EUROPEAN
INVENTORY
OF NQFs 2024

UKRAINE

This report was produced by the European Training Foundation (ETF) as a contribution to the joint Global Inventory of National and Regional Qualification Frameworks by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), the ETF, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL).
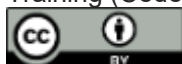
The report is part of the European inventory of national qualifications frameworks (NQFs).

For additional information please visit Cedefop's NQF online tool and ETF's qualifications and qualificatons system section.

Contents

# 1.	Introduction

Ukraine's NQF was first adopted in 2011 as a ten-level framework, which was then modified to an eleven-level structure in 2017. In 2020 the NQF level descriptors were again revised and the number of levels reduced to eight levels to bring them into line with the EQF.

Coordination and policy lead for the NQF lies with the Ministry of Education and Science (MoEs) and the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture, while the National Qualifications Agency (NQA) guides implementation.

In 2022, Ukraine completed self-certification of the higher-level qualifications in its NQF to the Qualifications Framework for the European Area for Higher Education (QF-EHEA). In 2023 it conducted a successful exercise to compare its NQF to the EQF. Ukraine, as a candidate for accession to the EU, is now a member of the EQF process and so eligible for referencing its NQF to the EQF.

Ukraine's NQF is in the activation stage.

# 2.	National context

## 2.1	Policy context

Ukraine submitted its application to join the EU on 28 February 2022, four days after the Russian invasion. Ukraine formally became a candidate country for EU accession on 23 June 2022.

On 8 November 2023 the European Commission recommended opening accession negotiations with Ukraine, acknowledging the country's reform efforts and its European vocation. On 14 December 2023, the European Council endorsed this recommendation and officially approved the opening of accession negotiations.

The Ukraine Facility, the EU's main financial instrument to support Ukraine effective from 1 March 2024, provides up to €50 billion in grants and loans to support Ukraine's recovery, reconstruction, and modernisation from 2024 to 2027. In education and training, key initiatives include restoring facilities, helping students catch up on learning, adapting qualifications to the needs of the labour market, and creating decent employment opportunities. Particular attention is paid to supporting vulnerable groups, including those affected by trauma, and encouraging the return of Ukrainians living abroad.

The Ukraine Facility provides for:
- enhancing education and skills.

- improving access to healthcare and rehabilitation.
- reintegrating people excluded from the labour market.
- expanding the active workforce.

Ukraine's pre-war trend of a declining population due to low birth rates and emigration has been an ongoing issue since the 1990s and is now exacerbated by the war causing millions to flee. The median age of the Ukrainian population has risen, indicating an ageing demographic that pressures the labour force and social support systems. In 2023, Ukraine's population was estimated at 37 million, a million fewer than in 2022. The International Organization for Migration estimates that there are circa 3.5 million internally displaced persons and 4.7 million returnees in Ukraine.

Ukraine's economy has shown resilience in the face of invasion, adapting from collapse in 2022 to a modest recovery in 2023. After falling by 28.8% in 2022, the economy recovered by 5.3% in 2023. Based on the results of 2024, GDP growth amounted to 2.9%. However, the economic recovery is slowing - each quarter of 2024 showed lower growth compared to 2021 than in 2023, and in the fourth quarter, GDP actually declined by 0.1% compared to the fourth quarter of 2023 (Ukrainian Centre for Economic Strategy).

The economic recovery continues to be hampered by the difficult security situation, a shortage of skilled workers, and Russian attacks on energy infrastructure.

Russia has inflicted massive damage on the country's infrastructure, housing and industrial assets. Ukraine's government has been running a massive budget deficit, with military spending consuming all domestic tax revenues. The country's fiscal stability is almost entirely reliant on external financial aid. The migration of millions of Ukrainians has created labour shortages and long-term demographic challenges. Traditional export routes for key goods like grains and metals have been blocked, forcing the country to find alternative, more costly land and river routes.

Education and training reform

Ukraine is implementing comprehensive reforms of its education and training system, driven primarily by two key factors: the need for adaptation and resilience during the ongoing war and the strategic goal of aligning with European Union (EU) policies in preparation for accession.

At school level the principal strategy is the 'New Ukrainian School ' (NUS) initiative, https://mon.gov.ua/en/tag/new-ukrainian-school?&tag=new-ukrainian-school. It was launched in 2016 and is now being implemented at all levels. Its main goal is to move from a knowledge-acquisition approach to one that develops

key competences for the 21st century. The system is being changed from 11 to 12 school years, bringing it into line with most EU countries. Schools are given more autonomy in terms of their administration and finances. Despite the war, the NUS reform is progressing, with international partners such as the World Bank supporting the reconstruction of schools and providing resources.

Reforms in the VET sector are a priority, as they are crucial for Ukraine's economic recovery and reconstruction. To this end, in 2025, Parliament adopted the Law of Ukraine, 'On vocational education ', whose focus is better aligning vocational education and training with the needs of the labour market.

In addition, the government supports systems to validate knowledge and skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning, including to support the reintegration of displaced persons into the labour market.

Many links have been created during the last ten years between Ukraine and the EU through economic cooperation, labour migration and platform work. The Association Agreement that entered into force in 2017 established the basis for cooperation on the NQF to improve transparency and recognition of qualifications and skills. To be operational, the NQF needs to be developed further to support flexible learning and recognition of skills.

As a candidate for EU accession, Ukraine is a member of the EQF Advisory Group. It completed a comparison of its NQF to the EQF - which compares and contrasts the relevant NQF to the EQF but does not establish a formal link between them - in 2023. It is now taking the path towards full referencing to the EQF. Once completed, this referencing will enable use of EQF levels on Ukrainian qualifications documents and the linking of qualifications and credentials data.

2.2   NQF legal basis

The key legal acts related to the NQF are:

- the NQF Decree, 2011, which established the NQF as a 10-level lifelong learning framework.
- On the professional development of employees, 2012. This law provides the framework for the training and attestation of workers and is the basis for introducing validation of non-formal and informal learning (art. 14) by training centres of the employment services and other training providers.
- On employment of the population, 2012. This law confirmed the right of unemployed people to have the skills they obtained through informal learning validated.
- Law on HE, 2014. It links concrete qualification types for HE to NQF levels.
- On approval of Confirmation of the Results on Non-formal Vocational Training of Persons in Working Professions, 2016. This order of the Ministry

of Social Policy, adopted in 2016, initiated the implementation of validation of non-formal learning for guards, cooks and welders.

