



EUROPEAN INVENTORY OF NQFs 2024

NORWAY

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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>).

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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 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 Norwegian 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 Norwegian NQF for lifelong learning (*Nasjonalt kvalifikasjonsrammeverk for livslang læring NKR*) was referenced to the EQF in 2014, alongside its self-certification to the qualifications frameworks in the European higher education area (QF-EHEA). It is structured into seven levels and includes all levels and types of formal education and training. The NKR uses knowledge, skills and general competence as level descriptors, and is at the operational stage.

2. National context

2.1. Policy context

In 2023, tertiary educational attainment was 40.6%; 37.4% of the population had a qualification at EQF levels 6 to 8 and 3.2% at EQF level 5 ⁽¹⁾. In 2024, 53% of middle school graduates applied for a VET programme leading to an NKR/EQF level 4 qualification. This was the first time that more learners chose VET over general education (which can lead to higher education) ⁽²⁾.

Since 2020, NKR has been mentioned in skills related policies (e.g. 2020 White Paper [Skills reform: lifelong learning](#)). The white paper [Outlook on the](#)

⁽¹⁾ More information on tertiary education can be found [here](#) (in Norwegian).

⁽²⁾ More information on secondary education can be found [here](#) (in Norwegian).

[skills needs in Norway](#) (2022-23), points out the most important skills needs providing directions for government policies in the coming years and promoting the alignment of education and training with labour market needs. The white paper strengthens the NKR's role in (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024):

- (a) providing a structured framework for recognising diverse competences, thus promoting lifelong learning by supporting continuous skills development through formal and non-formal education;
- (b) making qualifications easier to understand, thus increasing the transparency of education and training and learners' mobility, ensuring their qualifications are valued across education sub-systems at national and international levels;
- (c) promoting up- and re-skilling, ensuring that new skills gained through short courses, vocational training, or workplace learning are formally recognised, contributing to employability and economic adaptability.

The 2024 white paper on [profession-oriented education](#) aims to promote inclusion and equal opportunities in education and the labour market, validation of skills and competences, and to make education and training more flexible to address both the needs of individuals and employers. The NKR supports this policy by enabling the recognition and validation of skills, regardless of how they were acquired, enhancing the employability of all citizens. The framework facilitates the alignment of education programmes with labour market needs and promotes permeability across the different education sub-systems and mobility across labour market sectors (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

2.2. NQF legal basis

The NKR was adopted by the education ministry in December 2011 and, following amendments of the relevant laws relating to education and training, further legally defined in a regulation in December 2017 (Norwegian government, 2017a). The new acts on [Education](#) and on [Universities and University Colleges](#) are valid since August 2024. The sections linking them to the NKR have remained unchanged (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

3. NQF objectives

The NKR aims to describe the existing national education and training system in a transparent way, to make it more understandable at the national and international levels. Focusing on improving the transparency of qualifications, the NKR was originally seen as a communication and information tool rather than as a tool for reform. However, through its focus on learning outcomes and integration into the regulation of higher education and higher vocational

education, an important dimension of the NKR – underlined in the 2016 and 2017 White Papers on higher vocational education and higher education, respectively – is its integration into the quality assurance of education and training. More specific objectives include:

- (a) improving communication and mobility within education and training and towards the labour market;
- (b) offering a description of what a pupil/apprentice/graduate is expected to know, understand and be able to do after the successful completion of learning;
- (c) aiding the comparison of qualifications from other countries, via the EQF and the QF-EHEA;
- (d) opening the way for the development of new instruments for the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

4. Levels, learning outcomes and qualifications

4.1. NQF structure and level descriptors

A structure of seven levels has been adopted. The numbering of the seven levels starts at level 2 to ensure alignment with the levels of the EQF. Levels 5 and 6 have two sublevels each, with different level descriptors: sublevels 5.1 and 6.1 accommodate full qualifications that do not lead to full level 5 or 6 completion. Qualifications at sublevels 5.2 and 6.2 fully cover learning outcomes respectively at levels 5 and 6. For example, the level 5.1 refers to completion of vocational college education with 30-90 credits and duration of 6 to 12 months, whereas level 5.2 constitutes of 90-120 credits and duration of 18-24 months. The learning-outcome-based level descriptors are defined in terms of knowledge (*kunnskap*), skills (*ferdigheter*) and general competence (*generell kompetanse*). At level 4, two parallel sets of level descriptors have been developed – one for vocational education and training and one for general education – both representing full level completion.

