

HUNGARY

European inventory on NQF 2018

Introduction and context

Employment rates of recent graduates in Hungary are above the EU average for all levels of qualification; however, skill shortages are relatively high and influenced by low levels of tertiary education enrolment and completion. One challenge in the country has been an increasing percentage of students with low achievement in basic skills, particularly in terms of problem-solving, suggesting insufficient emphasis on the application of knowledge. This triggered revision of the national curriculum that started in 2017 (European Commission, 2017). The drop in performance was the highest in the EU, and accompanied by the strongest impact of socioeconomic background on outcomes. Contrary to the general EU trend in early school leaving (10.6% in 2017), the rate has increased (12.5% in 2017), especially among students from disadvantaged groups. An action plan to tackle this was adopted in 2016, including a system for early warning and pedagogical support. Participation of adults in lifelong learning is also below the EU average (6.2% in 2017 with an EU average of 10.9%); although recent legislative changes have brought some flexibility to VET and adult education, the age of career choice is lower. Despite being associated with a high overall employment rate for recent graduates (ISCED 3 and 4) (85.9 % against an EU average of 76.6 %, in 2017), the Hungarian vocational education and training (VET) system is marked by a significant gap between its two pathways at upper secondary level, vocational secondary schools and vocational grammar schools; the former has lower achievement and employability, higher dropout rates and fewer opportunities in terms of progression routes (European Commission, 2018).

The comprehensive national qualifications framework (NQF) for lifelong learning was adopted in July 2012 by a government decision and published in the Hungarian official journal ⁽¹⁾. It encompasses all State-recognised national

⁽¹⁾ So far, six government decisions dealt with the establishment of the Hungarian qualifications framework: Government Decision No 2069/2008 (VI. 6); Government Decision No 1004/2011 (I.14); Government Decision No 1229/2012 (VII. 6); Government Decision No 1791/2013 (XI. 7); Government Decree No 139/2015; Government Decree No 25/2016.

<https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1600025.KOR×hift=ffffff4&xtreferer=0000001.TXT>

qualifications that can be acquired in general education (primary school and secondary education, *Matura*), higher education qualifications ⁽²⁾ (BA/BSc, MA/MSc and PhD, postgraduate specialisation training) and those vocational qualifications registered in the national vocational qualifications register (NVQR, in Hungarian (OKJ) (full, partial, add-on ⁽³⁾) ⁽⁴⁾). There has been progress in recent years in social dialogue and dissemination, and linking qualifications from all education and training subsystems to the HuQF levels. Inclusion of certain types of non-formal training for NVQR qualifications, regulated by the Act on adult training ⁽⁵⁾ is on the country's policy agenda.

The HuQF was referenced to the European qualifications framework (EQF) and self-certified to the qualifications framework of the European higher education area (QF-EHEA) in 2015.

Policy objectives

The main aims for development of the HuQF are to have a comprehensive framework that includes all State-recognised Hungarian qualifications gained at different levels of education and training, and to strengthen the learning-outcomes approach at each level. The framework is expected to increase education and training transparency, and compatibility and transferability of qualifications between national education subsystems and between formal and non-formal pathways.

The HuQF has the following objectives (Hungarian Education Authority, 2015):

- (a) to create a coherent national qualification system by bringing together regulative measures of different subsystems of education and training into a unified system, including those acquired outside the formal system;
- (b) to strengthen the outcome-based approach in regulatory documents;

⁽²⁾ Government Decree No 139/2015 on the register of qualifications acquired in higher education. Advanced VET qualifications (higher VET programmes, short-cycle) (*Felsőfokú OKJ szakképesítés*) at level 5 are included in the higher education register.

⁽³⁾ The NVQR distinguishes partial qualifications which cover only a limited number of modules, (full) qualifications which cover all modules of its partial qualifications and add-on qualifications containing additional module(s) built on a full qualification.

⁽⁴⁾ The Government Decree No 25/2016 (II.25) on NVQR covers State-recognised NVQR qualifications linked to the correct HuQF level.

