels are social media (Facebook, [YouTube](#)), digital media (videos) and online informational material on the [website](#) of the Estonian Qualifications Authority, for example [on level descriptors](#). The use of the framework is also promoted and supported through a variety of [materials and tools](#) on the Europass portal, and by [infographics](#), articles on [Europass, the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe](#) and the [authority's](#) websites, [handbooks](#) and leaflets (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022). Dissemination and information events are organised annually to share information with education providers, policymakers and employer and employee organisations (European Commission and Cedefop, 2020).

## **6.4. Qualifications databases and registers**

Two interconnected qualifications registers are in use, which include all levelled qualifications. The [Estonian education infosystem \(EHIS\)](#) includes all formal education qualifications. The [Professional qualifications register](#) covers all professional qualifications, and also provides information in English. The coverage changes daily; in September 2022, the EHIS included 1 330 higher education qualifications, 1 393 vocational qualifications and 7 968 valid curricula, while the register contained 553 valid professional qualification standards. They both provide information on the field of study of qualifications, the EstQF/EQF levels, a description

of the learning outcomes (as open text), the awarding body, the entry requirements, ways to acquire the qualifications, the relationship to occupations or occupational fields and a link to the qualification. The EHIS also includes information on credit points (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

Both registers are interconnected with a significant number of public services, while Europass certificate supplements are integrated into the professional qualifications register, which is also connected to the Europass platform ([7]), [ESCO](#) (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations) and the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund database. The [Education Portal](#) is a one-stop shop providing information from the existing databases from the perspective of the end user (teacher, learner, counsellor, youth worker, etc.) (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

## **6.5. Awareness and use of the NQF**

All professional qualification standards, VET and higher education standards, and formal educational curricula are designed taking the EstQF level descriptors into consideration. Education and training providers use these descriptors when designing a curriculum or training programme; for example, all VET curricula have a compulsory annex that includes the referencing of the curriculum against the EstQF. Providers also indicate EstQF/EQF levels when advertising study programmes. Learners, students, workers and jobseekers use qualification standards and intended learning outcomes to self-assess the compliance of their competence against the requirements of study programmes and jobs.

In the labour market, in order to participate in public procurement it is mandatory for companies to employ a specialist holding a qualification at a specific EstQF/EQF level. Since 2020, EstQF levels have been included in job advertisements, while in several economic sectors, wages are also linked to holding a specific qualification level.

Guidance practitioners are being trained to use EstQF in their work, and are doing so (e.g. they use EstQF levels to suggest suitable learning pathways to individuals and the professional qualifications register to define the qualifications they have obtained). Skills analysis studies are used in career counselling activities as they offer a thorough overview of the level of qualifications used in the labour market and labour market skill needs. Training materials for guidance practitioners have been developed by the EQF NCP and the Euroguidance and Europass centres. The EstQF is also used in quality assurance for VET, higher education and

professional qualifications (Section ). In validation, the EstQF is used to assess the equivalence between applicants' portfolios and qualification standards or intended learning outcomes (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

## **6.6. Monitoring and evaluating the NQF**

The Estonian Qualifications Authority commissioned the Estonian Research Centre to perform an impact study of the Europass and EstQF information campaign, assessing, among other things, the awareness of citizens regarding EstQF levels. The study showed that 11 % of respondents were encouraged by the campaign to become informed about the level of their qualification, while 58 % of those already aware of the EstQF indicated the web page of the Estonian Qualifications Authority as the primary source of information. One overall outcome of the study is that these campaigns should continue. The [Quality of Higher Education in Estonia](#) study aims to provide an overview of the implementation of the learning-outcomes approach in higher education and an assessment of the compliance of curricula with national and international regulations, including the EQF recommendation (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

## **6.7. Impact of the NQF**

As all qualifications included in the EstQF are expressed on the basis of learning outcomes and indicate the EstQF level, the transparency and comparability of qualifications have increased. The implementation of the EstQF has led to gaps and imbalances being identified in the provision of qualifications. For instance, there were no qualifications from initial education and training at EstQF level 5. The labour market relevance of these types of qualification, supported by various stakeholders, has had an impact on policy decisions. The framework has also been used to revisit the provision of professional higher qualifications referenced to EstQF level 6.