Table 1. **Main NKR level descriptor elements defining levels 2 to 8 in Norway**

Level descriptor elements		
Knowledge	Skills	General competence

Understanding of theories, facts, concepts, principles and procedures in a discipline, subject area and/or profession.	The ability to apply knowledge to complete tasks and solve problems. There are different types of skill: cognitive, practical, creative and communicative.	The ability to use knowledge and skills in an independent manner in different situations in study and work contexts, by demonstrating the ability to cooperate, the ability to act responsibly, and a capacity for reflection and critical thinking.
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Source: Cedefop (2018).

4.2. NQF scope and coverage

The NKR includes all formal qualifications at lower and upper secondary, higher vocational and higher education levels. Qualifications awarded outside formal education are not included in the NKR. However, all levels of education and training are open to new and private providers, as long as they meet the accreditation criteria. This offers flexibility to the formal system to encompass education and training programmes in new fields and trades. Thus, the non-formal provision is rather limited (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

In general, the NKR includes full qualifications, except at level 3, which includes partially completed upper secondary education. Programmes leading to a qualification of partially completed upper secondary education do not include training in all parts of the curriculum; learners receive a certificate indicating the competences they have achieved (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

In the future, not active qualifications will be kept in the NKR to ensure that graduates with these degrees will be able to use this legal framework for recognition purposes (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

Table 2. Norwegian qualifications framework (NKR)

NKR level	Qualification type	EQF level
8	Doctoral degree (<i>PhD, DPhil, PhD in artistic development work</i>) Diploma for artistic development programme (<i>Diplom, kunstnerisk utviklingsprogram</i>) *	8
7	Master's degree (<i>Mastergrad</i>) Master of arts Master of business administration (MBA) Master of international business (MIB) Master of technology management Master of laws Candidata/candidatus medicinae Candidata/candidatus medicinae veterinariae Candidata/candidatus psychologiae Candidata/candidatus theologiae Diploma for general teacher education programme (<i>Vitnemål fra</i>	7

	<i>allmennlærerutdanning, Vitnemål fra grunnskolelærerutdanning)</i>		
6.2	Bachelor's degree (<i>Bachelorgrad</i>)		6
6.1	University college degree (<i>Høgskolekandidatgrad</i>)		
5.2	Diploma for vocational college education (1.5 to 2 years, 90–120 credits) (<i>Vitnemål fra fagskoleutdanning</i>)		5
5.1	Diploma for vocational college education 0.5 to 1.5 years, 30–90 credits) (<i>Vitnemål fra fagskoleutdanning</i>)		
4	A. Certificate of upper secondary vocational education and training (<i>Vitnemål fra videregående opplæring, yrkesfaglige utdanningsprogram</i>) Craft certificate (<i>Fagbrev</i>) Journeyman certificate (<i>Svennebrev</i>)	B. Certificate of upper secondary general education (<i>Vitnemål fra videregående opplæring, studieforberedende utdanningsprogram</i>)	4
3	Document of competence for partially completed upper secondary education (<i>Kompetansebevis</i>)		3
2	Certificate for primary and lower secondary education (10 years) (<i>Vitnemål fra 10-årig grunnskole</i>)		2
—	Not part of the NKR		1

* The PhD in artistic development is designed to replace the Diploma for artistic development, which is being phased out, but it is still active.

Source: European Commission & Cedefop (2024).

4.3. Use of learning outcomes

There is a broad consensus in Norway on the relevance of the learning-outcomes approach. One important reason for using learning outcomes is to encourage curriculum consistency at the national level.

Knowledge promotion (*Kunnskapsløftet*) – a wide-ranging reform of primary, lower and upper secondary education and training, which began in 2004 and was implemented in 2006 – has been particularly significant; it required the comprehensive redefinition and rewriting of learning objectives at these levels. This has been continued in the new revision of the curricula, curricular renewal (*Fagfornyelsen*). The learning outcomes have been rewritten to include more in-depth learning and better understanding. The [new curricula](#) were fully implemented by the end of 2021 (Cedefop & ReferNet, 2024).

