



NLQF - Netherlands qualifications framework

Do National Qualifications Frameworks make a difference?
Peer learning conference EC, Cedefop, QQI
Thessaloniki, 9 and 10 November 2017

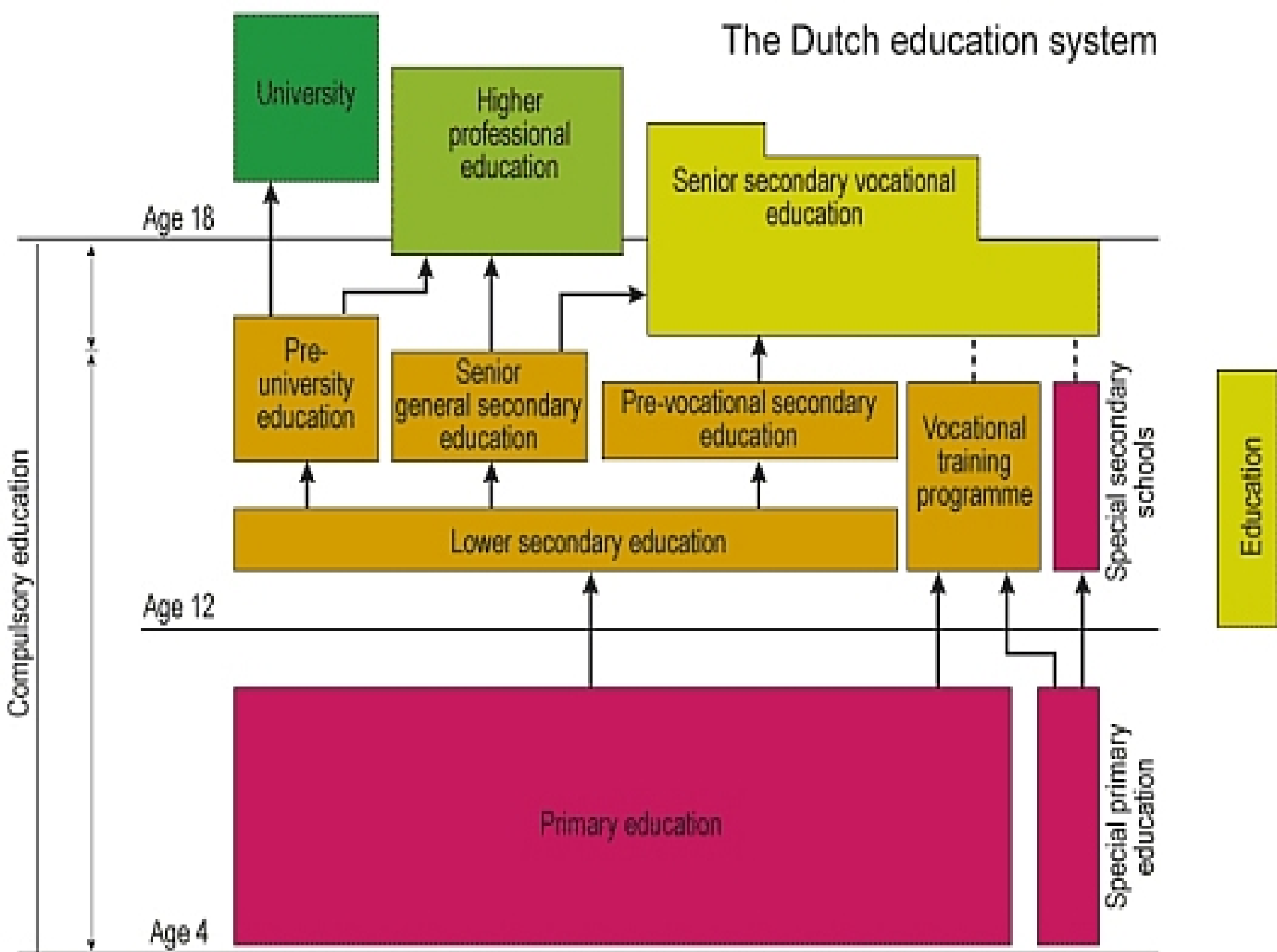
Questions

- 1) What were the original purposes for the NQF?
Have these changed?
If yes, in which direction?
- 2) In which areas are NQF's making a difference today and in which areas is impact less visible?
- 3) In which areas do you expect NQF's to make a difference in the future?