⁽⁵⁾ Act LXXVII of 2013 on Adult Training.
http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A1300077.TV

- (c) to strengthen quality assurance systems;
- (d) to recognise learning outcomes achieved in non-formal and informal settings;
- (e) to strengthen coordination of education and training policies and cooperation with stakeholders;
- (f) to orient better the design of new qualifications and education and training programmes, and revision of existing qualifications;
- (g) to provide better support to individual career choices, as well as career guidance and counselling systems;
- (h) to systematise information about qualifications and to make the system understandable to employers in a European context;
- (i) to improve the relevance of qualifications in the labour market.

The NQF can also play an important role in supporting lifelong learning in Hungary. Adult participation remains a challenge, especially among the unemployed. Only 50% of the population has at least basic digital skills; the country's aim is to reach the EU average with respect to digital literacy and usage. The need to maintain and develop new skills and to adapt to structural challenges is still regarded as particularly challenging (European Commission, 2018).

Levels and use of learning outcomes

The HuQF has an eight-level structure and is viewed as a 'communication framework'. The level descriptors were based on analysis of existing approaches in the relevant subsystems. The hierarchic and cumulative nature of the level descriptions of the EQF has been taken into account and applied in the HuQF. Learning outcomes are defined in four categories: knowledge, skills, attitudes and autonomy/responsibility (Hungarian Educational Authority, 2015). The 'knowledge' and 'skills' categories are directly comparable with homologous categories in the EQF, the 'autonomy/responsibility' category shares common features with the 'competence', current autonomy and responsibility category from the EQF, while the 'attitude' category (which includes emotional, cognitive and behavioural components in relation to the object of learning) is not present as such in the EQF.

The focus on learning outcomes has received greatest support from qualification developers and in research studies in different education and training subsystems. It has been mostly driven by EU policy and the need to link the HuQF to the EQF. However, stakeholders' views differ based on their

previous knowledge, information and involvement. According to a Cedefop study, a shift to learning outcomes has not been a clearly articulated policy objective in recent years (Cedefop, 2016). In practice, the education subsystems differ significantly in the extent to which they are outcome-oriented, and they apply different terminology and varying notions of competence in defining outcome requirements/standards.

General education is dominated by a curriculum-content-based approach. The core curriculum, issued in 2012, redefines key competences and broad standards in 10 subject areas as learning outcomes, or outcome requirements; these are described in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. However, general education in Hungary has placed the main emphasis on process and content regulation since 2010 ⁽⁶⁾, with the only outcome requirements being standards in the upper secondary school leaving examination. The General Educational Strategy, adopted in November 2014 ⁽⁷⁾, has been developed for the 2014-20 period with fields of intervention such as inclusive education, the teaching of heterogeneous groups of students, reducing the rate of early school-leavers and supporting the school success of vulnerable groups. Revision of the national core curriculum started in 2017. The new national curriculum aims at incorporating the learning outcome-based approach (European Commission and Cedefop, 2018), introducing the concept of experience-based learning that requires cross-subject cooperation. It reduces the content knowledge and provides more opportunities for introducing various teaching methods, with considerable emphasis on methods related to digital education ⁽⁸⁾. However, it is not yet known what form the final version of the curriculum will take since the action is still in process.

There have been two VET reforms in the past 12 years: in 2004-06 and in 2011-12. The new Vocational training Act came into force in September 2013. As a result of the introduction of the Act, the National vocational qualifications register (NVQR) was revised and continuously renewed (the renewed NVQR was generally introduced in all VET schools from 2008). The main aim of the changes

⁽⁶⁾ The national curriculum (2012) reintroduced the definition of ‘mandatory minimum content’ (with extensive amounts), which together with the new mandatory, centrally published framework curricula and the central selection of textbooks, leave little professional autonomy for schools.