All higher education institutions were requested to adopt learning outcomes in line with the descriptors for levels 6 to 8 of the NKR in all study programmes by the end of 2012. A major restructuring project of national curriculum regulations in health and welfare programmes, entitled RETHOS, has recently been carried out. The learning outcomes are formulated in accordance with the NKR and national and international regulations. The Norwegian Directorate for Higher

Education and Skills is the secretariat and monitors the revised programmes and considers changes if necessary.

In vocational college education (*fagskole*) at level 5, vocational colleges have developed and use learning outcomes in all programmes.

4.4. Quality assurance arrangements

The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (*Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen, NOKUT*) is the quality assurance body for higher education and higher vocational education (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024). Compliance with the NKR is included in the law on higher education, the law on higher vocational education and in NOKUT's regulations on the external quality assurance and control of vocational college education and of higher education (Norwegian government, 2017b). Accreditation of study programmes include the assessment of learning outcomes. The aim of using the NKR level descriptors is to ensure consistency across institutions and education sub-systems, contributing to the national and international credibility of Norwegian qualifications (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

Quality assurance in higher education follows the standards and guidelines for quality assurance of the European higher education area (ESG). Thus, higher education institutions have the main responsibility for the quality of their own educational provision, and NOKUT ensures, through periodic reviews, that all institutions follow the legal requirements and provide education of high quality. Accreditation is mandatory and universal for all formally recognised higher education; it can be institutional or programme accreditation. NOKUT assesses the systematic work on quality assurance and quality improvement of higher education institutions.

NOKUT accredits vocational college education programmes and supervises quality. Vocational colleges can, under certain conditions, receive self-accreditation rights for subject areas.

As quality assurance at primary and upper secondary levels is embedded in the legal framework, the state is responsible for inspecting all activities stipulated in the education act. The education ministry has delegated this responsibility to the [Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training \(Utdanningsdirektoratet, UDIR\)](#). UDIR is responsible for developing and supporting inspections, to ensure unified inspection throughout the country and to provide guidance on legislation.

5. Institutional arrangements and stakeholder involvement

The Ministry of Education and Research has the overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the NKR. The [Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education](#) (NOKUT) is the national coordination point (NCP) and provides information and guidance, along with running NKR-related projects. It serves as an information centre, coordinates activities relating to the NKR and the EQF and is responsible for the main web presentation. NOKUT is also responsible for coordinating the NKR for levels 5 to 8 (higher education and higher vocational education). NOKUT is an agency under the Ministry of Education and Research and is independent in all matters relating to accreditation and quality assurance. NOKUT's role is to ensure the quality of higher and vocational college education. Project work is financed through designated EU funding of NCP activities, including 25% self-financing. Other NKR tasks are financed through ordinary NOKUT budgets. UDIR is responsible for the coordination of NKR levels 2 to 4.

Both in secondary education and in higher vocational education there are national boards where social partners, municipality representatives and school leaders contribute to developing and improving the quality of vocational education. [SRY](#), the national advisory board for cooperation in vocational education is also embedded in legislation (*opplaeringsloven*) to ensure a formal base for involvement. A similar advisory board is also embedded in legislation on higher vocational education with a similar purpose. Both advisory boards were involved in the evaluation of the NKR (see Section 7.7). The boards are also receivers, as consultation bodies, of suggestions for changes promoted by government, regarding the NKR and education programmes.

6. Recognition and validation of prior learning

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

Arrangements relating to the validation of prior learning have a thorough legal basis and are referenced to the learning outcomes of qualifications in the formal system for education and training and the NKR, through a mechanism for validation (*realkompetansevurdering*). Validation certificates are formally recognised as equal to certificates acquired through formal learning, as they are issued by the same institutions (Grini, 2024). Validation arrangements can give access to programs leading to all NKR qualifications and allow learners to

receive credits/exemptions towards all such qualifications (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024). The Norwegian validation system aims to establish a connection between work-based learning and the formal education sector, enabling experienced workers without a formal qualification to access formal education and training (Grini, 2024).