As the EstQF includes qualifications from formal education, along with professional qualifications, and as VET and higher education programmes are based on professional qualification standards (where these exist), the framework is thought to have contributed considerably to the parity of esteem between different types of qualifications. Furthermore, the EstQF has contributed to a remarkable convergence between formal education and the professional qualifications system (Estonian Qualifications Authority, 2016), lowering barriers between sectors. The framework has promoted progression through education and training: entry to higher

education programmes in some occupations has been simplified for learners who obtain a level 4 VET qualification in a specific area. The EstQF has also supported the implementation of validation policies in VET and in general and higher education by describing qualifications on the basis of learning outcomes.

The fact that professional qualifications levels are negotiated within sectoral councils has contributed to an increase in dialogue and stakeholder cooperation across sectors and institutions.

## **Referencing to the EQF**

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The EstQF was referenced to the EQF and self-certified against the qualifications framework of the European higher education area in 2011 (Estonian Qualifications Authority, 2011). Following the 2013 VET reform, the referencing report was updated in 2016. The next update of the referencing report is planned for 2024-2025 (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022).

## Important lessons and future plans

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One important success factor is the direct connection of the EstQF level descriptors with curricula and professional qualifications. This provides a clear reference point for curriculum design, promotes the transparency of qualifications and supports people in looking for learning opportunities. Consequently, referencing to the EQF has improved opportunities for international learner mobility (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022). Another success factor has been the systematic promotion activities for stakeholders, through structures such as the sectoral councils and the body of chairmen of sectoral councils. The EQF NCP and Europass activities, which are part of EU-funded projects, along with cooperation with Euroguidance have increased awareness of the EstQF among stakeholders and end users ([8]).

One major challenge is that no correlation mechanism has been set up to include previously offered qualifications in the EstQF. Regarding future priorities, the framework will be a focal point of the planned reform of the professional qualifications system (see Section ). Furthermore, there are regulated narrower qualifications that have not yet been levelled to the EstQF. The pending draft of the adult education act gives the opportunity to formalise them as microcredentials, and provided they meet the volume and quality requirements it will become possible to include them in the framework (European Commission and Cedefop, 2022). Another priority could be to further increase awareness of the EstQF among end users.

# Main sources of information

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URLs accessed 20 July 2023

- [Estonian Qualifications Authority](#).
- [EQF NCP](#).
- [Estonian education infosystem \(EHIS\)](#).
- [Professional qualifications register](#).
- Estonian Qualifications Authority (2016). *[Referencing of the Estonian qualifications and qualifications framework to the European qualifications framework](#)*.

# National qualification framework (NQF)

NQF LEVEL	QUALIFICATION TYPES	EQF LEVEL
8	<b>Doctoral degree (Doktorikraad)</b> <b>Category</b> Qualification awarded in formal education <b>Level 8 professional qualification - senior specialists, top managers</b> <b>Category</b> Professional groups and professional qualifications e.g. chartered engineer, principal architect	8
7	<b>Master's degree (Magistrikraad)</b> <b>Category</b> Qualification awarded in formal education <b>Level 7 professional qualification - specialists, managers</b> <b>Category</b> Professional groups and professional qualifications e.g. diploma engineer, diploma architect	7

6	<p><b>Bachelor's degree (Bakalaureusekraad)</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Qualification awarded in formal education</p> <p><b>Diploma of professional higher education (Rakenduskörgharidusöppme diplom)</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Qualification awarded in formal education</p> <p><b>Level 6 professional qualification - specialists, supervisors</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Professional groups and professional qualifications e.g. energy auditor, career counsellor</p>	6
5	<p><b>VET certificate, level 5 (5. Taseme kutseöppme lõputunnistus)</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Qualification awarded in formal education</p> <p><b>Level 5 professional qualification - technicians and master craftspeople, frontline managers, clerical workers</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Professional groups and professional qualifications e.g. master carpenter, construction site manager, master chef</p>	5