⁽⁷⁾ General Educational Strategy No 1603/2014 (XI.4) in a government decree on the acceptance of the general educational development strategy.
<http://www.kormany.hu/download/6/fe/20000/K%C3%B6zvetlen%C3%A9s-fejleszt%C3%A9s.pdf#!DocumentBrowse>

⁽⁸⁾ Source: Eurydice online database: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/national-reforms-school-education-29_en

was to eliminate the overlaps and professional/content-related duplication (parallelism) among the qualifications. The previous modular principle and the competence-based approach have been kept, vocational (basic/primary) qualifications, partial qualifications and specialisations were retained, but the total number of qualifications has been reduced by about half. VET qualifications pursued in higher education have been excluded from the NVQR, since 2013 such type of training may only be launched within higher education. The development of the new NVQR was coordinated by the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry ⁽⁹⁾. In the latest piece of legislation ⁽¹⁰⁾ the VET qualifications are linked to the level of the HuQF ⁽¹¹⁾. Vocational education and training was also reformed, both in terms of governance and the modernisation of the contents of traditional ‘skilled worker’ vocational qualifications; the training period has been shortened from four years to three years ⁽¹²⁾. In September 2015, steps were also taken to bring VET closer to the labour market by transferring the supervision of VET schools under the Ministry for Innovation and Technology ⁽¹³⁾ and updating the content of VET programmes ⁽¹⁴⁾. In 2018 the amended VET Act CXCI came into force, encouraging apprenticeships, establishing sectoral skills councils and introducing mandatory requirements for practical instructors ⁽¹⁵⁾.

One of the most significant impacts of the HuQF was the spread of the use of learning outcomes (as a means of output-based approach to training). The greatest change in this field was in higher education: learning outcomes have partly appeared in higher education qualifications requirements through regulatory measures and acts. All first and second cycle higher education programmes and qualifications in Hungary, including advanced VET qualifications, are increasingly described in terms of both input and outcome criteria. The learning requirements and outcomes for qualifications listed in the

⁽⁹⁾ HCCI, Hungarian name and abbreviation: *Magyar Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara*, (MKIK).

⁽¹⁰⁾ Government Decree on NVQR of 4 March 2016.

⁽¹¹⁾ Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/resource-centre/content/hungarian-national-qualification-register>

⁽¹²⁾ Source: Eurydice online database: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/ongoing-reforms-and-policy-developments-29_en

⁽¹³⁾ <http://www.kormany.hu/hu/innovacios-es-technologiai-miniszterium>

⁽¹⁴⁾ Government of Hungary (2016). *National reform programme 2016 of Hungary*.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Cedefop (forthcoming). *Developments in vocational education and training policy in 2015-19: Hungary*. Cedefop monitoring and analysis of VET policies.

higher education qualifications register were defined in line with the HuQF level descriptors in August 2016⁽¹⁶⁾. These new standards describe the name and credit value of each programme, its learning outcomes, the study areas and the specific requirements for traineeship, the final thesis and foreign language skills. Requirements and outcomes apply to all higher education institutions wishing to offer a qualification. The higher education accreditation committee (HAS) – member of ENQA – has to assess new programme proposals in accordance with HuQF-compatible outcome requirements defined in the educational and outcome requirements. As a next step, higher education institutions must adjust their curricula to the new standards and introduce them from September 2017 (European Commission, 2017). However, student-centred learning, outcomes-based orientation and use of learning outcomes in designing programmes and learning modules are still key challenges in higher education.

The descriptions of education and training programmes in adult education do not always include the term learning outcomes. The learning outcome approach is spreading gradually in this sub-system of education.

Stakeholder involvement and institutional arrangements

Overall responsibility for developing and implementing the HuQF, and for initiating related legislation, is shared between the Ministry of Human Resources and the Ministry for Innovation and Technology (previously Ministry for National Economy). The Ministry for Innovation and Technology is responsible for qualifications standards in the NVQR and, together with the Ministry of Human Capacities, for VET framework curricula. The National Office of VET and Adult Learning⁽¹⁷⁾ supervised by the Ministry for Innovation and Technology, ensures coordination and implementation of national VET and adult learning policies⁽¹⁸⁾.

