



EUROPEAN
INVENTORY
OF NQFs 2024
LITHUANIA

This report was produced by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), Department for VET and Qualifications under the supervision of [Loukas Zahilas](#), Head of Department, and [Juergen Siebel](#), Acting Head of Department/Executive Director. Cedefop would like to thank the Qualifications and VET Development Centre (KPMPC) and the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) for their valuable contribution.

The report was updated by [Vicky Oraiopoulou](#), Policy officer in VET policies and systems, and peer-reviewed by [Iraklis Pliakis](#), Expert in qualifications and credentials.

This report is part of the [European inventory of national qualifications frameworks \(NQFs\)](#). For additional information please visit Cedefop's [NQFs online tool](#).

Please cite this publication as:

Cedefop. (2025). *European inventory of national qualifications frameworks 2024: Lithuania*. Cedefop. <http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/9782381>

A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (<http://europa.eu>).

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2025.



© Cedefop, 2025.

Unless otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes made are indicated.



ISBN 978-92-896-3860-9 doi: 10.2801/9782381 TI-01-25-026-EN-N

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	National context	1
2.1.	Policy context	1
2.2.	NQF legal basis	2
3.	NQF objectives	2
4.	Levels, learning outcomes and qualifications	2
4.1.	NQF structure and level descriptors	2
4.2.	NQF scope and coverage	3
4.3.	Use of learning outcomes	5
4.4.	Quality assurance arrangements	6
5.	Institutional arrangements and stakeholder involvement	7
6.	Recognition and validation of prior learning	8
6.1.	Recognising and validating non-formal and informal learning and learning pathways	8
6.2.	Recognition of foreign qualifications	9
7.	NQF implementation and impact	10
7.1.	Stage of implementation	10
7.2.	Procedures for including qualifications in the NQF	10
7.3.	Indicating EQF/NQF levels	11
7.4.	NQF dissemination	11
7.5.	Qualifications databases and registers	12
7.6.	Awareness and use of the NQF	12
7.7.	Monitoring and evaluating the NQF	13
7.8.	Impact of the NQF	13
8.	Referencing to the EQF	14
9.	Reflections and plans	15
	Acronyms	16
	References	17
	Web pages and databases	17

1. Introduction

Cedefop's work on qualifications frameworks dates back to 2003. The Centre has contributed to the conceptual development of the European qualifications framework (EQF) and has supported its further implementation, working alongside with the national authorities and stakeholders to introduce and develop national qualifications frameworks (NQFs). This report is part of the European inventory of NQFs, which systematically maps and analyses NQF developments in countries participating in the EQF process. The inventory is updated biennially in close cooperation with the EQF Advisory Group, the European Commission and the European Training Foundation. The report provides a detailed description of the structure of the Lithuanian NQF and its institutional arrangements. It also examines the framework's implementation and its impact on broader policy areas, focusing on key developments since 2022.

The Lithuanian qualifications framework (*Lietuvos kvalifikacijų sandara*) (LTQF) was formally adopted in 2010 and is now operational. It is based on eight learning-outcomes-based levels and covers all officially recognised qualifications in general (primary and secondary) education, vocational education and training (VET), and higher education. Joint referencing to, and self-certification against, the EQF and the qualifications framework of the European higher education area (QF-EHEA) was completed in late 2011, and the referencing report was published in 2012. The updated referencing report of the LTQF to the EQF and the QF-EHEA was published in 2024.

2. National context

2.1. Policy context

In 2023, Lithuania's public expenditure on education as a percentage of gross domestic product was 4.9%, slightly above the EU average of 4.7%. Participation in early childhood education and care is rising, reaching 96.7% in 2023, which is slightly above the EU-level 2030 target of at least 96%. The rate of early leaving from education and training is significantly lower than the EU average (in 2023, 6.4% and 9.5% respectively). In 2023, tertiary education attainment for those aged 25–34 was 57.4%, well above the EU-27 average and the EU-level 2030 target (43.1% and 45% respectively) (European Commission, DG Education, Youth, Sport & Culture, 2024). Participation in upper secondary VET is relatively low (27% in 2022 compared to the EU average of 49%), while vocational pathways are the only option for learners in post-secondary education ⁽¹⁾. In 2023, the employment rate of VET graduates aged 25–34

⁽¹⁾ More information at Eurostat [[educ_uoe_enra13](#)], accessed 18.3.2025.

was 71.3%, below the EU average of 81% (European Commission, DG Education, Youth, Sport & Culture, 2024).