- NQF Implementation Plan II 2016-2020, 2016. It updates and revises an earlier implementation plan and establishes a new intersectoral committee.
- Law on Education, 2017, which introduced important reforms aimed at modernizing the education system, including provision for a competency-based system the formal recognition of learning outcomes from non-formal and informal learning. It expanded the NQF from 10 to 11. It also introduced educational and professional qualifications, as well as full and partial qualifications.
- the Statute of the National Qualifications Agency, adopted in 2018 defines the composition, operations and functions of the NQA. This has proved a crucial innovation: the establishment of the National Qualifications Agency (NQA) as a collegial body of the key ministries and social partners.
- On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on Improving Educational Activities in the Field of Higher Education, 2019, which reduced the number of levels in the NQF from 11 to 8, to align to the EQF.
- On making changes to the Charter of the National Agency for Quality Assurance of Higher Education, 2019. This legal act amended the statutes of the said agency and made it operational.
- On making changes to the appendix to the resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 23 November 2011, No. 1341, 2020, which introduced new level descriptors.
- On the approval of the Standard Regulation for Qualification Centres, 2021. Qualification Centres are authorised by the NQA to evaluate and recognise learning outcomes obtained through formal, non-formal or informal learning, award and/or confirm relevant professional qualifications, and recognise relevant professional qualifications obtained in other countries.
- On the approval of the Regulations on the Register of Qualifications, 2022. The Register provides information on occupations, qualifications, standards and learning outcomes and Qualification Centres.
- Guidelines for the Development of Occupational Standards, first adopted in 2023 by the NQA but subsequently amended on 30 September 2025. These are designed to provide practical explanations and methodological assistance to bodies developing occupational standards and to ensure consistency of approach among such organisations.
- the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine has adopted amendments to the Procedure for Developing and Reviewing Professional Standards. Resolution No. 622 of 30 May 2025 provides a clear methodology for

developers, enhances the transparency of the process through mandatory public discussion, and establishes regular review of standards. These innovations are designed to ensure that qualifications meet the current requirements of the labour market and promote effective interaction between employers, employees, and the state.

- the Law of Ukraine, 'On Vocational Education ' (No.4574-20), adopted in 2025. Its intended outcome is a VET system capable of preparing graduates for the labour market. Its provisions also notably address levelling of qualifications in the NQF.
- a resolution, 'On Amendments to the Annex to Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1341 as of 23 November 2011', approved on 11 June 2025 by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. The amendments provide for the revision of certain terms and the inclusion in the National Qualifications Framework of qualifications from general secondary education.

3. NQF objectives and functions

NQF objectives and functions span:
- ensuring the relevance of qualifications in the labour market.
- supporting competency-based education.
- functioning as a tool for lifelong learning.
- facilitating educational and labour market mobility.
- encouraging work-based learning.
- setting quality assurance criteria necessary to ensure confidence as providers become autonomous.
- offering more ways to assess and recognise skills to improve permeability.
- developing and levelling occupational standards to support development of professional qualifications and their placing in the NQF.
- acting as an important tool for recognition at home of diplomas obtained abroad.
- building closer links to the EQF, and to European approaches in quality assurance, credit transfer, key competencies, and lifelong learning.
- fostering convergence with the Bologna Process.

4. Levels, learning outcomes and qualifications

4.1 NQF structure and level descriptors

In 2011 when the NQF was adopted, it had ten levels, from 0 to 9. Following article 36 of the Law on Education, an additional level was introduced in 2017. In 2020 these were then brought into line with the EQF levels, moving from 11 to 8 levels. HE qualifications span levels 5 to 8. Vocational qualifications span Levels 2 to 8. There are four domain descriptors across the NQF's eight levels:

- Knowledge: must be meaningful and focused on the field of specialisation, so that it can inform conscious, purposeful activities. Knowledge is divided into empirical knowledge (facts and ideas) and theoretical knowledge (conceptual, methodological).
- Skills: the ability to apply knowledge to perform tasks and solve problems. The skills/abilities are divided into cognitive skills (including logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical skills (including manual skill, the use of practical methods, materials and tools).
- Communication: interaction between persons in order to transmit information, coordinate actions, or undertake joint activities.
- Responsibility and autonomy: the ability of a person to apply knowledge and skills independently and responsibly.

Domain descriptors are similar to the EQF's, but described in greater detail, plus there are four domain descriptors in Ukraine's NQF, compared to the EQF's three. The fourth – Communication – is included to reflect the Dublin Descriptors of the QF-EHEA.

4.2 NQF scope and coverage

Ukraine's NQF is lifelong learning in scope. National legislation defines a qualification as a standardised set of acquired competencies (learning outcomes) recognised by an authorised entity and certified by a relevant document.

Vocational qualifications

A vocational qualification (full professional qualification) is a recognised or awarded/confirmed by an entity authorised by law, and certified by a relevant document, a standardised set of competences and/or learning outcomes acquired by a person, enabling them to perform all work functions specified by the relevant occupational standard.

Persons who have successfully completed training at a vocational education institution or another educational entity under a specialist training programme and have received a certificate of professional qualification from a qualification centre

shall be issued a specialist diploma by the vocational education institution or other educational entity.

Partial vocational qualifications

A partial vocational qualification is a standardised set of competencies and/or learning outcomes acquired by a person, recognised or awarded/confirmed by an entity authorised by law and certified by a relevant document, which enables the person to perform part of the job functions defined by the relevant occupational standard.

General education qualifications

Levels of general education correspond to the NQF levels following the schema:

- primary education - Level 1 of the NQF.
- basic secondary education - Level 2 of the NQF.
- specialised secondary education, eleven-year general secondary education programmes - Level 3 of the NQF.
- specialised secondary education, twelve-year general secondary education programmes - Level 4 of the NQF.

Higher Education qualifications

Qualifications for higher education include:

- Junior Bachelor, level 5.
- Bachelor, level 6.
- Master's degree, level 7.
- Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Arts and Doctor of Science (level 8).

Partial qualifications are established in law and are already used in the recognition of professional qualification and appear in the framework. There is discussion about introducing micro-credentials, which have been piloted in some projects, but they are not yet provided for in legislation.

The framework is open to qualifications acquired or awarded outside formal education, and to international qualifications.

While the GNQF does not include partial qualifications, it is open to micro-credentials, units of learning outcomes and international qualifications. Providers of such qualifications can be public colleges etc., while employers may request accreditation to develop their own programmes that lead to micro-credentials.

The table below gives summarises qualification types by NQF and EQF levels.

Types of qualifications

EQF Level	NQF level Ukraine	Formal Education Qualifications				Professional qualifications
		General secondary education	Vocational education and training	Pre-higher Professional Education	Higher Education	
8	8				Doctor of Philosophy. Doctor of the Arts	
7	7				Master	
6	6				Bachelor	
5	5			Professional Junior Bachelor (formerly Junior Specialist)	Junior Bachelor	
4	4	Specialised secondary education, under twelve-year complete general secondary education programmes				
3	3	Specialised secondary education, under eleven-year complete general secondary education programmes.				
2	2	Basic secondary education				
1	1	Primary education.				

