

European Inventory on NQF 2012

MONTENEGRO

Introduction

Montenegro has developed a comprehensive NQF for lifelong learning, based on learning outcomes. It includes all formal education qualifications (from general education, VET and higher education) as well as a system of national professional qualifications, which can be acquired through validation of non-formal learning.

In December 2010, the Parliament of Montenegro passed the national qualifications framework law (*Zakon o nacionalnom okviru kvalifikacija, 2010*) ⁽¹⁾. The law defines the principles and objectives of the NQF, the structure of levels and sublevels, qualifications types to be included and the governance structure.

Main policy objectives

The government sees NQF development and alignment to the EQF as an important political priority. The adopted Law on NQF defines its principles and main policy objectives. Among the principles the focus is on learning outcomes defined as knowledge, skills and competences, the importance of quality assurance in all phases of qualifications development, establishing cooperation among stakeholders, and creating conditions for transfer of credits.

The main goals of the NQF as defined by law are:

- supporting the shift to learning outcomes-based qualifications;
- linking education and training more effectively to the labour market;
- better integrating the various education and training subsystems;
- making progression possibilities (vertical and horizontal) within the system of education and training visible;
- supporting lifelong learning, and aiding recognition of non-formal and informal learning;
- improving international comparability of qualifications;
- ensuring the quality of qualifications.

Stakeholder involvement and framework implementation

The Ministry of Education and Sports has overall responsibility for developing and implementing the NQF.

⁽¹⁾ Law on NQF.
http://www.skupstina.me/cms/site_data/SKUPSTINA_CRNE_GORE/ZAKONI/ZAKON%20882.pdf
f [accessed 15.9.2011].

Different institutions are involved in developing and awarding qualifications at different levels. The National Council for Qualifications, established in May 2011 under provisions within the 2010 Law on the NQF, has overall responsibility for the national qualification system. The Council consists of representatives from ministries, institutions involved in the development of qualifications, employment services, universities, the social partners and the chambers of commerce, and representatives of employers and trade unions. The Council is a permanent body, whose principal tasks are to:

- make decisions on the inclusion and classification of qualifications into the NQF;
- make proposals for new qualifications to institutions in charge of developing qualifications;
- take decisions on the methodological documents for classification of qualifications;
- adopt guidelines for sector commissions, etc.

Level descriptors and use of learning outcomes

The Montenegrin NQF has eight levels, based on learning outcomes with sublevels at levels 1, 4 and 7. They cover all types of qualifications in formal education (in general education, VET, higher education).

The first four levels include qualifications from primary, secondary general, and vocational education. Level 5 is an intermediate level between upper secondary education and higher education (i.e. post-secondary VET qualifications). Levels 6 to 8 include qualifications awarded in higher education.

It is important to note that all NQF levels accept labour market oriented professional qualifications, as defined by the Law on National Professional Qualifications adopted in 2008 ⁽²⁾. This law defines procedures regulating validation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning. The law also refers to 'other qualifications'.

The shift to learning outcomes is seen as an essential part of the national qualifications framework development. It is planned that qualifications and programmes will be reviewed and revised in line with the level descriptors. Reforms are under way in different areas of education and training in the line with the Book of changes, which covers preschool, elementary, secondary and adult education.

Much needs to be done in developing qualifications based on learning outcomes, which will allow them to be aligned to the NQF.

Referencing to the EQF

The time frame for the referencing of the NQF to the EQF has not been defined.

⁽²⁾ *Zakon o nacionalnim strucnim kvalifikacijama.*
<http://www.iccg.co.me/ispitni/images/Razno/Regulativa/Zakon%20o%20nacionalnim%20i%20strucnim%20kvalifikacijama.pdf> [accessed 5.12.2012].

Important lessons and the way forward

The main aim is now to put the NQF into practice: an activity plan (April 2011 – April 2012) was prepared to guide actions. Capacity building among institutions (e.g. the Council for Qualifications and Sector Commissions) is an important task for the near future.

Much needs to be done in redefining and further developing qualifications to reflect the learning outcomes perspective and allow for alignment to the NQF. An important activity is raising awareness of the framework among stakeholders ⁽³⁾.

Main sources of information

An NQF website is available at <http://www.cko.edu.me> [accessed 12.3.2013].

⁽³⁾ For more information see <http://www.mpin.gov.me/en/ministry> [accessed 5.12.2012].