The establishment of the HuQF and its referencing to the EQF was legislated through two government decisions, in 2008 and 2011, respectively⁽¹⁹⁾. Between 2011 and 2014, framework development was carried out as part of

⁽¹⁶⁾ Decree No 18/2016 (VIII. 5) of the Ministry of Human Resources on the educational and outcome requirements of higher vocational programmes, bachelor and master programmes and on the modification of Decree No 8/2013 of the Ministry of the Human Resources on the common requirements for teacher training and educational and outcome requirements for teacher training programmes.

⁽¹⁷⁾ <https://www.nive.hu/>

⁽¹⁸⁾ Spotlight on VET – 2018 compilation (forthcoming).

⁽¹⁹⁾ Government Decision No 2069/2008 and No 1004/2011.

three different projects of the SROP: one for general education, one for higher education, and one for vocational and adult education. Each of the three projects was responsible for involving its own sector-specific stakeholders through conferences and workshops. To ensure coordination, information sharing, and harmonised working methods, an operational interministerial task force ⁽²⁰⁾ was set up and met regularly. A government decree 2012 ⁽²¹⁾ regulated the development phase of the HuQF.

Professional and secretarial support to the interministerial task force has been provided by the education authority since September 2012. In spring 2012, the national coordination point (NCP) was placed within the education authority as a project unit. The NCP and the Tempus Public Foundation organised subsector-specific and horizontal consultations and events. Of the three education subsystems, involving stakeholders from general education remains a challenge to be addressed.

Quality assurance is regulated by legal frameworks in education and training subsystems. Quality assurance in general education, as stated in the Law on General Education, is built on the processes of accreditation, authorisation, registration, control and evaluation. The planned government decree on the HuQF and its further operation will establish the legal basis for connecting the framework and different aspects of quality assurance in general education (Hungarian Education Authority, 2015).

The Educational Authority (*Oktatási Hivatal*) ⁽²²⁾ and the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (*Magyar Akkreditációs Bizottság*) ⁽²³⁾ support the minister responsible for education in higher education monitoring and evaluation. The Hungarian Accreditation Committee plays an important role in quality assurance. However, since the HuQF government decree on the operation, governance and quality assurance is still pending, reference to higher education quality assurance processes is missing.

The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as a public body, has decisive powers in adult education; in some cases it has exclusive decision-making competences. The National Office of Vocational Education and Training

⁽²⁰⁾ The operational task force consisted of the projects' key experts, the Hungarian national coordination point (NCP) and the Hungarian representative in the EQF advisory group.

⁽²¹⁾ Government Decree No 1229/2012.

⁽²²⁾ <https://www.oktatas.hu/>

⁽²³⁾ <http://www.mab.hu/web/index.php?lang=en>

and Adult Learning ⁽²⁴⁾ determines whether the quality assurance systems submitted to it can be matched to the quality assurance framework set out in the Minister's decree.

The new Act CXCI, which came in force in 2018, ⁽²⁵⁾ reinforces the role of employers in education and training by establishing sectoral skills councils. They will take over the tasks of the National Qualification Committees in monitoring economic, labour-market and technological developments in their sectors, making proposals for modifying the NVQR and the improving training programmes. Their mandate started in July 2018 when the national legislation came into force. Sectoral skills councils representatives will take part in the National Council for VET and Adult Learning, a forum for reconciling professional interests, representing the sectors vis-à-vis the Hungarian Government ⁽²⁶⁾. VET students will have the option to acquire a VET qualification in parallel to the vocational grammar school leaving certificate (Cedefop, forthcoming).

The HuQF provides the opportunity for dialogue between various education institutions. However, there are relatively few opportunities for end-users and other employees of the education system to share experiences. Since qualifications are under the authority of two different ministries (Ministry of Human Resources, Ministry for Innovation and Technology), dialogue between the institutions is relatively slow. For this reason, the EQF-NCP role to ease communication at policy level is becoming very important (European Commission and Cedefop, 2018). Unified coordination mechanisms and quality assurance for the whole framework operation are needed for the future.

⁽²⁴⁾ <https://www.nive.hu/>

⁽²⁵⁾ This act aims at supporting practical training in dual VET programmes.
<https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1700192.TV×hift=ffffff4&xtreferer=0000001.TXT>

⁽²⁶⁾ A total of 20 sectoral skills councils will be set up for 41 economic sectors. Of these, 13 SSCs (for engineering, tourism and catering, commerce, information technology, etc.) were set up in 2017, while new councils in sectors such as services, food industry, and agriculture, are being formed in 2018.