4.3 Use and renewal of learning outcomes and standards General Education

Ukraine's 2011 Decree adopting the NQF provides these definitions:

- competence is a dynamic combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, ways of thinking, views, values, and other personal qualities that determine a person's ability to successfully socialise and engage in professional and/or further educational activities.
- learning outcomes - knowledge, abilities, skills, ways of thinking, views, values, and other personal qualities acquired in the process of learning, upbringing, and development that can be identified, planned, assessed, and measured.

It is mandatory to use learning outcomes for each new qualification and in all standards. The Law on Education (art 32-33) regulates the use of learning outcomes in state educational standards and educational programmes. Educational programmes and individual qualifications are developed from the state educational standards, and are, therefore, indirectly linked to the Ukrainian NQF.

Occupational standards

Occupational standards (¹) are increasingly used in Ukraine to ensure the relevance of professional qualifications and support their levelling in the NQF.

VET, post-secondary VET and higher education qualifications should be based on occupational standards.

Resolution 373, adopted 31 May 2017, 'On Approval of the Procedure for Development, Enactment and Revision of Professional Standards ', adopted by Decision of the National Qualifications Agency in 2023, seeks to standardise the design of occupational standards. NQA or a joint representative body of employers oversees development of draft standards, for endorsement in turn by social partners. After endorsement they are registered in the Register of Qualifications (see 7.4 below).

Professional qualifications

Learning outcomes are used for assessing professional qualifications, and for developing VET qualifications and higher education qualifications. Since September 2021, a methodology for levelling occupational standards has been used to evaluate the learning outcomes in each of the four domains (Knowledge, Skills, Communication, Autonomy and Responsibility); and assessment of learning

---

(¹) Occupational standards are documents that describe the typical tasks and functions of an occupation and specify performance requirements by learning outcomes.

outcomes for each group of labour functions (for each partial qualification) in each of the four domains.

Professional qualifications are awarded by authorised awarding bodies (Qualifications Centres) based on occupational standards. This can be done after a training programme or through the validation of non-formal and informal learning, based on an assessment of achieved learning outcomes by individuals and measured against the learning outcomes in a relevant occupational standard (Procedure for the award and confirmation of professional qualifications by qualification centres).

Higher Education

In higher education, higher education institutions develop qualifications and educational programmes based on the state standards for higher education specialties.

The Law on Higher Education (2014) related higher education qualifications to the NQF, linked learning outcomes with quality assurance arrangements and introduced the diploma supplement that describes the learning outcomes of individual qualifications. In higher education, the use of learning outcomes is obligatory for educational programmes to be accredited (Criteria for evaluation the quality of an educational programme). Assessment of learning outcomes is addressed in higher education standards ([2]) and related programmes.

General requirements for the types of higher education qualifications (junior bachelor, bachelor, master, doctor of philosophy) are defined by the Law on Higher Education (Article 5). The formulation and use of learning outcomes are described in the methodology for developing higher education standards. All standards of higher education at all levels should contain a clear formulation of learning outcomes both at the level of the programme and for each individual discipline. Universities have published these learning outcomes in their course catalogues. Learning outcomes for higher education specialties are defined nationally and programme learning outcomes are defined by higher education institutions.

General education

General education is structured into primary education, basic secondary education, 11-year specialized secondary education and 12-year specialized secondary education. There are state standards for primary, basic secondary and for specialised secondary education, which are under development.

([2]) Methodological recommendations on the development of higher education standards

In general education, the New Ukrainian School concept reduced the curriculum from 19 subjects to 9 broader areas. State standards for primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education set out the requirements for compulsory learning outcomes including key competencies and specific learning outcomes and benchmarks for the assessment of nine educational fields e.g., language and literature, mathematics, natural sciences and technology, information technology, history etc.

Basic curricula, standard educational programmes and standard curricula are developed nationally, using the State Standards, while education providers should use these to develop the programmes in their institution.

For core competencies, the focus is first on maths and reading and literacy, followed by a gradual integration of others such as entrepreneurial competencies in line with the European EntreComp framework and digital competencies in line with DigComp framework. These define model curricula that schools can adopt or adapt to make their own curricula.

VET

In formal VET, the first outcome-based educational and professional programmes date back to 2013 when the methodology for developing state VET standards for specific professions was approved. A system-wide approach only came into force in 2021.

The new model of standards for VET requires that learning outcomes describe key and professional competencies derived from occupational standards. Labour functions (units of occupational standards) can be used as the basis for units of learning outcomes and modular curricula.

Learning outcomes-based curricula are being gradually introduced. There are currently 71 such state standards. The intention is that the learning outcomes approach be used more flexibly, allowing for alternating curricula in which training in schools and training centres is combined with learning in the workplace.

Educational programmes contain compulsory and optional elements, so that learners can tailor the programmes to better suit their needs and interests. Units of learning outcomes can shorten VET programmes and make them more attractive for adults.

4.4   Quality assurance arrangements

Quality assurance of qualifications is a main objective of the NQF. Qualifications that belong to the Ukrainian NQF are developed based on educational or occupational standards.

Providers conduct internal, institutional, quality assurance, complemented by bodies exercising external quality assurance functions ([3]). The State Service for Education Quality is responsible for the institutional audit, state control and monitoring, authorisation of VET institutions and their programmes, accreditation of pre-higher professional programmes, and approving educational programmes in general education.

Quality assurance in general education

MoES ([4]) is responsible for the development and approval of educational standards as well as the methodology for their development. Educational standards specify requirements for mandatory competencies and learning outcomes ([5]).

Model curricula are developed by MoES, based on state standards in secondary education. These have been informed by international competence frameworks such as DigComp and EntreComp.

In particular, the acquisition of key competencies is emphasised. All programmes are expressed in terms of learning outcomes, and programmes in general education are based on the model curricula. They must be approved by the State Service for Education Quality ([6]).

MoES is responsible for the licensing of education providers. General education providers are subject to licensing by regional educational authorities.

Quality assurance in higher education

During examination of higher education standards, compliance of the learning outcomes with the NQF descriptors is verified.

The National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NAQAHE) is responsible for the accreditation of higher education programmes. QA in Higher Education focuses more on programmes than on institutions.

Quality assurance in VET

Professional qualifications issued by Qualification Centres are based on occupational standards ([7]) and are awarded according to the established procedure for assessment. NQA accredits Qualifications Centres for specific

---

([3]) Art. 41 Law of Education
([4]) Art. 64 Law of Education
([5]) Art. 32 Law of Education
([6]) Art. 67 Law of Education
([7]) Art. 39 Law on Education

professional qualifications (Art. 38, Law on Education), including the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Independent assessment should ensure that individuals meet the learning outcomes in the standards.