The LTQF is an important instrument for designing and updating sectoral qualification standards and higher education study field descriptors (see Section 4.1), introducing short-cycle study programmes, and developing the competence assessment and recognition system for VET (Section 6.2) (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

2.2. NQF legal basis

The LTQF was formally adopted through a government resolution in 2010, and further refined by amendments in 2011 (role and functions) and 2019 (updated classification of higher education short-cycle study programmes)⁽²⁾ (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

3. NQF objectives

The LTQF was created to support the development and modernisation of education and training and to align the qualification offer with labour market needs. It aims to improve the transparency and comparability of qualifications, support their design and assessment, and make it easier to recognise and validate the learning outcomes that people achieve in formal, non-formal and informal settings. The framework also promotes a lifelong learning culture, and national and international mobility (KPMPC, 2024). Its aims have remained unchanged over time (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

The LTQF is a regulatory framework that sets out the levels of the qualifications system and promotes the principle of validation of informal and non-formal learning. It is seen as a prerequisite for the development of a unified national qualifications system (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

4. Levels, learning outcomes and qualifications

4.1. NQF structure and level descriptors

The LTQF combines the eight-level structure of the country's qualifications system with the descriptor principles introduced by the EQF. Level descriptors are defined according to two parameters: activity characteristics and types of competence.

⁽²⁾ [Resolution No 535 of the Government of Republic of Lithuania of 4 May 2010 on the description of the Lithuanian qualifications framework \(in Lithuanian\)](#).

Table 1. **Level descriptors in the LTQF**

Parameters		
Criteria	Characteristic of activities	Type of competence
	Complexity	Cognitive
	Autonomy	Functional
	Variability	General

Source: Adapted from KPMPC (2024).

The combination of these two parameters allows for detailed descriptions of each level. The types of competence correspond to the EQF distinction between knowledge, skills and competence (autonomy and responsibility in the 2017 EQF recommendation), while the characteristics of activities further develop the third EQF pillar. The strong relation of LTQF level descriptors to the EQF ones is documented in the updated referencing report (KPMPC, 2024).

4.2. NQF scope and coverage

The LTQF has been designed as a comprehensive framework for lifelong learning. It currently includes qualifications from general (primary and secondary) education, VET and higher education. In 2023, the outcomes of the primary education programme were linked to LTQF level 1. The amendments have been embedded in relevant legislation ([Order V-570 of 20 April 2023](#)), which defines the description of primary, lower and upper secondary programmes and corresponding LTQF levels, and legal documents regulating the issuing of general education certificates, including the *matura* certificate ⁽³⁾.

Qualifications awarded outside formal education and training and international qualifications are not yet included in the LTQF. Progress in establishing links between non-formal qualifications and the LTQF can be seen in Order V- 1218 of 18 September 2023 , which defines the procedure for quality assurance in non-formal adult education and continuing training programmes relevant to the individual learning account (ILA) system ⁽⁴⁾. The order specifies that the LTQF level can be indicated in the programme information when, for example, such a programme is part of a formal VET or study programme (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024). Legislative work in 2024 specified the conditions under which foreign and international qualifications can be recognised at a corresponding LTQF level (see Section 6.2) (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024; KPMPC, 2024).

The implementation of the comprehensive LTQF highlighted a gap at level 5. As a result, two types of qualifications were placed at this level: VET diplomas (*Profesinio*

⁽³⁾ [Order V-2001 of 23 December 2022](#) amending [Order ISAK-236 of 20 February 2007](#), and subsequent amendments [V-785 of 2 June 2023](#) and [V-308 of 18 march 2024](#).

⁽⁴⁾ More information on the establishment of the ILA system is available [online](#).

mokymo diplomas) acquired through post-secondary VET programmes ⁽⁵⁾, and short-cycle higher education programmes leading to a diploma (*Trumposios pakopos diplomas*), which were introduced in 2018 ⁽⁶⁾. In 2022, the first group of learners enrolled in programmes on tourism and leisure, and informatics engineering and programme systems. According to the law on research and higher education, study field descriptors and qualification standards provide the main guidelines for the development of short-cycle programmes, and consistency with them should be ensured (KPMPC, 2024; European Commission & Cedefop, 2024) ⁽⁷⁾.

The LTQF does not include partial qualifications ⁽⁸⁾ or microcredentials (KPMPC, 2024). National authorities involved in qualifications design are discussing how to define a legal and operational framework for micro credentials, and how to relate them to the LTQF and, in the long term, to the ILA system launched in 2023 as a future repository of individual credentials and awards. The updated referencing report suggests broadening the qualification offer, for example thorough the introduction of microcredentials and similar awards (KPMPC, 2024). A system for the use of microcredentials (concept, legal and operational framework) and its relation with the LTQF is being discussed between the education ministry, KPMPC and education providers, mainly HE institutions (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

The LTQF is open but does not currently include international qualifications. If international qualifications or qualifications awarded outside formal education and training were to be included in the LTQF, they would have to align with a specific qualification standard and meet the same requirements as other qualifications in terms of content and structure (KPMPC, 2024; European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

Table 2. Lithuanian qualifications framework (LTQF)

LTQF level	Qualification type	EQF level
8	Doctoral diploma (<i>Daktaro diplomas</i>)	8
7	Master diploma (<i>Magistro diplomas</i>)	7

⁽⁵⁾ In December 2023, 10 qualifications at level 5 were taught in modular CVET programmes (KPMPC, 2024).