More information at: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/hungary-sectoral-skills-councils-linking-quality-vet-jobs>

Recognising and validating non-formal and informal learning and learning pathways ⁽²⁷⁾

The legal framework governing VET, higher education and adult education allows for validation and recognition of prior learning, but there is no comprehensive policy on validation of non-formal and informal learning in the country. There is limited practice and sectoral approaches dominate validation development. In several recent strategies – on lifelong learning 2014-20 ⁽²⁸⁾, mid-term strategy against early school leaving ⁽²⁹⁾, national social catching up strategy ⁽³⁰⁾ – validation as an objective is explicitly mentioned but there is no coherent approach to the detailed tasks, procedures and precise responsibilities. In mid-2016, the government adopted a decision on the National digital education strategy ⁽³¹⁾; its implementation and validation is mentioned in the chapter on adult learning as a tool for access to training (without detailed recommendations).

⁽²⁷⁾ This section draws mainly on input from the 2018 update to the *European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning* (European Commission et al., forthcoming).

⁽²⁸⁾ *Az egész életen át tartó tanulás szakpolitikájának keretstratégiája a 2014/2020 közötti időszakra – Az európai uniós fejlesztéspolitikáért felelős államtitkárság, 2016.11.11 [Framework strategy for lifelong learning policy for 2014-20, by the Secretariat responsible for the development policy, 11.11.2016].* The original documents are available on the Government's website:
<http://www.kormany.hu/download/7/fe/20000/Egész%20életen%20át%20tartó%20tanulás.pdf>

⁽²⁹⁾ *A végzettség nélküli iskolaelhagyás elleni középtávú stratégia [Medium-term strategy against early school leaving].* The original documents are available on the Government's website:
<http://www.kormany.hu/download/5/fe/20000/Végzettség%20nélküli%20iskolaelhagyás%20.pdf>

The strategy targeting low-educated young people and adults mentions one of the tools a 'comprehensive national recognition model/knowledge recognition system', the operation of which uses a nationally-based territorial network-based career advisory system. However, the text of the strategy does not contain any detailed information on that system.

⁽³⁰⁾ *Magyar nemzeti társadalmi felzárkóztatási stratégia II (2011-2020) [The National Catching Up Strategy II, 2011-20]* The original documents are available on the Government's website:
http://www.kormany.hu/download/1/9c/20000/Magyar%20NTFS%20II%20_2%20mel%20_NTFS%20II.pdf

The strategy does not give details about the interpretation of validation activity, but the target group is designated: drop-out students, Roma youth.

⁽³¹⁾ *Magyarország Digitális Oktatási Stratégiája [Digital Education Strategy for Hungary].* The original document is available on the Government's website:
<http://www.kormany.hu/download/0/cc/d0000/MDO.pdf>

Current validation practice is fragmented, while essential elements (strategic goals, funding, stakeholder participation, quality assurance, preparation for participants) are missing. The development of validation practice in each sector is done through one-off projects. In the framework of the New Hungary development plan, various sectoral development projects were launched (in public education, vocational education and higher education) that had, to varying extents, the objective of establishing a validation procedure. According to the amended Higher education Act (2011) ⁽³²⁾, at least one third of the credits in a qualification should be earned in the institution issuing the diploma. Two thirds can be acquired in another way, including through validation of non-formal and informal learning. The development of validation in higher education ⁽³³⁾ was concluded in 2015 and integrated into the NQF development.

In adult training, matching previously acquired competences with training standards, evaluation (mostly test) and exemption from a given part of the training program are steps of the recognition procedure. Prior learning assessment and recognition was defined as an individual right in the first act on adult training (2011), enacted in 2013 ⁽³⁴⁾. The new Adult training Act retained this scheme, made the assessment of prior learning an obligation in vocational education and language training but did not manage to ease the application process in the case of State-subsidised programmes (European Commission et al., forthcoming).