5. Institutional arrangements and stakeholder involvement

5.1 Governance and institutional arrangements for the NQF

The National Qualifications Agency (NQA)

In Ukraine, the policy lead for the NQF is with the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture, while the lead implementing body is the National Qualifications Agency, mandated by the Law on Education in 2017.

Established in 2019 as a tripartite collegial body to strengthen coordination in qualifications, the National Qualifications Agency (Agency) is the main body supporting the Ukrainian NQF's implementation and the development of the professional qualifications system. It is also the country's National Coordination Point for managing the relationship between the country's qualification system and the EQF.

Stakeholder involvement

Since the beginning of modern qualification system reform, many stakeholders have been involved in the development and implementation of the NQF and the qualification system. They can be sub-divided thus:

- ministries: the Cabinet of Ministers, MoES and the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine, the Ministry of Regional Development, of Finance, of Culture, and the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture.
- Parliament.
- the education world: the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, the Academy of Sciences, the Institute of the Modernisation of Education.
- employment agencies: the State Employment Service.
- the VET Research Institute.
- regional training and methodological centres.
- employers/chambers: the Federation of Employers, the Confederation of Employers, the Chamber of Industry, Professional Bodies, Economic

Clusters, the Federation of Metallurgists, Sector Committees, lead enterprises, the State Railways.

- trades unions.
- universities the ENIC-NARIC centre, the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Educations, NGOs such as the Institute for Professional Qualifications, and different training providers.

5.2   Roles and functions of actors and stakeholders

MoES cooperates with the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine and the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture. The Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine has been in charge of developing and implementing validation of non-formal and informal learning, occupational standards, the Classifier of Professions, guidance and counselling, but many tasks have been taken over by the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture while others have been transferred to the NQA.

Article 38 of the Law on Education legislates the NQA as a collegial body, co-founded by government and social partners to strengthen coordination in the field of qualifications. According to the law, the National Qualifications Agency has 20 tasks. It:

- participates in the development of regulatory and legal acts in the field of qualifications.
- coordinates the activities of stakeholders in the field of qualifications.
- supports the National Qualifications Framework, including for the purpose of harmonising it with similar international instruments.
- engages in international cooperation in the field of qualifications and professions (types of occupations).
- analyses and evaluates the effectiveness of state policy in qualifications.
- participates in forecasting labour market needs in terms of qualifications.
- provides information support for the National Qualifications System.
- ensures the creation and maintenance of the Unified Register of Qualifications - the Classifier of Professions.
- compiles and provides the central executive body implementing state policy in the field of statistics with information from the Unified Register of Qualifications - Classifier of Professions on the codes and names of professions (types of occupations) in accordance with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO).
- develops a draft procedure for the development, implementation and revision of professional standards and submits it for approval to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

- registers occupational standards and ensures open access to standards.
- provides information, analytical and methodological support for the development of occupational standards.
- participates in the development of educational and occupational standards.
- accredits qualification centres, monitors the activities of qualification centres, suspends or revokes accreditation certificates of qualification centres.
- develops criteria and procedures for the recognition of professional and partial professional qualifications obtained in other countries.
- develops a draft procedure for the award/confirmation of professional and partial professional qualifications, the recognition of learning outcomes (in particular, those obtained through non-formal or informal education) by qualification centres and submits it for approval to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.
- participates in the functioning of the external quality assurance system for vocational education.
- develops a methodology for calculating the cost of assessing the learning outcomes of vocational education seekers by qualification centres and submits it for approval by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.
- interacts with bodies and institutions responsible for ensuring the quality of education.
- exercises other powers provided for by the Law on Education and other legislative acts.

The statute of the National Agency for Qualifications was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 5 December 2018 and revised in 2019 and 2024. In accordance with paragraph 13 of the Statute of the NQA, it has a board of 12 members, two each representing MoES, the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine, and the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture, with three each from the Joint Representative Body of Employers' Organisations and the Joint Representative Body of the Trades Unions.

The NQA board was approved by a decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in April 2019. Its priorities for the first three years were:

- establishing communication and institutional ties with domestic and foreign stakeholders.
- developing the legal aspects and settings such as qualification (examination) centres.
- revising the process for developing occupational standards.
- launching the national register of qualifications, including its regulatory basis.

- identifying qualification needs in line with changing labour market demand.
- developing a new, unified register of qualifications to replace the current Classifier of Occupations.

The first three priorities have been fully achieved, the fourth is ongoing, with the last two priorities still at an early stage.

6. Recognition and validation of prior learning

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

VNFIL in Ukraine - in law, and in practice - goes back some years, to legislation adopted in 2012 and to related regulations and piloting. From the beginning, it has been oriented to encouraging professional development and supporting people who find themselves unemployed. After the legal acts, piloting, a staggered roll-out across selected assessment centres, and, notwithstanding the war, its implementation is finally gathering pace.

Enabling legislation is:

- the law 'On professional development of employees ', Number 4312 of January 2012, introduced the establishment of recognition centres by the State Employment Service. It also defined non-formal vocational training.
- the new Law on Employment, adopted in 2012. It stated that unemployed people are entitled to have their skills assessed.
- Resolution Number 340, adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers in May 2013, 'On the Procedure for validation of blue-collar occupations, non-formal and informal learning outcomes '.
- the December 2013 Order Number 875/1776 by the Ministry of Social Policy, which lists and sets criteria for (private) assessment centres, and ministerial order 886 which lists occupations for assessment.
- Order Number 256 of the Ministry of Social Policy, adopted in 2016, for the approval of the Confirmation of the Results of Non-formal Vocational Training of Persons in Working Professions.

It was this last regulation that finally made VNFIL operational i.e., the awarding of certificates to candidates via validation routes. Key enablers of this operationalisation have been the establishment and role of the NQA, a piloting of qualifications for cooks, and the designation of assessment centres.

Piloting VNFIL

During 2013-2014 the first piloting of validation began, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Policy and the State Employment Service. Three occupations, those of cook, guard and welder, were identified for implementation in three locations - Odessa, Rivne and Kiev. However, in the event, only those candidates pursuing qualifications in cooking were awarded certificates. By 2022, before the first Qualification Centres became operational, 650 candidates across the three centres had been awarded qualifications.

Role of the Qualification Centres

In April 2021, MoES approved a regulation defining the tasks and functions of Qualification Centres. Further, in September that year, a Resolution by the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers authorised the procedure which enables the NQA to accredit the Centres ([8]).

The first accredited qualification centre was Higher Vocational School No. 33 in Kyiv. On 12 July 2022, the National Qualifications Agency issued seven certificates of accreditation for the qualification centre for professional qualifications defined by the occupational standards of Cook and Confectioner.