According to Grini (2024), the NKR evaluation (see Section 7.7) suggests that the NKR could influence validation by further promoting the use of the learning outcomes in every education and training sub-system, increasing the transparency in all NKR levels, developing more fit-for-purpose methods (supporting validation) and developing a more consistent conceptual basis. Furthermore, the review showed that the NKR is rarely used by higher education institutions for the validation of learning. On the other hand, vocational colleges generally find the framework helpful for validation purposes. Finally, some experts consider that the current validation system promotes general education and they are questioning whether the system should be more accessible for practical and vocational education (Grini, 2024).

6.2. Credit system

In December 2024, the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills launched a research study on the potential use of ECTS for higher vocational education. The purpose was to obtain a good knowledge base on the prerequisites for using ECTS for different education levels, the possibility of using ECTS in higher vocational education and which will be the consequences (also for higher education). The outcomes will inform the ongoing debate about the further development of higher vocational education (Grini, 2024).

6.3. Recognition of foreign qualifications

On 1 January 2023, the Enic-Naric office was transferred from NOKUT to the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (*Direktoratet for høyere utdanning og kompetanse*, [HK-DIR](#)). The evaluation of the NKR showed that the NKR and the EQF are used as a reference tool to make the recognition of foreign qualifications easier. According to HK-DIR, the recognition of upper secondary and post-secondary VET qualifications is challenging because of the great variation in vocational education and training systems at these levels (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

As a consequence of the reorganisation of responsibilities in the field, there was a public consultation on a new regulation on the general recognition of foreign higher education qualifications in spring 2024. The new regulation came into force in summer 2024 ⁽³⁾.

7. NQF implementation and impact

7.1. Stage of implementation

The NKR has reached the operational stage, operating as a map of, and reference to, most nationally recognised qualifications. It is an important tool in the quality assurance of higher education and higher vocational education and supports the cross-border mobility of students.

7.2. Procedures for including qualifications in the NQF

The inclusion of qualifications in the NKR is governed by legislation on primary and secondary education and training, tertiary vocational education, and universities and university colleges, along with the corresponding regulations. The procedures are based on the relevant act and its regulations.

In the areas of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary school, the inclusion of qualifications in the NKR is carried out by the education ministry through the approval of national curricula. VET curricula are developed in close tripartite cooperation with social partners, ensuring linkages with labour market needs.

In tertiary vocational education, the procedure for enrolling qualifications in the NQF is linked to the procedure for the recognition of new provision and must fulfil the requirements set by NOKUT (see Section 4.4). External experts assess whether the programmes cover the standards, including learning outcomes.

Also at levels 6, 7 and 8, only qualifications accredited by NOKUT, or provided by an institution with self-accreditation rights can be included in the NKR (see Section 4.4). The applicant must fulfil the requirements set out in NOKUT's regulations (Norwegian Ministry of Education & Research, 2012). All new higher education qualifications are designed to fit the NKR level descriptions ⁽⁴⁾.

⁽³⁾ *Source:* internal communication with NOKUT.

⁽⁴⁾ *Source:* internal communication with NOKUT.

7.3. Indicating EQF/NQF levels

NKR levels are indicated on all qualifications. NKR/EQF levels are indicated on all Europass certificate supplements, apart from levels 2 and 3, and on diploma supplements (in higher education). The NKR regulation states that all new diplomas and certificates from the formal education system should indicate NKR levels, and that EQF levels should be indicated on supporting documents. (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

7.4. NQF dissemination

NOKUT is working systematically on NKR dissemination through the EQF-NCP projects. This includes project-specific communication, but also general and public information on the NKR. The information mainly targets education providers and learners, but also at society at large.

NOKUT continues to focus on promoting the use of learning-outcome descriptions. In late 2022, the report '[The use of learning outcomes – a knowledge-based summary](#)' was published targeting stakeholders from higher education and higher vocational education. NOKUT has also published a series of 5 [informational videos](#) targeting apart from education stakeholders, employers, learners and organisations in the field of education and training. The videos explain the NKR levels, how to approach learning outcomes from a pedagogical point of view and how to design learning outcome descriptions. NOKUT has disseminated the results of the NKR evaluation through a seminar (available [on-line](#)) and a [press-release](#) (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

Indicating NKR levels on higher vocational and higher education qualifications, as stated by the relevant [act](#), has great impact on the dissemination of NKR to both students and providers.

