

# BELGIUM (German-speaking Community) European inventory on NQF 2016

## Introduction and context

The German-speaking Community of Belgium adopted its qualifications framework (*Qualifikationsrahmen Deutschsprachiger Gemeinschaft*, QDG) on 18 November 2013 <sup>(1)</sup>. Being the smallest part of Belgium (geographically and in terms of population) the framework reflects the work done in the Flemish and French Communities but is also inspired by the German qualifications framework (DQR). The 2013 decision envisages that a system of validation of non-formal and informal learning will be linked to the QDG. The QDG has, so far, not been referenced to the EQF and there is currently no indication of when this could take place.

## Policy objectives

A main objective for the framework is to strengthen national and international comparability of qualifications. While subject to federal laws on education applying in Belgium, the geographic location of the region means that citizens are likely to cross regional or national borders for living and working. This makes it a priority to clarify the relationship between own qualifications and those awarded in the neighbouring countries. The framework also promotes equivalence between general and vocational education and training, and the shift to learning outcomes is an important step in increasing transparency and strengthening permeability.

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft, 18 November 2013 – Dekret zur Einführung eines Qualifikationsrahmens der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft [Decree establishing a qualifications framework for the German-speaking Community]:*  
<http://reflex.raadvst-consetat.be/reflex/pdf/Mbbs/2014/02/13/126688.pdf>

## Level and use of learning outcomes

An eight-level, learning-outcomes-based framework has been introduced. The framework builds on the concept of *Handlungskompetenz* (action competence) and distinguishes between subject/occupational specific and personal competences. Level descriptors will be based on the following categories.

### Level descriptors of the German-speaking Community of Belgium, main categories

Handlungskompetenz (action competence)			
Subject/occupational oriented competence ( <i>Fachliche Kompetenz</i> )		Personal competence ( <i>Personale Kompetenz</i> )	
Knowledge	Skills	Social competence	Autonomy

Source: Ministry of the German-speaking Community, 2013.

The framework is seen as an instrument for promoting a learning outcomes or competence-based approach across the different parts of education and training in the region. It distinguishes between general and vocational qualifications, reflecting the parallel distinction made in the Flemish and French Communities of Belgium. General upper secondary education (*Abitur*) is placed at level 4, with the three cycles of bachelor, master and doctor placed at levels 6 to 8. In vocational education and training, completed apprenticeship (dual system) is at level 4. A master craftsman with two years of training is placed at level 5, one with three years of training at level 6.

## Stakeholder involvement and institutional arrangements

The framework has been developed over a relatively short time, involving all main education and training stakeholders in the region. This includes the social partners who normally play a key role in an education and training system inspired by that of Germany, both for general and vocational education and training.

## Recognising and validating non-formal and informal learning and learning pathways <sup>(2)</sup>

A strategy for introducing a validation system was outlined in 2015. This refers to European developments in this area and sees validation as an integrated part of an overall, lifelong learning strategy for the region. Individuals with no (or low) qualifications are seen as a key target group. A project addressing the validation challenge was started in 2014/15 and the aim is to put concrete arrangements in place by 2018. It is envisaged that this work will be supported by funds from the European Social Fund (ESF).

### NQF implementation

Available information indicates that QDG plays a limited role in supporting education and training policies and practices in the region. This reflects the size of the region and the fact that only limited (human and financial) resources are available. The QDG is not referred to in the 2025 education and training vision for the region. The emphasis given to validation and competences (see above) indicates, however, that the basic learning outcomes orientation underpinning the QDG is taken forward in a systematic manner. This is also apparent in relation to other projects outlined in the 2025 strategy, for example strengthening support to individual pupils and application of competence-oriented diagnostics.

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<sup>(2)</sup> This section builds on the information provided in the report on 'future strategies' for the German-speaking Community of Eastern Belgium (Ostbelgien Leben 2025 Regionales *Entwicklungskonzept der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft*). The information provided here builds on the section covering the '*Bildungsregion DG*' (the German-speaking education and training region).  
[http://www.ostbelgienlive.be/PortalData/2/Resources/downloads/rek/REK4-72dpi-KORR\\_23sept.pdf](http://www.ostbelgienlive.be/PortalData/2/Resources/downloads/rek/REK4-72dpi-KORR_23sept.pdf) [accessed March 2017].