In principle, professional qualifications can be awarded through the validation of non-formal and informal learning for all existing occupational standards, except for regulated professions.

The certificate to be awarded could be for specific professional skills or for the candidate's future improvement.

By October 2025, 186 Qualification Centres were operating, including 141 accredited by the National Qualifications Agency, 53 operating in accordance with submitted declarations, and 8 with dual status (accredited for some professional qualifications and declarants for other professional qualifications).

Qualification centres have already issued 9,087 certificates of professional qualification to applicants.

The current accredited Qualification Centres can now award certificates for 579 different professional qualifications, a number increasing rapidly. This evolution can be followed on the website of the National Qualifications Agency.

Validation procedures in operation

As with the European guidelines and the EU Council VNFIL recommendation, a typical validation procedure consists of identification, documentation, assessment

---

([8]) "Regulation on accreditation of qualification centres" approved by Cabinet of Ministers Resolution in September 2021.

and certification (IDAC), set out in 'The Guidelines on the process of assessment and recognition of the outcomes of non-formal vocational training '.

The procedure for assessing, recognising and awarding professional qualifications in Qualification Centres includes:

- the Qualification Centre accepts the application for the professional qualification and other supporting documents submitted by the applicant on the acquired learning outcomes.
- an interview takes place with the applicant regarding the acquired learning outcomes, and relevant knowledge of occupational safety for the given occupation.
- based on the interview a decision is made on the possibility of conducting the assessment.
- the assessment is carried out; and:
- based on the results, a decision is made regarding the confirmation procedure and issuance of the relevant document.

In cases where occupational standards are the basis for formal education, there is no need for assessing, recognising and awarding the professional qualifications in a Qualification Centre. In such cases, formal education graduates will receive a corresponding educational qualification.

A study jointly conducted by MoES, the State Employment Service of Ukraine, the Federation of Employers of Ukraine, the Solidarity Fund Poland, the European Bank for Reconstruction & Development, and the EU4Skills Programme 'Better Skills for Modern Ukraine ', concluded that the introduction of Qualification Centres has proven instrumental in addressing staffing needs in sectors experiencing significant personnel shortages, such as the mining industry, utilities, and state-owned enterprises for housing and communal services.[9]

Other VNFIL practices in Ukraine

Although the Qualification Centres are the most advanced and visible part of VNFIL, the Law on Education (2017) states that educational, professional and partial qualifications can be awarded on the basis of formal, non-formal and informal learning and that the state provides relevant services to facilitate this.

Some of these arrangements already existed before the 2017 Law on Education. This is particularly true for general education, where the possibility of taking external exams and following a personal programme always existed.

---

[9] Confederation of Employers of Ukraine, Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, European Bank for Reconstruction &

Development, Solidarity Fund PL, EU4Skills: Better Skills for Modern Ukraine. (2022). Labour market in Ukraine: 2022 - 2023: Status, Trends and Prospects. Study of skills needs in Ukraine during the war. https://www.dcz.gov.ua/sites/default/files/ebrd_survey_20_04_23_0.pdf

In VET, an admission control procedure has been introduced. It allows training institutions that also provide opportunities for professional upskilling and reskilling to shorten training periods based on experience.

In higher education and pre-higher vocational education, developments are more recent. The Law on Education requires providers to make arrangements for the recognition of learning outcomes obtained through non-formal and informal learning. NAQAHE has introduced accreditation requirements for validation that require higher education institutions to develop appropriate arrangements.

However, these have not been fully translated into new practices. In the meantime, MoES established a working group to develop a framework approach for validation in higher education and pre-higher vocational education. This has led to ministerial order No. 130 of 8 February 2022 'On approval of the Procedure for recognition in higher and professional pre-higher education of learning outcomes obtained through non-formal and/or informal learning'. The order defines:

- general requirements.
- the type of institutions and persons to whom it applies.
- the sequence of the validation and recognition procedures.
- requirements for educational institutions.
- application process and identification of appropriate learning outcomes.
- assessment procedures.
- how the outcomes affect further learning.

Recognition may not exceed more than 25% of the learning programme, in most cases.

6.2   Credit systems

Ukraine's NQF is lifelong learning in intention and scope - it should provide coherence between educational and professional qualifications and their compliance with labour market needs and create mechanisms for the recognition of qualifications acquired throughout life.

In 2017, the Law on Education provided a legal framework for the NQF as a pillar for wider education and training reforms, moving the country towards a competency-based education system. It is significant that the law places a strong emphasis on learners, and on the right to education and lifelong learning, including the possibility to follow individual learning programmes.

Learning outcomes are integrated into national methodologies for developing occupational standards and new educational standards formats and methodologies are either in use or being implemented in higher education, general education and vocational education. NQA organises annually a Forum on Human Capital Development, where the state of lifelong learning is discussed with

representatives of many key institutions and stakeholders. Validation of non-formal and informal learning is developing.

Legislation on adult learning is being drafted.

Recent developments are an important step in the right direction towards a more lifelong learning system, but the war, global developments and the impact of COVID have resulted in huge changes in the labour market, which has become much less predictable and more difficult to regulate. There is a need to carefully evaluate the use of professional and educational qualifications on lifelong learning opportunities and adult learning, including pathways from professional to educational qualifications and vice versa, and the possibility to use partial qualifications to accumulate learning experiences supporting horizontal or vertical progression.

Partial qualifications deserve more attention as they can be building blocks for lifelong learning and personalised pathways. Career guidance will need to be integrated into the new qualifications system.

There is a need for more information online to support individuals in making career decisions. It is therefore important that the register of qualifications becomes fully operational, bringing together all educational and professional qualifications, indicating how and where they can be obtained, and what career opportunities they may lead to.

7. NQF implementation and impact

7.1 Stage of implementation

Key legislation has been passed. NQA is operational. New competency-based standards and learning outcomes are used in general education, vocational education and training and in higher education. The NQF is self-certificated against the Qualifications Framework of the European Area for Higher Education and compared to the EQF. The validation of non-formal and informal learning is operational for a growing number of occupations as more and more qualification centres are established. The NQF is also a tool for recognition, through the link with the EQF.

Qualifications for complete general secondary education are included in the NQF; currently, work is underway to amend vocational education qualifications in accordance with the new Law of Ukraine 'On Vocational Education'.

There are 272 confirmed specialties published on the website of the MoES: 110 are for bachelor degrees, 101 for master degrees, 55 for doctorate degrees.

Additionally, there are 275 specialties for professional junior bachelor at level 5 of the NQF, again available on the website of the MoES.

Since adoption of the new approach to VET standards and VET programmes in 2021, 71 new VET standards, spanning NQF levels 2 to 5, have been approved and are published on the MoES website.