VET provision is modularised and the qualifications and requirements are described in terms of competences, so VET is closer to the learning-outcomes-based approach. Regulation of the VET examination system has been 'open' to validation since 1993 (Law on VET) ⁽³⁵⁾, making it possible for applicants to take an examination without entering a formal VET programme, though this option is not much used.

Without an overall validation policy and procedure, education institutions tend to operate validation autonomously in the framework of their given legal environment. Adapting to a learning-outcomes approach remains the major

⁽³²⁾ Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education.

http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A1100204.TV (in Hungarian only).

⁽³³⁾ In the framework of SROP 4.1.3: Social renewal operational programme in the frame of the new Hungary national development plan.

⁽³⁴⁾ Act LXXVII of 2013 on Adult Training.

http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A1300077.TV

⁽³⁵⁾ Act CLXXXVII of 2011 on VET.

<http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/getdoc2.cgi?dbnum=1&docid=A1100187.TV>

difficulty in implementing validation in Hungary as training programmes are not written in the form of learning outcomes. However, there are two very successful validation procedures in the field of single competence certification; the European computer driving licence examination scheme, which provides certification for ICT skills obtained by any means, and the foreign language proficiency examinations ⁽³⁶⁾.

Further NQF development and implementation is expected to assist validation through use of the learning outcomes approach and because the framework is open to including qualifications obtained through validation of prior learning achieved in non-formal and informal settings. However, no rules have been set out on the link between validation and the NQF. Validation mostly takes place in education institutions and social partners are not involved in its development.

NQF implementation

The HuQF was formally adopted by Government Decision No 1229/2012 and is partly operational. Since the adoption of the framework, its development and implementation has been carried out in the three projects of the Social renewal operational programme (SROP): VET and adult learning, higher education and general education, following the logic of three education and training subsystems.

Over recent years, NQF developments were closely linked to new legal provisions in all subsystems of education and training: VET law (2011) ⁽³⁷⁾ and amendments, law on general education (2011) ⁽³⁸⁾, act on adult learning (2013) ⁽³⁹⁾ and amended law on higher education (2011) ⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Currently, qualifications included in the framework are State-recognised from general education, vocational qualification included in the NVQR and higher education qualification, as well as certain types of adult education certificate (type

⁽³⁶⁾ These examinations have traditionally been open to learners from any learning environment; applicants can acquire certification (of the level in accordance with their actual language proficiency) without participating in any language training course (they can learn on their own in an informal way). <http://www.nyak.hu/default-eng.asp>

⁽³⁷⁾ Act CLXXXVII of 2011 on VET.
<http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/getdoc2.cgi?dbnum=1&docid=A1100187.TV>

⁽³⁸⁾ Act CXC of 2011 on National Public Education.

⁽³⁹⁾ Act LXXVII of 2013 on Adult Training.
http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A1300077.TV

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education.
http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A1100204.TV

B training certificate under the Act on adult training. The qualifications not included in the framework are those of authority regulated training ⁽⁴¹⁾, language training certificates, and ‘other’ training programmes (under the scope of the Adult training law), international qualifications and those awarded by private providers.

Following the legal basis for general education (Act on national general education) qualifications have been linked to HuQF levels: the leaving certificate awarded after six grades of primary school; the primary education qualification certifying the completion of the first eight grades; the secondary education qualification certifying the completion of secondary education after the 12th grade; the certificate for the secondary school leaving examination; and the two bridge programmes ⁽⁴²⁾. With the exception of the secondary school school-leaving exam (level 4), the HuQF levels are not indicated on certificates or diplomas of general education).

In VET, following the Act on vocational education and training, assignment of VET qualifications to HuQF levels started with those included in the NVQR; this used technical comparisons between qualifications and HuQF descriptors and – if needed – social judgement and examination of legal backgrounds. In 2016, a government decree ⁽⁴³⁾ on the NVQR regulated the possibility for HuQF and EQF levels to be added to vocational education certificates. The new government decree ⁽⁴⁴⁾ modifies some rules of VET and the HuQF levels are to be presented on VET certifications from 2019 (European Commission and Cedefop, 2018).