⁽⁶⁾ Between 2018 and 2023, the short-cycle higher education programmes delivered a study certificate (*Studijų pažymėjimas*).

⁽⁷⁾ From 2022 to September 2024, 15 short-cycle programmes have been included in the register of studies, training programmes and qualifications. For more information, see [the qualifications register](#) (in Lithuanian).

⁽⁸⁾ Units of qualifications defined in the qualification descriptor of qualifications standards. When developing a VET programme, a unit typically becomes a module of the programme. Partial qualifications are not registered separately in the Register of Study, training programmes and qualifications.

LTQF level	Qualification type	EQF level
6	Bachelor diploma (<i>Bakalauro diplomas</i>) Professional bachelor diploma (<i>Profesinio bakalauro diplomas</i>) Study Certificate (<i>Pedagogas</i>) – Teacher training programmes	6
5	VET diploma, level 5 (<i>Profesinio mokymo diplomas</i>) Short cycle diploma (<i>Trumposios pakopos diplomas</i>) – short-cycle HE programmes	5
4	VET diploma, level 4 (<i>Profesinio mokymo diplomas</i>) <i>Matura</i> certificate (<i>Brandos atestatas</i>) (*) (on completion of the upper secondary education programme and passing <i>matura</i> examinations)	4
3	VET diploma, level 3 (<i>Profesinio mokymo diplomas</i>) Lower secondary education certificate (<i>Pagrindinio išsilavinimo pažymėjimas</i>) (*) (completion of lower secondary education programme and testing learning outcomes) (grades 5–10)	3
2	VET diploma, level 2 (<i>Profesinio mokymo diplomas</i>)	2
1	VET diploma, level 1 (<i>Profesinio mokymo diplomas</i>) (*) Primary education certificate, level 1 (<i>Pradinio išsilavinimo pažymėjimas</i>) (*)	1

(*) The learning outcomes of primary education programmes are referenced to LTQF level 1, those of lower secondary education programmes to LTQF level 3, and those of upper secondary education programmes to LTQF level 4. Level 1 qualifications are not currently awarded.

Source: KPMPC (2024)

4.3. Use of learning outcomes

Level descriptors form the basis for formulating qualifications. The descriptors serve as an explicit reference point to improve consistency between qualifications and across education sectors. Qualification standards (nationally referred to as sectoral qualifications standards), modular VET programmes, higher education study field descriptors and higher education study programmes all align with the LTQF level descriptors.

The 2019 reform of the general curriculum framework for pre-primary, primary, lower and upper secondary education aimed to strengthen the competence-based curriculum orientation. The reformed curricula at all levels focus on the acquisition of seven key competences: cognitive, communication, cultural, creativity, citizenship, digital, and social, emotional and healthy lifestyle competences. These competences are developed across all programmes and subjects. (KPMPC, 2024).

Since 2020, measures bridging general education and VET have been established. General education learners in grades 9 to 12 may substitute the technology subject (*technologijų dalykas*) of the curriculum with a short VET module (5-10 credits). Credits are recognised when enrolling in VET, shortening the programme duration. General education learners in grades 11 to 12 may enrol in individual VET modules (KPMPC, 2024; Cedefop & KPMPC, 2023; ReferNet Lithuania & Cedefop, 2023).

Even before 2010, the learning outcomes (competence) approach was widely implemented in VET (Laužackas et al., 2009). All formal VET programmes are based on qualification standards, which are used to implement and operationalise the LTQF by defining and describing qualifications at different levels of the framework (see Section 7.2). Standards are reviewed and updated at least once every five years, and the related VET programmes must be aligned within 12 months from the entry into force of the updated standard(s). All standards are publicly available [online](#). By June 2023, 24 standards covering 608 qualifications at LTQF levels 2 to 8 were in place (KPMPC, 2024; European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

The learning outcomes approach supported the modularisation of VET curricula, which began in 2015 and was gradually implemented by 2020. Formal VET programmes consist of mandatory and elective modules expressed in learning credits, aligned with LTQF level descriptors. Depending on the targeted qualification, the volume of formal IVET is 30, 45, 60 (usual volume of a one-year programme), 90 or 110 credits, and 20, 35, 50, 70 or 90 credits in formal CVET ⁽⁹⁾. The volume of a non-formal VET programme cannot exceed 30 credits (KPMPC, 2024).