The NQF register contains data on occupational standards, qualification centres and professional qualifications, and in October 2025, NQA begun to input educational qualifications.

The data in the register are not interoperable, and so do not allow a link between data on qualifications and learning and data on career opportunities and providers,. Nor is there yet a link with the EU's Qualifications Data Register, linking Ukrainian qualifications to those of other European countries. In education, partial qualifications are not yet being used in a significant way.

In the labour market the rozryadi, skills or wage levels inherited from the Soviet system still play a prominent role, more than the NQF levels. The NQF is meant to be a tool for more relevant and quality assured qualifications, but the descriptors play only a partial role in quality-assuring qualifications.

7. 2   Indicating NQF /RQF levels.

NQF level descriptors were aligned with the EQF's in 2020. Recording NQF levels on qualifications is the most tangible information for end users and employers. Ukrainian higher education qualifications have a clear reference to the NQF, and NQF levels have also begun to appear on general education and vocational qualifications.

Diploma Supplements in Ukraine follow the European format and contain information on the NQF level and corresponding QF EHEA levels, including even the EQF levels ([10]), (although, formally, EQF levels should only be indicated after the referencing of the NQF to the EQF).

NQF levels have been recently introduced for new vocational education qualifications.

Occupational standards have been levelled in the NQF since 2022, which facilitates the levelling of professional qualifications.

There are plans to establish a digital credential register that would include Diploma Supplements in electronic format.

The new Law 'On vocational education ' specifies that certificate supplements should be issued alongside vocational education specialist diplomas.

([10]) forma-dodatka-do-dyploma-yevropeyskoho-zrazka.docx (live.com)

7.3 NQF dissemination

In Ukraine, NQA is primarily responsible for communicating on the NQF. The NQA website includes sections with information about the national qualification system, resources, links to useful sources, related legislation, key documents and publications.

During 2022-2024 a set of communication events with key stakeholders including employers, social partners, HEIs and VET institutions, was carried out.

Information about NQF in Ukraine is communicated via:

official websites such as those of the NQA, MoES, the Ukrainian ENIC, educational institutions, other interested organisations.

social networks e.g., NQA's Facebook pages, other interested organisations.

organising conferences, forums, round table discussions; notably the annual Human Capital Development Forum organised by NQA.

visual materials and presentations, by MoES and Ukraine's national information centre on academic recognition, or ENIC.

reference to an NQF level in diploma and certificate supplements.

NQA produced in 2025 a series of video lectures for HEI representatives, covering: the NQF, its concepts, progress and next steps in implementation; comparison of the NQF to the QF EHEA in levels and descriptors; and the process of referencing the NQF to the EQF.

NQA was designated the country's National Coordination Point (NCP) for EQF in 2023 and launched a dedicated webiste.

MoES' website provides information on the NQF's implementation, including visuals representing the NQF, analytical and informational materials, sectoral councils, relevant legislation and reports. MoES also maintains online repositories of educational standards:

- General secondary education state standards
- VET standards
- Professional pre-higher education standards
- Higher education standards.

The Single State Educational Database (EDEBO) includes registers of educational establishments, educational credentials that have been issued, independent external certificates for access to higher education, student cards, and teachers who have been certified. The database allows for the verification of educational credentials that have been issued.

The ENIC-NARIC website includes a visual representation of the NQF (11) and a description of Ukraine's education system (12). It also provides information about relevant legislation and the NQF self-certification report.

7.4   Qualifications databases and registers

There are currently several databases or registers containing standards and qualifications. They are, under new legislation[13], being integrated into the single Unified Register of Qualifications–Classifier of Professions (URQ-CP), a process which should be completed during 2026.

The URQ-CP will encompass information about occupations, qualifications and competencies. It is envisaged that the URQ-CP will replace the current Classifier of Professions.

Among the existing databases, The register of qualifications was adopted via a regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers on 16 June 2021. This legal act provides for general education, vocational education and higher education qualifications and standards to be placed and publicly available in its register of qualifications.

Data fields required for qualifications to enter the database adhere to Annex VI of the EQF Recommendation include qualification title, study or occupational field, NQF level, related occupational standard(s) (for professional qualifications), awarding body, and relevant quality assurance institution or regulator.

1,291 professional qualifications are currently included in the Qualifications Register. At the time of writing, there are 471 modern occupational standards in the register. The register contains basic data on occupational standards, but more detail can only be obtained from pdf documents.

Access to data varies, so that there is fully open access to data on professional and educational qualifications, qualification centres, and occupational standards, but more limited access, for reasons of confidentiality, to professional qualifications and part-qualifications that have been awarded to individuals (credentials).

Ukraine already has a system in place for digital credentials. The Single State Educational Database (EDEBO) includes registers of educational establishments, educational credentials that have been issued, independent external certificates for access to higher education, student cards, and teachers who have been

---

(11) NationalQualificationsFramework (enic.in.ua)

(12) EducationsystemofUkraine (enic.in.ua)

(13) The Law of Ukraine No. 4353-IX of 15 April 2025 'On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding the Improvement of the National Qualifications System in Line with Current Labour Market Needs' (Law No. 4353-IX), which came into force on 2 May 2025.

certified. The database allows for the verification of educational credentials that have been issued.

For the future unified register of standards, occupations and qualifications, it is important to ensure that all data are converted from pdf documents so that they can be linked, and that direct links are created with the databases under the responsibility of MoES. This will allow up to date data and interoperability. It is important that data fields are aligned with the European Learning Model (ELM) version 3, to optimise this interoperability. The prototype of the register developed with ETF already allows for this and the NQA plans the application of ELM to an integrated register.

As a candidate for EU accession, Ukraine is a member of the EQF Advisory Group (EQF AG), and is preparing to reference its NQF to the EQF. Its draft referencing report, which will be submitted to the EQF AG, has already been approved by the relevant actors in Ukraine. Once the NQF is referenced to the EQF, authorities can indicate EQF levels on Ukrainian certificates and other qualification documents. Ukraine can also then link its database of qualifications with Europass through the Qualifications Data Register.

7.5 Use of NQF in recognition of foreign qualifications

Recognition of foreign qualifications is used for several purposes:

- employment and career progression, ensuring that individuals with foreign qualifications can integrate into the workforce and access professional opportunities.
- access to further education, allowing individuals with recognised foreign qualifications to pursue additional studies in Ukrainian educational institutions.
- integration of returning Ukrainian citizens, facilitating the recognition of qualifications obtained abroad for those returning to Ukraine.
- professional mobility, supporting workforce movement within the Ukrainian labour market.

In Ukraine, the recognition of foreign formal qualifications is based on the Lisbon Recognition Convention and on other international agreements. Ukraine has made approximately 20 bilateral agreements on recognition.