Formal education in the Netherlands

- Primary education - 8 years
- Secondary education:
 - i. pre-vocational education : VMBO- 4 levels- 4 years
 - ii. secondary vocational education and training : MBO – 4 levels, up to 4 years
 - iii. general secondary education: HAVO- 5 years
 - iv. pre-university education: VWO – 6 years
- Higher Education
 - i. Universities of applied sciences: HBO- comprehensive and specialised
 - ii. Universities: WO general/specialised/and Open University
- Adult education

The Dutch education system



Facts and Figures (1)

➤ Formal qualifications

- VET 2232 (developed until 2014)
 742 (after revision in 2014)
- HE 3274
- GE 6

➤ Non formal

- 1,5 million people a year participate in post-initial learning (15,5% of population)
- 84% of adult learning takes place in the private or non formal sector
- Turnover: € 3,5 billion per year (€3.500.000.000)

Facts and Figures (2)

- 18 % of labour active adults followed a training in 2014 (for work or leisure)
- Private providers : Yearly 1.3 million participants
- 893.000.000 spent by citizens on non-formal education in 2015
- 90% of learning happens by learning on the job e.g. from co-workers or by job-rotation
- 8% of learning happens by following trainings
- 2% of learning happens in education aimed at obtaining a formal qualifications in VET or HET

Adult learning in The Netherlands

- Government perspective in The Netherlands:
 - Life Long Learning and flexible learning for adults prominent on the agenda
 - Employers and employees are responsible for Life Long Learning

2011 - Objectives NLQF

- Enlarge the transparency within the Dutch educational landscape;
- Enlarge the transparency of qualifications within Europe;
- Enlarge the comparability of levels of qualifications;
- Stimulate the use of the concept in learning outcomes;
- **Stimulate lifelong learning for individuals;**
- Facilitate the participation in learning;
- Increase insight in the levels of qualifications for the players in the labour market;
- Facilitate the communication between the stakeholders in education and the labour market.

Characteristics NLQF (1)

- Comprehensive framework (GE,VET,HE)
- Based on learning outcomes
- Underpinned by quality assurance
- Amount of levels reflects national situation
- Fully compatible with Bologna framework
- All levels are open, under conditions, to qualifications **outside the formal system** without progression rights or right to titles

Characteristics NLQF (2)

- Systematic organisation of all existing qualification levels in the Netherlands
- Entry Level followed by 8 levels, Level 1 being the least complex and Level 8 the most complex
- Description of levels
 - Knowledge
 - Skills
 - Responsibility and autonomy