In higher education, LTQF descriptors are used when defining study levels and study field descriptors. The learning outcomes approach is implemented using two main tools: the study cycle descriptors ([Order V-1012](#) of 16 November 2016), which define the learning outcomes to be achieved at each cycle (in terms of knowledge and application, research skills, special abilities, social abilities, and personal abilities), and study field descriptors, which define the set of knowledge, skills and qualification requirements relevant to a study field. By 2023, 53 study field descriptors had been established. The Centre for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (SKVC) coordinates the development and review of [study field descriptors](#) to develop, for example, new short-cycle programmes in emerging sectors (KPMPC, 2024). Higher education institutions use study field descriptors as reference points for the development, review and renewal of their programmes and qualifications.–Study field descriptors are also used for external quality assurance of programmes (see Section 4.4.), and to link higher education with labour market needs better (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

4.4. Quality assurance arrangements

The LTQF is underpinned by quality assurance arrangements, which cover development, management, assessment of competences and the award of LTQF qualifications. The LTQF helps to raise the quality of qualifications and is one of the instruments used in external quality assessment. For example, experts evaluating

⁽⁹⁾ 'A learning credit is a unit of learning volume that measures learning outcomes and a learner's working time' (KPMPC, 2019). In the national context, initial VET programmes are those delivered at lower and upper secondary, and post-secondary levels. Continuing VET programmes that enable adults to acquire a second qualification in formal VET are available.

higher education study programmes use the study field descriptors in external quality assurance procedures (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

The National Agency for Education (NSA), established in 2019 after reorganising six institutions subordinate to the education ministry, ensures quality assurance in the general education sector (pre-school, pre-primary and general education, except for higher education), including the organisation of curricula and *matura* examinations. Responsibility for quality assurance of formal VET is shared between the Qualifications and VET Development Centre (*Kvalifikacijų ir profesinio mokymo plėtros centras* (KPMPC)), the Centre for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (SKVC) and the NSA. The NSA was also responsible for the external evaluation of providers of formal VET ([Order V-316](#)); however, from 2024 this responsibility was delegated to KPMPC. Supporting higher education institutions to quality-assure their programmes falls under the responsibility of the Centre for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (SKVC). KPMPC and NSA participate, together with the national ESF Agency and the Association of Lithuanian HE Institutions for Joint Admissions, in setting up – through the [Learn for Life](#) project – of the legal, quality assurance and operational framework of the individual learning account system of non-formal programmes, implemented by education institutions and labour market actors (see Section 7.2) (KPMPC, 2024; Cedefop & ReferNet, 2025).

5. Institutional arrangements and stakeholder involvement

The education ministry ⁽¹⁰⁾ has assigned the LTQF's implementation and day-to-day coordination to the Qualifications and VET Development Centre (*Kvalifikacijų ir profesinio mokymo plėtros centras*, [KPMPC](#)). The KPMPC acts as the EQF national coordination point (NCP). Its tasks are to reference national qualifications levels to the eight levels of the EQF, ensure transparency, and to provide access to information and guidance to stakeholders on how national qualifications relate to the EQF through the LTQF. It also aims to promote the participation of stakeholders (education institution representatives, social partners, sector representatives and experts) in the process. The management of the LTQF is performed by the Qualifications Formation Unit (four people) within the KPMPC. LTQF-related activities such as the development and update of sectoral professional standards, consultation with stakeholders and dissemination activities are funded by the state budget, European funds and Erasmus+ programmes (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024). The KPMPC is the ReferNet contact point and the European quality assurance in VET reference point.

For quality assurance of the LTQF and the national qualifications system, the KPMPC works closely with the NSA and SKVC (see Section 4.4). In 2013, the SKVC

⁽¹⁰⁾ The official title is [Ministry of Education, Science and Sport](#).

was officially delegated to take part in the coordination and implementation of the LTQF, with a specific focus on universities and universities of applied sciences. The Ministry of Economy and Innovation oversees human resources development policy and recognition of regulated professions, and, together with the education ministry, is represented in all sectoral professional committees (SPCs).

Stakeholders have been actively involved in national qualifications system development since 2007, for instance in referencing the LTQF to the EQF and in setting up a framework of sector-based qualification standards. The 2017 law on VET introduced the [SPCs, 18 advisory bodies](#) ⁽¹¹⁾ that operate under the KPMPC, covering all economic sectors and supporting the development of the national qualifications system and framework ⁽¹²⁾. Each SPC is composed of at least nine members, including representatives of national employer organisations and branch employer associations, trade unions, ministries, public organisations, and higher education and VET providers (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024). The SPCs endorse qualifications, consider and submit proposals on new qualifications (at any LTQF level) to the education ministry, and submit opinions regarding the need for short-cycle study programmes. They chair KPCMC committees examining the application of institutions wishing to perform assessment and recognition of competences and contribute to the external evaluation of VET institutions (KPMPC, 2024). Stakeholder involvement regarding LTQF implementation is more prominent in VET and higher education through the work of SPCs (employers usually constitute at least half of the SPC committee composition) on sectoral qualification standards design, and on aligning short-cycle programmes with the needs of the economic sectors (KPMPC, 2024).