7.5. Qualifications databases and registers

Norway has a national database ([Utdanning.no](#)) covering all learning opportunities in formal education. The database provides information about education and training possibilities and programmes in upper secondary education and training, vocational college education, higher education, folk high schools (boarding schools without exams or grades), further and continuing education (flexible courses or education offers at all levels, often based on professional experience) and some further education programmes that do not award formal qualifications. In total, the database includes 8 160 qualifications (European Commission & Cedefop, 2022; 2024). The database has been developed to help students search for and navigate education opportunities and to help guidance counsellors give advice. It includes information on which careers and occupations end users would qualify for, what salary to expect and

to which institutions they could apply. The database includes, to a lesser degree, level descriptors and level indicators. Learning outcomes are not included in the database, and are instead normally published on the individual educational institutions' web pages. Programmes offered by the educational institutions in English are published on a separate [website](#). The [Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research](#) (*Kunnskapssektorens tenesteleverandør, SIKT*), an agency under the education ministry, has been tasked with developing a qualifications registry. The registry will contain an exhaustive list of accredited qualifications with unique markers to avoid duplicates; it will also feed information into existing databases. When developed the database is expected to have the capacity to deliver data to The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (Eqar), Europass Digital Credential Infrastructure (EDCI) and Qualifications Dataset Register (QDR) platform (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

7.6. Awareness and use of the NQF

The NKR evaluation (see Section 7.7) showed that learners are aware of learning outcome descriptions. They very often use them for planning their learning pathway and easing international mobility, but rarely when seeking employment. Apart from those in health and social care vocational education, learners have in general limited knowledge of the NKR. Workers and job seekers also have low awareness of the NKR (only 16% of respondents indicated that they were familiar with the framework). Awareness tends to be higher among those in the public sector, particularly in healthcare and education, younger workers and recent higher-education graduates (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

Education and training providers overall have very high level of awareness and use of the NKR. However, the extent that they use and promote it varies. They use it in designing qualifications and curricula and ensuring compliance with national and international quality standards. Any education institution that seeks to attain accreditation for a study programme is familiar with the NKR, as the learning outcomes of their programmes should be compared to the NKR level descriptors. Many institutions consider that although the NKR is valuable, the regulatory framework is too rigid, and to some extent hinders flexibility in developing study programmes (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

At national level, awareness of the NKR is very high among employer associations and large enterprises. At the same time local employers do not display a thorough understanding of how the framework works. According to the evaluation, employer awareness is limited; the study shows that 15% of employers know the NKR, 14% know the term learning outcome, and 12% know

the EQF. Although many employers acknowledge the value of clearly defined qualifications and learning outcomes, they do not often use the NKR when assessing candidates. However, employers consider that the linking of the NKR with the EQF, helps them assess the qualifications of international candidates more effectively, a crucial function for industries relying on foreign expertise and mobility of professionals. The knowledge of the NKR improves in sectors like healthcare and social services (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

The NKR is well known within government agencies. It is used by NOKUT in its quality assurance of higher education and higher vocational education.

7.7. Monitoring and evaluating the NQF

In 2023 NOKUT published a feasibility [report](#), mainly focusing on the placement of higher vocational education in the NKR. It suggests two possible structures; the first has two parallel and separate descriptors for higher education and higher vocational education, and the second has a common set of descriptors (Cedefop & ReferNet, 2024).