#### Further sources of information

Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft, 18. November 2013 - Dekret zur Einführung eines Qualifikationsrahmens der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft <http://reflex.raadvst-consetat.be/reflex/pdf/Mbbs/2014/02/13/126688.pdf>

## Qualifications framework of the German-speaking Community of Belgium (QDG)

NQF levels	Qualifications from general education	Qualifications from vocational education and training	Envisaged EQF levels <sup>(3)</sup>
8	<p>Doctoral or postdoctoral degree/habilitation</p> <p><i>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss einer Promotion oder Habilitation auf Doktoren- bzw. Professorenebene</i></p>		8
7	<p>Master degree (long duration)</p> <p><i>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss eines Hochschulstudiums langer Dauer auf Masterebene</i></p>	<p>Master degree upon successful completion of dual track higher education (long duration)</p> <p><i>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss eines dualen Hochschulstudiums langer Dauer auf Masterebene</i></p>	7

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<sup>(3)</sup> Not referenced yet to the EQF.

NQF levels	Qualifications from general education	Qualifications from vocational education and training	Envisaged EQF levels <sup>(3)</sup>
6	Bachelor degree  <i>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss eines Hochschulstudiums kurzer Dauer auf Bachelorebene</i>	Master craftsperson certificate upon successful completion of a three-year master craftsperson programme <i>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss einer dreijährigen Meisterausbildung mit dem Meisterbrief</i>  Professional bachelor degree upon successful completion of dual track higher education Der erfolgreiche Abschluss eines dualen Hochschulstudiums kurzer Dauer auf Bachelorebene	6
5		Master craftsperson certificate upon successful completion of a two-year master craftsperson programme Der erfolgreiche Abschluss einer zweijährigen Meisterausbildung mit dem Meisterbrief  Successful completion of supplementary secondary vocational education Der erfolgreiche Abschluss einer Ausbildung im ergänzenden beruflichen Sekundarunterricht	5

NQF levels	Qualifications from general education	Qualifications from vocational education and training	Envisaged EQF levels <sup>(3)</sup>
4	<p>Successful completion of upper secondary general education</p> <p>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss der Oberstufe des allgemeinbildenden Sekundarunterrichts</p>	<p>Successful completion of upper secondary technical and arts programmes</p> <p>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss der Oberstufe des technischen oder künstlerischen Sekundarunterrichts</p> <p>Attestation of competence upon successful completion of year 6 in vocational education</p> <p>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss des sechsten Jahres des berufsbildenden Sekundarunterrichts mit Befähigungsnachweis</p> <p>Successful completion of year 7 (complementary year) in vocational education</p> <p>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss des siebten Jahres des berufsbildenden Sekundarunterrichts</p> <p>Journeyman certificate upon successful completion of an apprenticeship</p> <p>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss einer mittelständischen Lehre mit dem Gesellenzeugnis</p>	4
3	<p>Successful completion of lower secondary general education</p> <p>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss der Unterstufe des allgemeinbildenden Sekundarunterrichts</p>	<p>Successful completion of lower secondary technical, vocational or arts programmes</p> <p>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss der Unterstufe des technischen, künstlerischen oder berufsbildenden Sekundarunterrichts</p> <p>Certified partial qualification acquired in year 2 of an apprenticeship</p> <p>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss einer zertifizierten Teilqualifikation im zweiten Jahr der mittelständischen Lehre</p>	3

NQF levels	Qualifications from general education	Qualifications from vocational education and training	Envisaged EQF levels <sup>(3)</sup>
2	<p>Successful completion of 'common' year 2 in secondary education</p> <p>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss des zweiten gemeinsamen Jahres des Sekundarunterrichts</p>	<p>Successful completion of year 3 in vocationally oriented education Der erfolgreiche Abschluss des dritten Jahres des berufsbildenden Sekundarunterrichts</p> <p>Befähigungsnachweis der Unterstufe des Fördersekundarunterrichts Befähigungsnachweis der Unterstufe des Fördersekundarunterrichts</p>	2
1	<p>Successful completion of primary education</p> <p>Der erfolgreiche Abschluss der Grundschule Niveau</p>	<p>Certificate upon successful completion of year 2 in vocationally oriented education</p> <p>Das Studienzeugnis des zweiten Jahres des berufsbildenden Sekundarunterrichts</p>	1

Source: Ministry of the German-speaking Community (2013).

## References

Ministry of the German-speaking Community (2013). *Dekret zur Einführung eines Qualifikationsrahmens der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft [Decree establishing a qualifications framework for the German-speaking Community]*.

<http://reflex.raadvst-consetat.be/reflex/pdf/Mbbs/2014/02/13/126688.pdf>