6. Recognition and validation of prior learning

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

Validation is an integral part of the lifelong learning system and is covered by multiple legal frameworks. According to the 2017 law on VET the results of validation should be recognised as part of a whole formal qualification. Validation arrangements can provide access to all formal education programmes leading to VET diplomas (levels 1 to 5). When enrolling in VET, learners may validate their prior learning and receive credits or exceptions from parts of a VET programme. Acquisition of a partial or full VET

⁽¹¹⁾ More information on the [SPCs](#) (in Lithuanian).

⁽¹²⁾ [Joint Order No V-610/4-401 of 28 June 2018 of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Economy on the description and approval of the composition, tasks and financing of the sectoral professional committees](#) (in Lithuanian).

qualification is possible through validation ⁽¹³⁾. There is no evidence on the use of validation in general education (Juskevicius, 2024). In higher education, prior learning can be recognised as part of a programme; the maximum credit is 75% of a total study programme (Juskevicius, 2024; European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

Since September 2021, the governance and organisation of competence assessment and recognition procedures in VET have changed ⁽¹⁴⁾, with nominated competence assessment centres now responsible. In addition to supporting formal VET graduates, the new procedure promotes the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning (professional competences) acquired through apprenticeships, work experience and self-education (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

Competence assessments for qualification are coordinated by the KPMPC in cooperation with nominated VET providers acting as competence assessment centres. Competence assessment tasks are prepared in line with sectoral qualification standards and LTQF level descriptors (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

6.2. Recognition of foreign qualifications

The SKVC is responsible for the academic recognition of foreign and international qualifications. A 2024 legislative amendment formally recognised the SKVC as the national ERIC-NARIC centre ⁽¹⁵⁾ and broadened the scope of academic recognition of general and combined (general and vocational) programmes, allowing access to tertiary education for holders of VET qualifications issued by foreign and international VET institutions. NQF/EQF levels are key in assessing and recognising foreign qualifications, and in implementing automatic recognition agreements. ⁽¹⁶⁾ The [Government Resolution No 475 of 14 June 2024](#) regarding academic recognition of education and qualifications acquired according to educational programmes of foreign countries and international organisations specified that the outcome of recognition of foreign and international qualifications may be the recognition of these qualifications as equivalent to a qualification awarded in Lithuania or to the corresponding level of the LTQF (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024; ReferNet Lithuania & Cedefop, 2025). After the amendment, VET institutions acquired the right to carry out academic recognition and validation of foreign and international qualifications, when applicants

⁽¹³⁾ Credits/exceptions apply to some level 3 and 4 VET diploma programmes only; a full level 4 VET diploma cannot be acquired through validation alone (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

⁽¹⁴⁾ [Order No V-1480 of 30 September 2020 on the approval of the description of the procedure for the assessment of acquired competencies](#) (in Lithuanian).

⁽¹⁵⁾ [Amendment No 475 of 12 June 2024 of the 2012 Resolution](#) on the procedure for the recognition of international qualifications and qualifications acquired in a foreigner country.

⁽¹⁶⁾ For example, see the [Agreement among the Government of the Republic of Estonia, the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on the automatic academic recognition of qualifications concerning higher education](#) (in English).

intend to study according to VET programmes (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) provides information online on the conditions for [recognition](#) of foreign qualifications, depending on the level and purpose (professional or academic) of the qualification gained, including the recognition of qualifications giving access to higher education (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

7. NQF implementation and impact

7.1. Stage of implementation

The LTQF is at an operational stage. It is an important element of the education, training and qualifications system and provides a map of and references to all formal qualifications.

7.2. Procedures for including qualifications in the NQF

The process for registering LTQF qualifications and programmes leading to them into the register of studies, training programmes and qualifications (RSTPQ) constitutes the formal process to include a qualification in the LTQF (order no V-1335). The National Education Agency (NSA) is appointed by the education ministry as the manager of the register (KPMPC, 2024).

In VET, the KPMPC methodology defines the process for assigning qualifications to levels 1 to 5, following an analysis of the qualification descriptor (units of qualifications) and expected learning outcomes/competences against the LTQF level descriptors. The design of modular VET programmes is based on the qualification requirements defined in the sectoral qualification standards ⁽¹⁷⁾ ⁽¹⁸⁾. It is supervised by KPMPC experts and undergoes external evaluation before submission to the NSA for inclusion in the register (European Commission & Cedefop, 2025; KPMPC, 2024).

At tertiary level, higher education institutions are responsible for developing and awarding qualifications at LTQF levels 5 to 8, in line with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education and Research and the general requirements for conducting studies defined based on the qualification cycle/level (short-cycle, bachelor, master, doctorate), the LTQF level and study fields descriptors. The accredited study programme and the corresponding higher education qualification should be submitted to the NSA and

⁽¹⁷⁾ SPC committees review and discuss the LTQF levels proposed in the sectoral qualifications standards before endorsing them.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Formal VET programmes include core modules, which are based on LTQF-levelled qualification units, and optional modules, which undergo levelling procedure. In December 2023, 629 modular VET programmes were included in the RSTPQ. The register includes also 13 non-modular VET programmes designed to provide specific competences for statutory functions.

registered in the RSTPQ for a programme to be implemented. Professional studies are outside the study cycles and cover teacher training programmes (at LTQF level 6, indicated in the study field descriptor) and residency studies in medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine ⁽¹⁹⁾.