4	<p><b>Upper secondary general education certificate (Gümnaasiumi lõputunnistus)</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Qualification awarded in formal education</p> <p><b>Upper secondary VET certificate (Kutsekeskhariduse lõputunnistus)</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Qualification awarded in formal education</p> <p><b>VET certificate, level 4 (4. Taseme kutseõppe lõputunnistus)</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Qualification awarded in formal education</p> <p><b>Level 4 professional qualification - skilled workers, machine operators, service and sales workers, clerical support workers</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Professional groups and professional qualifications e.g. CNC (computer numerical control) milling machine operator, carpenter, florist</p>	4
3	<p><b>VET qualification certificate, level 3 (3. Taseme kutseõppe lõputunnistus)</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Qualification awarded in formal education</p> <p><b>Level 3 professional qualification - skilled workers, machine operators, service and sales workers, clerical support workers</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Professional groups and professional qualifications e.g. cleaner, electronic equipment assembler, facility maintenance technician</p>	3

2	<p><b>Basic education certificate (Põhikooli lõputunnistus)</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Qualification awarded in formal education</p> <p><b>Basic education certificate based on simplified national curriculum for basic schools (Põhikooli lihtsustatud riikliku õppekava lõputunnistus)</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Qualification awarded in formal education</p> <p><b>VET certificate, Level 2 (without basic education requirement) (2. Taseme kutseõppe lõputunnistus)</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Qualification awarded in formal education</p> <p><b>Level 2 professional qualification - elementary workers</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Professional groups and professional qualifications e.g. cook's assistant, cleaner's assistant</p>	2
1	<p><b>Basic education certificate based on simplified national curriculum for basic schools (for students with special educational needs) (Põhikooli lihtsustatud riikliku õppekava toimetulekuõppe tunnistus)</b></p> <p><b>Category</b></p> <p>Qualification awarded in formal education</p>	1

## Acronyms

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EHIS Eesti Hariduse Infosüsteem (Estonian education infosystem)

ENIC- European Network of National Information Centres and Network  
NARIC of National Academic Recognition Information Centres

EQF European qualifications framework

EstQF Estonian qualifications framework

NCP national coordination point

NQF national qualifications framework

VET vocational education and training

# References

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Cedefop (2016). *Application of learning outcomes approaches across Europe: a comparative study*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.

Cedefop (2020). *Developments in vocational education and training policy in 2015-19: Estonia*. Cedefop monitoring and analysis of VET policies.

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Estonian Qualifications Authority (2016). *Referencing of the Estonian qualifications and qualifications framework to the European qualifications framework*.

European Commission and Cedefop (2020). Survey on implementation, use and impact of NQF/EQF: Estonia [unpublished].

European Commission and Cedefop (2022). Survey on implementation, use and impact of NQF/EQF: Estonia [unpublished].

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## Notes

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[1]Professional qualifications are assigned to levels 2 to 8 in the EstQF (Estonian Qualifications Authority, 2016).

[2]In the sub-framework for higher education, general descriptors follow the logic of the Dublin descriptors, but are adjusted to national needs.

[3]In VET, employers are involved in developing professional standards, which serve as the basis for curriculum development; in higher education, they directly participate in curriculum development (Source: internal communication with the Estonian Qualifications Authority)

[4]VET curricula [database](#).

[5]The committee included representatives of ministries, the State Chancellery, trade unions, the employers' confederation, learners' unions, the chamber of commerce and industry, the qualifications authority, the Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education, the Unemployment Insurance Fund and the ENIC-NARIC centre.

[6]The VET standard and the higher education standard.

[7]Estonia is running mapping tests to connect EHIS with European digital credentials for learning.

[8]Source: internal communication with the Estonian Qualifications Authority

## Related content

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2022

## Estonia - European inventory of NQFs 2022

European inventory of NQF



Estonia