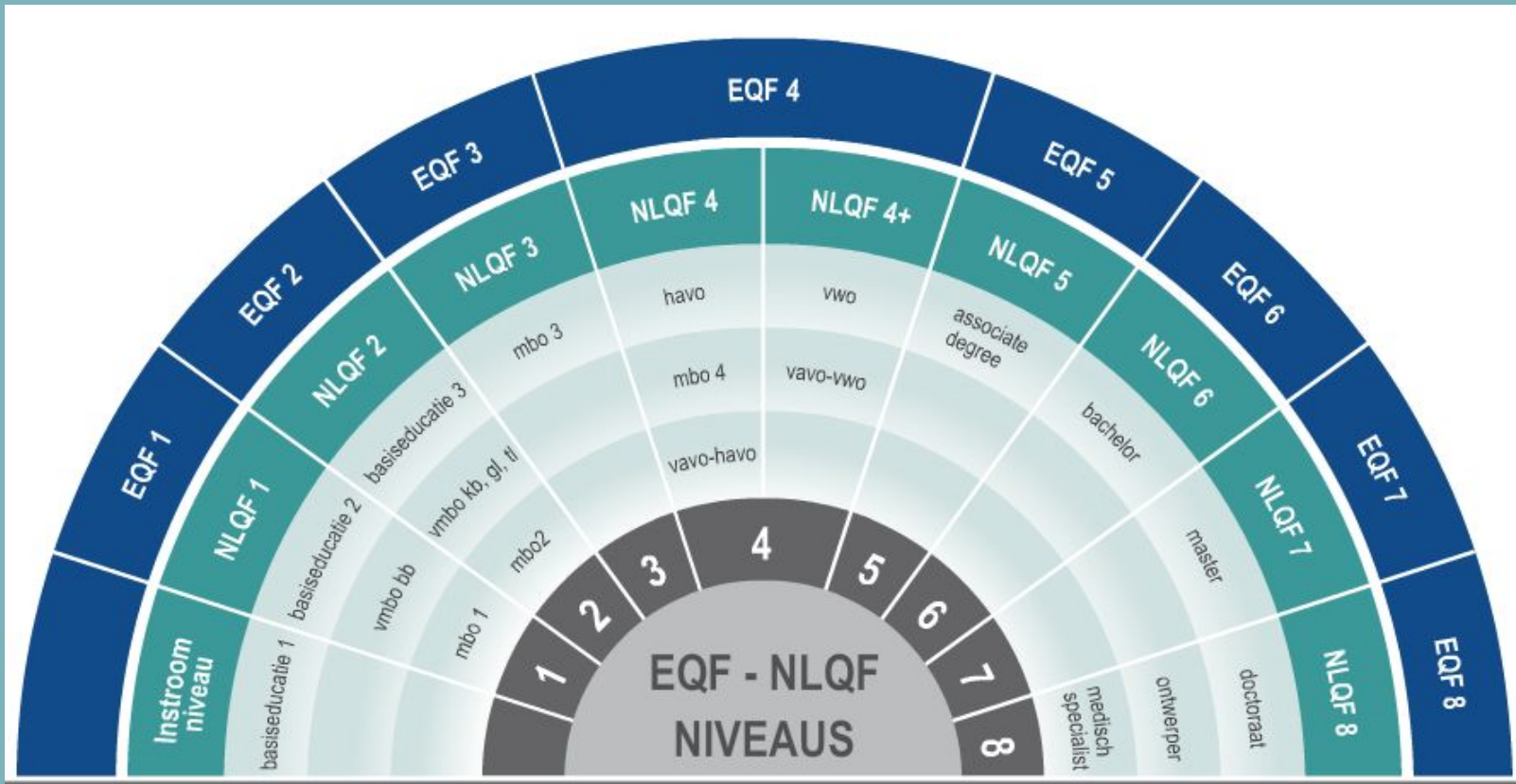
What were NOT the purposes

- NLQF is **not** a revision of the Dutch education system
- An NLQF level indicator does not give an entitlement to a title or a degree
- The right to enter and transfer to education sectors is not regulated by NLQF

Classification of qualifications into the NLQF

- Levels wise inclusion of existing qualifications regulated by the government
- **Non formal qualifications (private sector) included in NCP NLQF based on heavy procedures**

Classification of government regulated qualifications



Procedure for classifying non formal qualifications in NLQF

- 1) Validity check of the organisation (condition for step 2)
 - Information to be provided: prove of legal entity, ownership of the qualification, continuity of the organisation, approach to assessment/examination, approach to quality assurance
 - Assessment by Quality Committee, decision by the Programme Council of the NCP NLQF
- 2) Classification of qualifications into levels of NLQF
 - Information to be provided: i) Comparison to descriptors NLQF, ii) amount of hours of learning (substantial qualification= at least 400 hours) or substantiation of labour market relevance iii) approach to examination/assessment
 - Assessment by Classification Committee, decision by the Programme Council of the NCP
- 3) The qualification is included in the register at www.nlqf.nl/register (valid for 6 years)

NCP NLQF

- NCP NLQF commissioned by Ministry of Education.
Objectives:
 - Classification and registration qualifications of the **private** sector;
 - Information and communication;
 - Maintenance and evaluation of NLQF and link to EQF;
 - Accountability and monitoring of the implementation of the NLQF.
- NCP NLQF started 1 February 2012 now 6 part-time employees
- Funding :
 - Ministry of Education: € 450.000 per year,
 - European Commission: € 50.000 (grant)
 - Organizations applying for registration (€ depending on procedure)

State of play end 2017 (1)

- Procedures for classifying non-formal qualifications in place
- End of 2017: **50** non-formal qualifications classified in NLQF of more than 20 providers
- Examples of organisations with classified qualifications



State of play end 2017 (2)

- Almost 7.300 diploma's/certificates issued indicating an NLQF level
- Revision of VET qualifications has taken place using the level descriptors of the NLQF
- 0,04% (=849) of online job vacancies use the NLQF, especially in the health sector in Limburg region
- Improvement of the procedures for classifying non-formal qualifications is an ongoing process, based on experiences
- Increasing participation in information sessions for providers of non-formal qualifications (increasing demand)
- NLQF in connection with ECVET/ECTS and validation of non-formal and informal learning

What is next?

- NLQF to be regulated by Law
 - Because of cross cutting topic, affecting many different stakeholders a very delicate process
 - An evaluation of the NLQF and an ex-ante evaluation of the proposed law was commissioned by government and has resulted in an recommendation
 - Improved text to be finalised and send for adoption beginning 2018
 - Expected implementation of law in 2019 also resulting in indication of NLQF levels on formal certificates and diplomas.

Conclusion

- Lengthy process but NLQF is there to stay
- Soon to be laid down by law
- Increasing impact on the large sector of non-formal qualifications
 - Transparency of level
 - Improved quality awareness and quality assurance
- NLQF descriptors used when describing learning outcomes of VET qualifications
- NLQF descriptors used in pilots for designing flexible dual HE
- NLQF used for describing units of learning outcomes in ECVET pilots and in the process of validation of non-formal and informal learning

Thank you very much for your attention!

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