In general education, it is the learning outcomes that are referenced to the national framework. The alignment of primary, lower-secondary and upper-secondary programmes to LTQF level is established by legal acts governing the general education curriculum (see Section 2.2) (KPMPC, 2024).

7.3. Indicating EQF/NQF levels

LTQF and EQF levels are indicated on primary (LTQF only), lower and upper secondary general education certificates, VET diplomas ⁽²⁰⁾, and Europass certificate supplements ⁽²¹⁾, as well as in higher education diploma supplements, apart from doctoral diplomas ⁽²²⁾ and teacher study certificates (level 6). LTQF/EQF levels are indicated on qualifications in the register of study, training programmes and qualifications (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

7.4. NQF dissemination

Information on the LTQF and EQF is available through the dedicated [website](#) on the LTQF, established in 2022. The revamped [website](#) of the SKVC provides information on study fields descriptors assigned to different LTQF levels as well. A [methodological guide](#) for stakeholders and employers involved in preparing qualifications standards emphasises the LTQF's role in improving quality and consistency in qualification design at all levels, and between and within sectors, while [recommendations](#) (in Lithuanian) for referencing qualifications to LTQF levels and a guide for developing and introducing mastery qualifications (see Section 6.1) are available. In 2023, no communication strategy was yet in place. A series of promotional videos were launched on television and YouTube to inform the public about the [LTQF](#) and [EQF](#) frameworks and their [areas of application](#) in the national context. As part of the updated referencing report to the EQF and EHEA consultations with VET and HE stakeholders and social partners, as well as a conference to discuss progress achieved and challenges ahead, took place (European Commission & Cedefop, 2022; 2024).

⁽¹⁹⁾ Professional studies were introduced with 2017 amendments to the Law on HE and Research; they can be referenced to level 6 or 7 (KPMPC, 2024).

⁽²⁰⁾ [Order No V-231 of 23 March 2015 on the description of the content, form and issuing procedure of VET diplomas and certificates and VET diploma template](#) (in Lithuanian).

⁽²¹⁾ See the [example of a Europass certificate supplement](#) on the Online Open Information and Guidance System website (in Lithuanian).

⁽²²⁾ Order No V-362 of 15 May 2017 concerning the [recommendations for filling in diploma supplements](#) (in Lithuanian).

7.5. Qualifications databases and registers

The register of study, training programmes and qualifications (RSTPQ) includes VET and higher education ⁽²³⁾ qualifications and new types of qualifications, such as level 5 short-cycle higher education qualifications. It does not yet include general education and doctorate (level 8) qualifications. By September 2024, the register included 1 498 qualifications. The slight decrease compared to 2022 (1 574) is the result of the deletion of outdated qualifications not compatible with the new qualification standards. During the same period, 15 level 5 qualifications were registered at post-secondary and tertiary levels.

The RSTPQ aims to provide individuals with information, in Lithuanian and English, on qualifications, education programmes and standards. It targets individuals such as learners, employees and employers, as well as legal entities such as education institutions and other organisations. The information provided includes the title of qualifications, the LTQF/EQF level, the intended learning outcomes in open text format, the awarding body and ways to acquire the qualification.

The information is transferred to Europass certificate supplements. The register is hosted within the national Online Open Information and Guidance System (*Atvira Informavimo Konsultavimo Orientavimo Sistema, AIKOS*), which is an entry point to qualifications, education and training programmes, and also offers data on learning opportunities through the database of study and training programmes. There is interoperability with the European learning model version 3 (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

7.6. Awareness and use of the NQF

The LTQF is well known to, and extensively used by, education and training providers, quality assurance bodies and authorities involved in recognition processes, and, to a lesser extent, to sectors and other stakeholders.

Policies on the development of learning outcomes for VET and higher education treat the LTQF as an overarching principle. LTQF descriptors are embedded in methodological guidelines for developing and updating qualifications standards, VET curricula and higher education study descriptors. System changes introduced by the progressive implementation of the VET reform have increased employers' involvement in designing, developing and assessing VET qualifications and programmes in line with LTQF principles. LTQF levels are mentioned in job openings (mainly in the public sector) and in the Europass CV, which is widely used when applying for a job.