Recognition is regulated based on procedures for Higher Education Degrees and documents in secondary education and in secondary vocational education.

MoES is responsible for recognition, relying on the expertise, advice and recommendations of the ENIC-NARIC Centre. MoES can make recognition decisions that are valid throughout Ukraine. While individual HEIs can make recognition decisions, these are only binding within the specific institution.

Line ministries are responsible for issuing licenses for work in regulated professions e.g., the Ministry of Health for health professions.

There is a central database of recognition decisions. Recognition processes can cover formal qualifications and periods of study abroad that have been certified in the formal education system. There is a separate arrangement regarding PhDs.

Recognition of vocational qualifications is governed by legislation adopted in 2021 ([14]). It established a procedure which empowers competent recognition authorities (CRAs) - qualification centres, educational institutions and other entities authorised in law to function as CRAs – to formally confirm vocational qualifications awarded in other countries.

CRAs analyse and verify the file submitted by applicants, compare it to the equivalent Ukrainian qualification (at this stage, the credential evaluators also examine the related occupational standards approved in Ukraine) to inform their decision.

To date, no vocational qualifications awarded in EU countries have yet been recognised by CRAs in Ukraine.

Before the war, the number of recognition requests grew more than sixfold between 2026 and 2021, from 4,694 to 29,744. Most of these applications were handled by MoES, while the numbers dealt with directly by HEIs has increased in recent years. This reflected the growing popularity of Ukraine before the war as a destination for foreign students, who primarily came from non-EU countries.

The recognition process includes establishing the authenticity of the document, the status of the issuing educational institution and an assessment of elements to determine equivalent academic or professional rights. The aim of the process is to establish equivalence with an existing qualification, therefore detailed matching of the content and level of the submitted qualification against the reference qualification is required. Importantly, the EU qualification must be based on an occupational standard.

Ukraine's NQF and learning outcomes play a role in the assessment of the level, workload, quality, profile and learning outcomes of a qualification, in line with the European Area of Recognition Manual (EAR). The NQF and overarching qualifications frameworks can be used to compare qualifications, which can shorten the recognition process, especially if there is a link to the EQF.

NQFs as transparency instruments confirm the level, learning outcomes and often the type of qualification. Databases on HEIs are also very useful.

([14]) The Procedure for the Recognition in Ukraine of Professional Qualifications Obtained in Other Countries, approved by Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 576 on 2 June 2021.

The electronic network UaReNet, set up in 2020, is a platform that encourages exchange between MoES, the ENIC-NARIC Centre and HEIs. Recognition offices in HEIs are trained by the ENIC- NARIC Centre to use the EAR Manual and other tools.

A procedure for recognition in Ukraine of professional qualifications obtained in other countries was approved at a Government meeting on 2 June 2021 ([15]). It states that persons who have obtained professional qualifications in other countries can have them confirmed in Ukraine by applying to the competent authority, which are those Qualification Centres that have been accredited for the corresponding professional qualification in Ukraine.

7.6 Career guidance and counselling

Good information about relevant qualifications should guide and advise individuals on suitable learning and career opportunities, and so there is a direct link between the qualifications' framework and lifelong career guidance.

A recent ETF Review of Career Guidance Services praised Ukraine for several features of its careers servicers, notably its strong legal basis; the underpinning Concept of the State System for Public Career Guidance; its Action Plan; and the inclusive nature of the services which target all social categories and all age groups.

ETF's Inventory on the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in Ukraine recognised that Qualification Centres publish detailed information on the procedures and guidance for applicants online, and can provide applicants with personal guidance.

There are many different online platforms and digital services run by various stakeholders that should be reviewed and consolidated in an integrated, needs-based way to meet the needs of various client groups. Here, the link with the register and how it could be exploited for career guidance is an area that should be considered.

Ukraine's Euroguidance Centre, which is part of the European network of National Resource and Information Centres for career guidance, has been operating in Ukraine since July 2024. Combining national and international experience, it promotes the quality and accessibility of career services and supports lifelong learning.

The Centre provides information on educational and career pathways, assists individuals in their professional development, and supports career guidance professionals by offering European resources, tools, and best practices. It also

---

([15]) https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/576-2021-%D0%BF#Text

organizes activities for both young people and professionals in the field of career guidance and counselling. Three regional Europass and Euroguidance Centres within the State Employment Service are scheduled to open by the end of 2025.

7.7 Awareness and use of the NQF

Public organisations, NGOs, training providers, quality assurance bodies, recognition authorities, and employers that have been involved in NQF development and implementation, or engaged or consulted on it, naturally have high levels of awareness of the framework. Trades Unions have also of course contributed to shaping the NQF but overall their awareness is lower than employers'.

Guidance counsellors and careers services are increasingly engaged, while employment services remain less so.

Otherwise, public awareness of the NQF and its uses varies by category. Higher education graduates and students generally know the NQF level of their qualification(s). More broadly, learners in full-time education and training tend to be better informed than those already in employment.

NQA is undertaking many initiatives to inform a wider public, to meet organisations, and to stimulate a public debate on qualifications. It will be important to promote the use of the NQF further, in particular on the labour market, where the traditional skill/wage levels (rozryadi) are better known.

NQA also anticipates that use of Europass will generate more awareness of the NQF's functions.

7.8 Monitoring and evaluating the NQF

There does not seem currently to be a framework for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the NQF. An independent review is not foreseen. It is however important to define objectively verifiable indicators on the outcomes of the NQF to monitor its implementation and to use feedback in order to adapt and improve the mechanisms linked with the NQF.

7.9 Impact of the NQF

At the policy level and at the level of standards and curricula, the NQF development process exerts a strong influence in promoting relevant learning outcomes, ensuring stakeholder involvement and attention to quality assurance of the qualifications of individuals. The introduction of learning outcomes in education is advancing, strengthening the emphasis on competence, rather than purely knowledge.

Gradually new opportunities for training, retraining, learning, progression and mobility are being created, e.g., through the Qualification Centres and new types of qualifications and partial qualifications.

Ukrainian qualifications and education and training have become closer to European practices and support European integration.

Currently, the impact on end users such as teachers and trainers, career guidance professionals, HR officers in companies and organisations and learners still seems to be somewhat limited. Career guidance and counselling and lifelong learning opportunities will need to be integrated with the new qualifications system.

8.   Referencing to the EQF

8.1   Referencing to the EQF

When Ukraine formally gained EU candidate country status in June 2022, it became a member of the EQF Advisory Group and is therefore entitled to reference its NQF to the EQF.

A Working Group, chaired by the NQA, has already been established to steer this process. It can draw on the analysis and results of the comparison exercise, also led by the NQA, in 2022-2023, which sought to compare the NQF to the EQF. The Comparison report, which can be found on the Commission's Europass website, is the result of a pilot to explore the value of comparing third countries' NQFs with the EQF.