Reference qualifications from higher education and higher vocational qualifications were also assigned to HuQF levels. In higher education, the regulation ⁽⁴⁵⁾ adopted made it compulsory to indicate HuQF and EQF levels in diplomas and to revisit and adjust the educational and outcome requirements for higher education study programmes in line with HuQF descriptors. Bachelor and

⁽⁴¹⁾ Provided by the relevant ministries

⁽⁴²⁾ Bridge programmes are one-year programmes that prepare students who have not completed lower secondary studies or who performed so poorly that they were not admitted to upper secondary education to continue their studies in vocational schools.

⁽⁴³⁾ Government Decree 25/2016 (II. 25).
http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A1600025.KOR×hift=ffffff4&txreferer=00000001.TXT

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Government Decree 307/2018. (XII. 27.)

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Government Decree No 87/2015. (IV.9) on the execution of certain provisions of Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education.

master degrees include the relevant HuQF level. The levelling is not yet indicated on doctoral degrees.

For future stages of development, the framework is open to linking qualifications acquired in non-formal settings, training regulated by the Adult education Act, international qualifications and other certificates awarded by private providers.

Two registers have been established: VET qualifications are included in the NVQR ⁽⁴⁶⁾ and HE programmes and qualifications in the HE register ⁽⁴⁷⁾.

The HuQF currently serves as an instrument for transparency and communication of qualifications for experts and stakeholders, and plays a role in the lifelong learning narrative, but concrete actions are still limited. Within its limited budgetary and human resources capacity, the NCP has carried out information and dissemination activities, and staged workshops aimed at raising awareness about learning outcomes approaches among target groups from the different education subsystems. The development of a three-year communication plan is in progress, informing in various ways about the framework, using interactive methods, and participation in public events (job fairs, vocational exhibitions, workshops, conferences, and teacher training programmes). The communication plan focuses mostly on learners in general education, students in higher education, guidance counsellors and participants in adult education. Nevertheless, end-user knowledge of the framework is considered limited and no evaluation of the impact of the framework has yet been carried out (European Commission and Cedefop, 2018).

Referencing to the EQF

The Hungarian qualifications framework was referenced to the EQF and self-certified to the QH-EHEA in 2015 ⁽⁴⁸⁾. An updated referencing report is planned for 2020, following changes in the national qualification system, particularly in VET and inclusion of new qualifications.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ https://www.nive.hu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=297

⁽⁴⁷⁾ https://www.felvi.hu/felveteli/szakok_kepzesek/szakleirasok!/Szakleirasok/index.php/szakterulet

⁽⁴⁸⁾ The report is available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/documentation>

Important lessons and future plans

One main role of the NQF is to function as an interface between education and the labour market; it is crucial to get all stakeholders on board. As HuQF development has been running within three separate projects, following the three education subsystems (VET, higher education, general education), cross-subsystem cooperation remains a challenge. Adoption of the HuQF government decree streamlining the operation and further implementation of the HuQF would be an important step into full implementation of the framework. This requires further clarification of HuQF policy goals, agreeing roles and responsibilities and overall coordination of the HuQF for lifelong learning as well as intermediary implementation structures. An explicit strategic vision to integrate the HuQF in the different education subsystems is still to be defined. Future tasks include involving stakeholders from general education, as well as wider dissemination of the benefits of the framework among end-users (students, parents, employers and employees). Awareness among guidance practitioners and employment services – currently still low – could be raised through conferences and seminars (European Commission and Cedefop, 2018).

Following the work on HuQF development and on the referencing process, use of learning outcomes is still identified as a key area for further work. HuQF development work and related work on validation has generated more understanding of the learning outcomes approach and initiated revision of regulatory documents. Three supporting projects in school education, VET and higher education have disseminated the learning outcomes approach to a wider circle of stakeholders. However, the education subsystems are at different stages of development in this regard and strengthening the learning outcomes approach is an important step in moving on. In line with the lessons of the referencing report on the HuQF, revision of the contents of training programmes leading to qualifications at levels 5, 6 and 7 (higher vocational education and training, bachelor courses, master courses) was completed in 2016. Full implementation in practice among teachers and adult educators is an important task for the future.