The LTQF is also used by guidance and counselling practitioners when presenting education systems, and training, study and career opportunities. The national public employment service (PES) uses the framework to define the level of 'competences and

⁽²³⁾ Not all LTQF level 8 qualifications are included; general education qualifications at levels 1 to 4 were included in the LTQF, but implementation was pending in 2024.

qualifications that create high added value' ⁽²⁴⁾, which can be obtained through PES training programmes for the employed and unemployed (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

The LTQF has simplified the procedures for recognising foreign qualifications and older Lithuanian qualifications (e.g. by indicating LTQF/EQF levels on diplomas). The LTQF is also used in the quality assurance of qualifications, in validation procedures, and is mentioned in decisions confirming the recognition of a foreign or international qualification (see Section 6.2) (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

7.7. Monitoring and evaluating the NQF

The KPMPC has assessed the impact of referencing the LTQF to the EQF from 2012 to 2020 ⁽²⁵⁾. The study examined the role of the LTQF in strategic projects and policy initiatives in VET and higher education.

The study concluded that the LTQF has influenced the design and development of VET and higher education curricula (see Section 4.3); in higher education, it has also supported quality assurance. Further, the LTQF level descriptors have made it easier to compare national and foreign VET and higher education qualifications. The study also identified action areas, such as improving permeability between education institutions, enhancing the capacity of education providers to recognise competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning, assigning LTQF levels to qualifications awarded outside formal education and training, and completing the legal framework regulating EQF level 5 qualifications (European Commission & Cedefop, 2022; 2024).

As part of the KPMPC [Erasmus+ programme 2021-23](#) project on the implementation of the EQF in Lithuania, the joint referencing report of the LTQF to the EQF and the QF-EHEA was updated to reflect better the changes in education and training over the past decade and to support the implementation of the LTQF better in all sectors. The report provides specific recommendations for future actions, including opening up the framework to diverse qualifications, supporting the recognition of non-formal learning, and conducting periodical assessments of the framework and its impact (see Section 9) (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

7.8. Impact of the NQF

The LTQF was conceived and developed as a tool to classify qualifications by level according to their learning and/or study outcomes. It supports the development of a

⁽²⁴⁾ *Aukštą pridėtinę vertę kuriančių kvalifikacijų ir kompetencijų įgijimas*, in Lithuanian. [Order V-294 of 22 September 2022](#) specifies the list of 40 qualifications and 590 competences at LTQF level 4 or higher in research and development (R&D) priority areas established by the Government of Lithuania.

⁽²⁵⁾ The evaluation is intended for internal purposes and was not published.

unified national qualifications system to improve the quality, comparability and relevance of qualifications to existing economic needs, and also supports continuity of learning for professional mobility (KPMPC, 2024).

The compliance of qualification standards and higher education study field descriptors with LTQF descriptors and levelling criteria ensures that qualifications are expressed in terms of learning outcomes, promoting their comparability and transparency. In addition, the LTQF is one of the instruments used to carry out the external quality assessment in higher education (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

The framework has contributed to the standardisation of qualifications delivered at the same level and ensures consistency of qualifications issued at different levels. The early implementation of the LTQF promoted the learning outcomes approach in qualification and programme design across education sectors and levels. This has improved horizontal and vertical permeability in general education, VET and higher education. It has also increased parity of esteem between VET and higher education and led to the development of level 5 qualifications offered in post-secondary VET and short-cycle higher education programmes.

Both the regular operations of the framework in qualification design and assessment of competences of qualifications, and the updating of the referencing report in 2023, have created space for dialogue and cooperation among national authorities and stakeholders, for example, through the network of sectoral professional committees operating under the KPMPC.

The systematic use of qualification levels in VET diplomas and HE diploma supplements facilitates recognition of qualifications, international mobility for work or study, and international recognition of qualifications.

The LTQF offers a common language linking education and the labour market ⁽²⁶⁾; for example, the employment authority uses the LTQF to evaluate the diplomas and qualifications of jobseekers. In parallel, the LTQF helps employers to assess the competences that employees have or lack, plan training needs and design job descriptions (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

8. Referencing to the EQF

The LTQF was referenced to the EQF in November 2011, with an integrated report covering both the EQF and the QF-EHEA published in 2012. An updated referencing report to the EQF for lifelong learning and the EHEA was presented in early 2024 and published in August 2024. The report provides a comprehensive overview of LTQF-related developments since 2012, such as the inclusion of general education

⁽²⁶⁾ VET institutions report that former graduates are contacting them to confirm the level of their qualifications or training programmes, which can be levelled using the LTQF principles.

qualifications at primary and lower and upper secondary levels, and the implementation of level 5 qualifications in post-secondary VET and short-cycle HE programmes (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024; Cedefop & ReferNet, 2025).