Comparison does not have the same status as referencing – it confers no 'right ' to place EQF levels on national certificates. But Ukraine's Comparison report does demonstrate how its qualifications - through the EQF - compare with those of other countries. Moreover, having successfully completed the comparison exercise, Ukraine has already done much technical analysis and stakeholder engagement which will be useful in the referencing.

Outside the EQF process, Ukraine, in 2022, completed self-certification of the higher-level qualifications in its NQF to the QF-EHEA, in the Bologna Process in higher education.

8.2   International cooperation

Before 2019, several education projects, limited in size and scope, were implemented. The Tempus and Erasmus Plus Programmes for Higher Education have been a continuous source for cooperation in HE.

Additionally, the British Council has supported the development of the NQF and HE reforms.

In general education, the Polish and Finnish governments have provided bilateral support to implement the New Ukrainian School concept.

In VET there has been a Twinning Project and some smaller bilateral initiatives, including cooperation to develop dual education. Estonia has implemented a project for the Volyn region, which provided school partnerships and curriculum development support and has been particularly important as a trailblazer for moving towards a competency-based, decentralised VET system.

To assist the development and implementation of a competency-based education system and the NQF, the has ETF provided bridging support that included principles for decentralisation, key competencies, the NQF implementation plan, the establishment of NQA and the development of new standards and modular curricula.

The ETF Resource Hub for Ukrainians who fled the war and are looking for learning opportunities, recognition and job opportunities in the EU brings together information sources from member states and these could perhaps eventually be integrated with online resources in Ukraine.

The EU4Skills programme supports the Modernisation of VET and the implementation of the NQF. This includes support for the development of NQA, the development and implementation of standards and VET curricula for 100 profiles, and widening the offer of VNFIL.

A World Bank loan of USD 200 million for the programme, 'Ukraine: Improving Higher Education for Results ' ([16]) should further help to boost the quality of the higher education sector, as well as its relevance to the labour market, including teaching and research facilities and the digital learning infrastructure. Ukraine has been a very active participant in the Tempus and Erasmus+ programmes, which have mainly benefitted HEIs, but are gradually opening up to cooperation in VET and lifelong learning.

Ukraine established its national Coordination Point (NCP) in March 2023 for guiding relations between the NQF and the NQF, while it set up its Europass Centre in July 2024.

9.   Reflections and plans

Notwithstanding the war, implementation of the NQF has progressed significantly in recent years. An important role in these developments has been played by NQA as the key executive body.

([16]) Development Projects: Ukraine Improving Higher Education for Results Project - P171050 (worldbank.org)

The NQF supports definition of standards, programmes and curricula. Validation is advancing now that Qualification Centres have been established and is gradually extending to more professional qualifications and in general education.

Through, first, the completed comparison exercise, and now the current progress towards referencing to the EQF, integration to European Union systems, use of tools and broader integration with EU countries is intensifying. Ukraine plans to reference to the EQF in the first half of 2026. This will enable EQF levels to be indicated on certificates and diplomas and Ukrainian qualifications can be linked directly with the qualifications of other European countries through Europass.

Individual general and vocational qualifications need to be levelled, e.g., by bringing school leaving qualifications into line with level 4 of the NQF and EQF and by ensuring each vocational qualification has a certificate supplement that clearly indicates its level and the most important learning outcomes. Both revisions are scheduled to be implemented during the first half of 2026.

Information on occupations, skills, qualifications, programmes, providers and credentials is not interoperable, requiring pdfs to be converted into data where they are brought together in an integrated system. The classifier of occupations could be updated and linked to the European Skills, Competences and Occupations classifier (ESCO) to ensure labour market information is expressed in terms that can be compared and used when developing qualifications and programmes.

Partial qualifications and micro-credentials are important in facilitating retraining, upskilling and validation, in particular for adult learning. The war has caused people to be displaced, and to be forced to flee the country. Some displaced persons or refugees have returned to Ukraine to work in new occupations or jobs. Qualification and training systems need to be flexible to recognise different experiences.

The Joint Action Plan, agreed between the EU and Ukraine, lists the following priorities:

- every VET qualification, professional qualification and qualification of general education, to have a clear NQF level.
- operationalising the NQF register, populating it with educational and professional qualifications ensuring it is fully compatible with QDR and the European Learning Model. And ensuring successful creation of the developing Unified Register of Qualifications–Classifier of Professions (URQ-CP).
- widening the implementation of validation of non-formal and informal learning, in formal education - higher education, VET and general education - and increasing the number of Qualification Centres to support VNFIL for professional qualifications.

- strengthening the use of learning outcomes for quality assuring all qualifications and programmes in Ukraine.
- improving information for end-users on Ukrainian qualifications, including better online information tools to support lifelong learning guidance, and facilitating access to Europass digital credentials.
- communicating the NQF to people in Ukraine - the development of a communication strategy is envisaged by the Action Plan for referencing the country's NQF to the EQF.

Acronyms

DigComp	European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens
EAR	European Area of Recognition
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EDEBO	Single State Education Database
ENIC NARIC Centre	National Information Centres on Academic Recognition of Qualifications
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EntreComp	The European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
EQF AG	EQF Advisory Group
ESCO	Multilingual classification of European Skills, Competence, and Occupations
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
HE	Higher Education
HEIS	Higher Education Institutions
HR	Human Resources
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
NAQAHE	National Agency for Quality Assurance of Higher Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PISA	OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment
QCs	Qualification centres
QF-EHEA	Qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area
UaReNet	Ukrainian Network for the Recognition of Foreign Educational Qualifications
VET	Vocational education and training
VNFIL	Validation of non-formal and informal learning

References

[URLs accessed 8/10/2025]

European Training Foundation (ETF), *Key policy developments in education, training and employment – Ukraine 2024*, Turin 2024. Available online at : Country Fiche_Ukraine_2024_EN_web_0.pdf

Comparison Report Ukrainian NQF and EQF, 2023,
https://europa.eu/europass/system/files/2023-
02/Comparison%20report%20final%20rev%2023-02-2023%20EN.pdf

Self-Certification Report Ukraine,
https://mon.gov.ua/storage/app/media/nrk/2021/11.10/01/Zvit.pro.sa
mosertyfikatsiyu.NRK-EN-10.11-1.pdf

Further information

Ministry of Education and Science, https://mon.gov.ua/eng

Register of Qualifications, https://register.nqa.gov.ua/

National Qualifications Agency, https://nqa.gov.ua/

EDEBO - Single State Educational Database, https://info.edbo.gov.ua/

ENIC NARIC website, https://enic.in.ua/index.php/en/

ETF Resource Hub for Ukraine, https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/education-and-
work-informationukrainians-and-eu-countries