In 2023, NOKUT completed an [evaluation](#) of levels 5 to 8 of the NKR; 5 reports and a synthesis report were published (see also section 7.6). The evaluation reviewed how education institution and learners perceive learning outcomes, and the awareness, use and benefits of the NKR for higher education institutions and communities, employers, employees and learners. The data were collected through surveys, qualitative interviews and focus groups (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

A key finding was that the NKR has had a significant impact as a tool for the regulation of higher education institutions and for enhancing curriculum quality (NOKUT, 2023; European Commission & Cedefop, 2024). Although there is an overall positive attitude, the interaction of the NKR with other regulatory tools was highlighted as a challenge, along with its impact to institutional autonomy and educational development processes. However, vocational schools were more favourable towards NKR due to its alignment with labour market needs. Employers also favoured the alignment of the NKR with industry needs but highlighted a gap with the theoretical learning outcomes. There was a call to promote practical competences and closer alignment with job requirements. Employees consider that the NKR has improved the transparency and comparability of qualifications, making easier to understand and assess levels of knowledge, skills and competences, but the framework cannot fully capture the complexity of skills acquired through work experience. Learners mentioned that the NKR should further contribute to increasing their labour market preparedness. Overall, the NKR has succeeded in improving quality and

international mobility, however it has influenced lifelong learning and labour market integration to a lesser extent (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

7.8. Impact of the NQF

The evaluation has showed that the NKR has enhanced the transparency and comparability of qualifications at national and international levels, facilitating international mobility of learners and workers and the recognition of foreign qualifications. These have triggered reforms to further enhance student exchange programmes, joint degrees, and international collaboration between educational institutions. At the same time, the NKR enables employers, as it is referenced to the EQF, to trust and understand qualifications from outside Norway. According to the evaluation, employers consider that the NKR also promotes employability at national level, as it is aligned to labour market needs; however, they have identified a gap between the theoretical learning outcomes and the skill needs in the labour market. Nevertheless, the NKR has fostered dialogue between education providers and the labour market, aiming to address labour market needs and help employers understand the competences associated with the different NKR levels. The alignment of the NKR with the labour market has contributed to identifying gaps, encouraging the design of new qualifications that meet emerging needs of the economy and society; for instance, specialised qualifications offering digital, green, and technical skills (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

The NKR has a well-documented impact on the quality assurance of qualifications (see Section 4.4). The fact that NOKUT is the only accreditation agency with a government mandate and the EQF-NCP has a positive impact. The framework has contributed to promoting the learning outcomes approach, which is widely accepted in education and training, and among social partners. Furthermore, the NKR level descriptors clearly define the complexity of the learning outcomes of different types of qualifications, promoting parity of esteem between vocational and academic qualifications (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

The NKR has reinforced the importance of lifelong learning, encouraging reforms that focus on flexible learning pathways. This includes better connections and cooperation between vocational education, higher education, and continuous professional development. However, the evaluation suggests that cooperation among education subsystems and between them and labour market stakeholders should be enhanced (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024).

8. Referencing to the EQF

Norway referenced its national qualifications framework to the EQF in June 2014, along with self-certification to the QF-EHEA.

9. Reflections and plans

A crucial enabling factor in the implementation of the NKR is that it is fully embedded in national legislation, making it binding to all related institutions. Furthermore, the fact that NOKUT, a government body responsible for accreditation and quality assurance, is also responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the NKR, stimulates education and training stakeholders to follow it (European Commission & Cedefop 2024).

The NKR evaluation provides five recommendations for the implementation of the framework to address existing challenges and barriers (European Commission & Cedefop, 2024):

- (a) fully review the NKR level descriptors;
- (b) reduce the regulatory role of the NKR in designing qualifications and clarify the level of autonomy of education institutions in developing programmes and learning outcomes aligned with the NKR level descriptors;
- (c) remove the sublevels and ensure that all qualifications are correctly levelled;
- (d) open level 5 to higher education qualifications, give the possibility to higher vocational education to offer qualifications at levels above 5, and investigate administrative models to implement this;
- (e) consider opening up the NKR to qualifications not yet included, as well as to different forms of continuing and non-formal education.

The structure of the higher NKR levels (5 to 8) remains an open question. Currently, the highest NKR level achievable through the VET system is 5.

Acronyms

EQF	European qualifications framework
HK-DIR	Direktoratet for høyere utdanning og kompetanse (Directorate for Higher Education and Skills)
NCP	national coordination point
NKR	Nasjonalt kvalifikasjonsrammeverk for livslang læring (national qualifications framework for lifelong learning)

NOKUT	Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen (Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education)
NQF	national qualifications framework
QF-EHEA	qualifications frameworks in the European higher education area
UDIR	Utdanningsdirektoratet (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training)
VET	vocational education and training

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