9. Reflections and plans

Since 2012, the framework has supported the VET and higher education curriculum and quality assurance reforms and has been gradually embedded in national legislation in different education sectors. This in turn supports and guides its implementation, for example, through the alignment of the general education curriculum to the LTQF levels and their use in general education certificates. The framework supports the development of a unified national qualifications system. The use of the same criteria to define qualifications at different levels and across sectors supports their transparency and comparability and alignment to existing economy needs. The LTQF level descriptors are considered the basis for developing and updating VET and higher education qualifications, strengthening trust among education sectors and levels. Its conceptual approach, capturing the increase in the complexity, depth and breadth of activities and competences, has proved effective and is well regarded by education providers and labour market actors. Further, the LTQF has set up a platform for cooperation between various stakeholders, especially VET and higher education representatives. The SPCs promote dialogue on the LTQF between education and labour market actors. Interinstitutional cooperation has helped the sustainable operationalisation of the LTQF across sectors with different governance (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

Although legislation on the validation of prior learning is in place, there is room for the LTQF to contribute significantly to this area, as implementation of the legislation has not progressed significantly. It is important to raise awareness of the LTQF beyond the education sector, to improve stakeholders' understanding of the LTQF's underlying principles (e.g. levels and level descriptors), and to promote further parity of esteem between qualifications (e.g. bachelor degree and professional bachelor degree). The role of labour market actors and trade unions in qualification development also needs to be strengthened (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

More needs to be done to increase trust in qualifications awarded outside formal education and training, and to assure their quality in order to open up the framework to them. It would be useful to strengthen and increase the responsibilities and human capital of institutions involved in awarding such qualifications (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

The updated referencing report (2024) has identified the main future priorities. In general education, the report highlights the need to raise awareness of the LTQF among career counsellors and teachers, learners and their families, for example through targeted campaigns. In VET, it is recommended to better align qualifications

standards, programmes and LTQF levels, to develop a systematic quality assurance model, and to intensify the work of the SPCs in designing new qualifications and standards. In the tertiary sector, it is planned to widen the spectrum of qualification types to include microcredentials, qualifications with a narrow professional focus and qualifications delivered in interdisciplinary studies. Broadening the scope of the framework correlates with developments regarding validation of non-formal learning and the setting up of the ILA system. Other suggestions include regular assessment of the LTQF implementation and its impact; greater permeability between education programmes at the same or different LTQF levels; and faster delivery of level 5 qualifications through validation processes (KPMPC, 2024; European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

Acronyms

EQF	European qualifications framework
ILA	individual learning account
KPMPC	Qualifications and VET Development Centre [<i>Kvalifikacijų ir profesinio mokymo plėtros centras</i>]
LTQF	Lithuanian qualifications framework
NARIC	the Network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres
NCP	national coordination point
NQF	national qualifications framework
NSA	National Agency for Education [<i>Nacionalinė švietimo agentūra</i>]
SKVC	Centre for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
SPC	sectoral professional committee
VET	vocational education and training

References

[URLs accessed 4/4/2025]

- Cedefop & KPMPC. (2023). Vocational education and training in Europe – Lithuania: system description. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2024). *Vocational education and training in Europe: VET in Europe database – detailed VET system descriptions* [Database].
- Cedefop & ReferNet Lithuania. (2021). *Lithuania: Accelerating recognition of self-acquired professional competences*.
- Cedefop & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe*. [online tool].
- European Commission. DG Education, Youth, Sport & Culture. (2024). *Education and training monitor 2024: Lithuania*. Publications Office of the European Union.
- European Commission & Cedefop. (2022). *Survey on implementation, use and impact of NQF/EQF: Lithuania* [unpublished].
- European Commission & Cedefop. (2024). *Survey on implementation, use and impact of NQF/EQF: Lithuania* [unpublished].
- Juskevicius, R. (2024). *European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2023 update: Lithuania*. European Commission & Cedefop.
- Laužackas, R., Tūtlys, V. and Spūdytė, I. (2009). *Evolution of competence concept in Lithuania: from VET reform to development of national qualification system*. Journal of European industrial training, Vol. 33, No 8/9, pp. 800–816.
- KPMPC. (2012). *Referencing the Lithuanian qualifications framework to the European qualifications framework for lifelong learning and the qualifications framework for the European higher education area – National report 2012*.
- KPMPC. (2019). *Methodology for the development of formal VET programmes*.
- KPMPC. (2024). *Referencing the Lithuanian qualifications framework to the European qualifications framework for lifelong learning and the qualifications framework for the European higher education area – updated national report December 2023*.
- ReferNet Lithuania & Cedefop. (2023). *Lithuania: programme aligns VET to labour market needs (2021-30)*. National news on VET
- ReferNet Lithuania, & Cedefop. (2025, January 9). *Publication of the updated report on the referencing of the Lithuanian Framework to EQF and QF-EHEA*. National news on VET.
- ReferNet Lithuania, & Cedefop. (2025, January 8). *Lithuania: VET institutions recognise professional qualifications acquired abroad*. National news on VET.

Web pages and databases

[URLs accessed 4/4/2025]

[KPMPC](#).

[LTQF/EQF website](#).

[Qualifications register](#).