Main sources of information:

- The Education Authority hosts the EQF NCP: <http://www.oktatas.hu/>
- HuQF website: https://www.oktatas.hu/kepesiteseknyito/kepesitesek/magyar_kepesitesi_keretrendszer
- Register of vocational qualifications: NVQR (OKJ): https://www.nive.hu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=297
- Register of HE programmes and qualifications: https://www.felvi.hu/felveteli/szakok_kepzesek/szakeirasok/Szakeirasok/index.php/szakterulet
- Hungarian Education Authority (2015). *Referencing and self-certification report of the Hungarian qualifications framework to the EQF and to the QF-EHEA.* https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/sites/eac-efq/files/HuQF_referencing_report.pdf

Hungarian national qualifications framework (HuQF)

HuQF levels	Types of qualification	EQF levels
8	PhD/DLA (doctor of liberal arts) (<i>Doktori fokozat</i>)	8
7	Master degree (MA/MSc) (<i>Mesterfokozat</i>)	7
6	Bachelor degree (BA/BSc) (<i>Alapfokozat</i>) Advanced VET qualifications (entry requirement is BSc degree) (<i>Felsőfokú szakképzettség</i>)	6
5	Advanced VET qualifications (higher VET programmes – short cycle) (<i>Felsőfokú OKJ szakképesítés</i>) Postsecondary full and add-on* VET qualifications (based on upper secondary school leaving examination) (<i>Érettségire épülő szakirányú OKJ szakképesítés</i>)	5

HuQF levels	Types of qualification	EQF levels
4	Certificate for upper secondary school leaving examination (<i>érettségi bizonyítvány</i>) General upper secondary school leaving certificate (<i>gimnáziumi záróbizonyítvány</i>) Vocational grammar school leaving certificate (<i>szakgimnáziumi záróbizonyítvány</i>) Vocational secondary school leaving certificate (<i>szakközépiskolai záróbizonyítvány</i>) Full/add-on* VET qualification of vocational secondary schools (<i>szakiskolában megszerezhető teljes vagy ráépüléssel OKJ szakképesítés</i>) Partial**/full VET qualification of vocational grammar schools (<i>szakgimnáziumban megszerezhető rész- vagy teljes OKJ szakképesítés</i>)	4
3	Leaving certificate and VET qualification (vocational schools for SEN students) (<i>Speciális szakiskolai záróbizonyítvány és OKJ szakképesítés</i>) Lower secondary and secondary*** level partial**, full and add-on* VET qualifications (<i>Alapfokú és középfokú teljes, rész- és ráépüléssel OKJ szakképesítés</i>)	3
2	Primary (general) school leaving qualification (primary level educational attainment) (eight years) (<i>általános iskolai záróbizonyítvány</i>) Leaving certificate of skills development (vocational schools for SEN students) eight years) (<i>Speciális készségfejlesztő szakiskolai bizonyítvány</i>) Partial** VET qualification after Vocational Bridge Programme (<i>Híd program</i>)	2
1	Leaving certificate after six grades of primary school (for those who move to general secondary schools covering grades 7 to 12) (<i>6. osztályos általános iskolai bizonyítvány</i>)	1

(*) Add-on qualifications build on one or more full qualifications. These consist of additional modules that extend the scope of activities for which the holder is qualified.

(**) Partial qualifications cover a subset of the modules included in a full qualification. They prepare the holder for simpler occupations or for a narrower scope of tasks.

(***) Lower secondary and secondary qualifications have different access requirements.

Source: Hungarian Education Authority, 2018.

Abbreviations

CVET	continuing vocational education and training
EQF	European qualifications framework
ESF	European Social Fund

ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
HuQF	Hungarian qualifications framework
VET	vocational education and training
NQF	national qualifications framework
NVQR	national vocational qualifications register
QF-EHEA	qualifications framework of the European higher education area
VERs	vocational and examination requirements
SROP	social renewal operational programme

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